

Town of Riverdale Park
Board of Elections Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2023

In Attendance

Sarah Zolad, Chief Election Judge
Kate Kelly, Deputy Chief Election Judge
Heather Cronk, Board of Elections member
Patti Doyen, Board of Elections member
Michael Lynch, resident
Jahera Otieno, Board of Elections member

Jessica Barnes, Director of Administrative Services/Town Clerk

Call to Order

Ms. Zolad called the Board of Elections meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the March 7, 2023, meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Doyen. Vote: All in favor.

Discussion:

There were no changes to the agenda or stated conflicts of interest.

Discussion Items

Street Files Report from the County Board of Elections

Director Barnes provided an overview of the process used to review the Street Files Report from the Prince George's County Board of Elections. Director Barnes discussed the impact of redistricting on the Street Files Report.

Ms. Zolad discussed the need to make residents aware of the process used to review the Street Files Report. Ms. Zolad also asked how the BOE could be sure that the review was done each year. Director Barnes explained that the BOE would review the County's Street Files Report prior to each Town Election.

Ms. Kelly asked if anyone was registered to vote from the Fire Department's address and Director Barnes replied that she was not certain.

Ms. Zolad stated that it was important to document the process for future BOEs and Director Barnes agreed.

Director Barnes discussed the Supplemental Voter Registry and same-day voter registration.

Ms. Zolad discussed her concerns regarding unhoused people, and noted that the Town could establish its own process for addressing the concerns.

Director Barnes discussed the information included on the Street Files Report and the need to do a thorough review of the revised Street Files Report. Ms. Zolad suggested dividing the report by

ward and Director Barnes explained how the Street Files Report was structured. Ms. Doyen asked for clarity regarding the information to be reviewed and Director Barnes provided additional information.

Ms. Kelly asked Director Barnes about the review process and Director Barnes discussed the process that she had used to review the Street Files Report. Director Barnes provided examples of address ranges and how they were verified. Director Barnes noted that the report provided by Mayor Thompson included every address in Town and the ward it was assigned and seemed to be the most helpful for review of the Street Files report.

Ms. Zolad asked if Mr. Lynch could assist with the review and he confirmed that he was able to assist. Ms. Zolad assigned the pages to be reviewed and reminded everyone to sign the page of the report that they reviewed. Director Barnes discussed the County Board of Elections Municipal Survey form that was completed regarding the upcoming election. Ms. Doyen asked how the voters on the Supplemental Voter Registry were notified and Director Barnes explained the outreach efforts.

Ms. Kelly discussed same-day voter registration. Director Barnes discussed how the Supplemental Voter Registry was maintained.

Director Barnes discussed voter education activities in the future. Mr. Lynch stated that the University of Maryland had a research group that was studying voter trends for those who start voting at 16 years old. Mr. Lynch asked if it was possible to get a list of County/State voters who register to vote prior to 18 years old. Ms. Zolad asked if it was possible to get a list of voters who were 16 or 17 years old and registered with the County/State. Director Barnes stated that she would ask the County Board of Elections.

Ms. Zolad stated that she would be interested to learn more about best practices to reach younger voters. Ms. Cronk stated that her partner worked in a similar field and would be happy to talk with the BOE. Ms. Zolad stated that it would be helpful to meet with other jurisdictions that have similar laws. Ms. Kelly noted that the Board could work on that after the election and Director Barnes discussed the municipal election schedule. Ms. Zolad suggested hosting a meeting with the County BOE and inviting neighboring jurisdictions.

Review of election materials

Ms. Kelly stated that she had reviewed the content of the forms and had very minor changes related to punctuation. Ms. Kelly stated that she would scan and email her changes to the Board.

Ms. Kelly asked about the status of the Candidate Packets. Director Barnes noted that the Candidate Packets were included in the Dropbox folder for review by the Board. Director Barnes reported that the Election Notice and the Absentee (Mail-in) Ballot application forms were included in the March edition of the *Town Crier* to ensure that residents received election-related information twice prior to the May 1st Town Election.

Director Barnes stated that the Board had discussed holding an information session at Town Hall and suggested that a virtual information session be held as well. Ms. Kelly noted that the candidate filing deadline was on April 6th and suggested the date of Saturday, March 18th. Director Barnes stated that it was important to finalize the Candidate Packet as soon as possible. Ms. Kelly noted that there were some pronoun issues with the first page of the Candidate Packet.

Ms. Kelly stated that she would make the minor changes and scan and email the changes to the Board. Ms. Kelly noted that there were no recommended changes to the content of the forms.

Ms. Kelly made a motion to post the approved changes to the Candidates Packets as soon as they were made. Ms. Cronk seconded the motion. Vote: All in Favor.

Director Barnes discussed where the Candidate Packets could be found on the Town website and in the document holder at Town Hall. Ms. Zolad asked if election items could be distributed at the Farmers Market and Ms. Barnes noted that in 2021 the Election Notices were distributed at the Farmers Market. Director Barnes discussed public outreach efforts.

Ms. Cronk suggested working with Town businesses to post and distribute election information. Ms. Cronk discussed using a QR Code on pizza boxes or takeout bags.

Discussion regarding Information Session

Ms. Kelly suggested holding an informal session to distribute election-related materials and answer questions. Ms. Doyen asked how to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to hear the information. Ms. Cronk suggested holding two sessions: one in person and one virtual session. Director Barnes stated that the virtual session could be recorded and noted that the questions should be limited to the Town election process. Director Barnes stated that she ordered a large ward boundary map.

Review of Electec price quote

Director Barnes provided an overview of the price quote from Electec and noted that it was within the approved budget and below the threshold for requiring a formal procurement process. Director Barnes noted that Electec was used by other jurisdictions in the area and discussed the services provided by Electec. There were no questions or concerns.

Ms. Kelly stated that the instructions for the Absentee (Mail-in) Ballots should be similar to the ones provided in 2021. Director Barnes stated that she had the instructions that were used in 2021 and she would add them to the Dropbox folder.

Ms. Zolad made a motion to move forward with Electec. Ms. Doyen seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor.

Town Election Information Session

Ms. Zolad asked if Mr. Lynch could attend the virtual Town Election Information Session and provide input on how to reach younger voters. Mr. Lynch stated that he would work on ways to reach younger voters. Director Barnes noted that Mr. Lynch was attending the BOE meetings as a resident as he had recently turned 18 years old and had to resign from the BOE.

Ms. Zolad suggested that the in-person Town Election Information Session could inform the virtual Town Election Information Session and Ms. Kelly agreed.

Ms. Zolad suggested that the Town Election timeline be covered during the Town Election Information Sessions and asked if a Spanish speaking translator was available. Director Barnes stated that she would have a Spanish speaking staff member present for the Information Sessions.

Next Meeting

The next BOE meeting was scheduled for March 14th at 7:00 p.m.

The in-person Town Election Information Session was scheduled for Saturday, March 18th at Town Hall from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The virtual Town Election Information Session was scheduled for Monday, March 20th at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.