

ELECTION BOARD MEETING
February 1, 2023, 11:00 a.m.
Commissioners Meeting Room

PRESENT: Commissioners Matthew Osterberg, Ronald Schmalzle, and Tony Waldron; Chief Clerk Krista Gromalski; Election Director Nadeen Manzoni, Solicitor; Tom Farley

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to convene the Election Board meeting.

VOTE: All members voted “aye”. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the December 28, 2022 Election Board meeting minutes.

VOTE: All members voted “aye”. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve contracting Phoenix Graphics to mail and print ballots for 2023. The vendor is a change from the original mail house vendor, Runbeck Elections, who informed Director, Nadeen Manzoni, they were unable to accommodate new clients for the 2023 election year.

VOTE: All members voted “aye”. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board of Elections members recommended appointments to replace them for the 2023 election cycle while they seek re-election for the office of County Commissioner as follows:

Matthew M. Osterberg recommends George R. Lutfy
Ronald R. Schmalzle recommends Christopher Strong
R. Anthony Waldron recommends Bridget Gelderman

BOE Solicitor Thomas Farley will submit the recommendations to the Court of Common Pleas for approval.

The current Board of Elections have stepped down from their duties as of this meeting, February 1, 2023.

PRESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Reporter, Chris Jones, asked about what using the mail house meant. Director, Nadeen Manzoni explained the mail house vendor, Phoenix Graphics will print and put together ballot packages to send to voters who apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot. Act 77 greatly increased the volume of mail-in and absentee requests the elections office processes, especially during Presidential and Mid-Term Elections. To help alleviate some of the workload the process of mailing out ballots will be turned over to Phoenix Graphics. They will be responsible to print ballots, envelopes and instructions sheets and put together the ballot packages which includes; a ballot, secrecy envelope, return envelope, instructions and the outside envelope.

The elections office will provide a list of verified, eligible voters whose applications were processed and approved by election office personnel. This list contains no personal identification and is similar to the absentee/mail-in voter lists made available to the public.

The mail house provides dates and postal service tracking information to the elections office when our ballots hit the mail stream. Using USPS technology we are now able to track a voters ballot as it moves through the postal service facilities in real time.

The elections office is still responsible for processing, verifying and approving absentee/mail-in applications. The elections continues to be responsible for handling the return, processing and recording of returned ballots. The only thing that will change with the mail house is who prints the ballot materials, stuffs the envelopes and mails them out. All other processes remain the same and the responsibility of the county election office.

Meeting attendee, State Representative Tarah Probst, asked about the county putting out more Drop Boxes throughout the county. Commissioner Osterberg said the Board decided against using more Drop Boxes due to the fact they could not be adequately monitored and municipal offices did not have extended hours. Also stating the issue of staffing to collect the ballots from

Drop Boxes and secure chain of custody required for multiple Drop Boxes. We will continue to make available the Drop Box in the lobby of the administration building that is monitored by a Sheriff Deputy.

Reporter, Chris Jones questioned how an interim Board of Elections was chosen. Solicitor Farley explained that each commissioner chose someone to appoint. The request is sent over to the Court of Common Pleas and the Judge usually appoints whoever the commissioners request. Commissioner Osterberg said they, (the commissioners), are not even allowed in the building on Election Day so there is no perception of favoritism.

Meeting attendee, Matthew Contrares asked about the timing of when a new Board of Elections would be in place. Commissioner Osterberg responded, before the petitions are circulated. This is the last Board of Elections Meeting with us serving as the Board.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to adjourn the Election Board Meeting.

VOTE: All members voted "aye". Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.