

Bristol Virginia Electoral Board

Meeting Minutes

July 31, 2020

Present: Chair Sarah Williams; Vice-Chair Kevin France; Secretary Joyce Kistner; General Registrar, Penny R. Limburg and a member from the public

Next meeting: August 31, 2020 rescheduled from August 27, 2020.

- 1. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chair Williams. Williams welcomed a member from the public who attended the meeting. Due to the primary reason for the meeting being to evaluate the registrar which was to be done in closed session, she asked for a motion to amend the agenda to allow public comment first instead of at the end of the meeting.

Vice-Chair, France, made a motion to amend the agenda and move the public comment to the front with a second from secretary Kistner. Hearing no opinion to the contrary, the motioned passed.

Mr. John Warner, a citizen living in Bristol, Virginia, was invited to speak. Mr. Warner expressed concern over the recent trend of public perception regarding mail in voting and that it was prone to fraud. He was interested to learn more about the process and what safeguards were in place to prevent this. He was concerned that the Department of Elections had not addressed the issue of voter confidence.

The electoral board and the registrar explained a number of the safeguards which were in place. The registrar also informed Mr. Warner that the office was working with a public relations person on a communication strategy to educate and inform voters ahead of the November election. Chair Williams thanked Mr. Warner for his concern and invited him to attend future meetings or to join the team and become an election officer.

Mr. Warner left after the discussion on mail ballots.

- 2. Approval of minutes from June 24, 2020.** – Vice-chair France motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Secretary Kistner seconded the motion. There being no objection, the minutes were approved.
- 3. Old Business-** The registrar updated the board on the status of renovation work expected to be done at City Hall and in the registrar's office. A contractor was working on a plan to change out the drawer for the drive-thru window.

The engineering department was soon to start accepting bids on the renovating the lobby. I strongly advised that any renovation work must be completed by September 17 or work would have to cease due to early voting beginning on the following date.

The tentative plan for the office is to allow early voting in the office space and via the drive thru window until the last two weeks when early voting would then move to the city council chambers and continue through the drive thru window. One set of new voting equipment has been ordered for use in pre-processing of ballots due to higher volumes of mail ballots expected because of the COVID pandemic.

The registrar informed the board that the office would be participating with Ballot Scout which provides intelligent barcode tracking for outgoing ballots and incoming ballots. Citizens will be able to track their ballot using a link which will be published on the city website.

The registrar informed the board that a mailer to educate voters on their options for voting would be mailed in September in addition to creating a video for social media, radio, and hopefully, the local news station.

4. New Business - §24.2-109.1 Performance Review of general registrar

CLOSED SESSION

GOING IN TIME: ___10:55 am_____

1. Upon a motion made by Electoral Board Member __France____, seconded by Electoral Board Member _Kistner_, and passed by a vote of Electoral Board, Electoral Board went into closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) of the Code of Virginia for the "[d]iscussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body;"

2. Upon a motion made by Electoral Board Member _France____, seconded by Electoral Board Member Kistner_, and passed by vote of the Electoral Board, the Electoral Board reconvened in open session.

Secretary calls the roll certifying that only such public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting were discussed or considered. The following members voted aye:

1. Kevin France
2. Sarah Williams
3. Joyce Kistner

The Meeting reconvened to a public meeting at: ___12:00 p.m._____

The board complimented Limburg on conducting three elections successfully in 2020 so far with two of those being during a pandemic. They stated the city manager, candidates and the public were complementary of the efforts put forth from the office during such a challenging time. Limburg thanked them for their support and ability to work in a nonpartisan manner. She also gave due credit to the deputy registrar who also put in long hours to get the job done.

5. Announcements – Limburg handed out election calendars with deadline and officer training dates. She also participated in a cybersecurity tabletop exercise sponsored by DHS.

6. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m. by Williams.

Signature of secretary

Date