

A P P R O V E D

BOTETOURT COUNTY ELECTORAL BOARD

M I N U T E S

JULY 13, 2017

The Botetourt County Electoral Board met on Thursday, July 13, 2017, in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Botetourt County Court House in Fincastle, Virginia. Chairman John W. Rader, Vice Chairman William L. Heartwell, III, and Secretary Paul E. Fitzgerald were present. Director of Elections and General Registrar (DoE/GR) Traci Clark also was present. The DoE/GR provided a detailed agenda with supporting information packet.

The meeting was called to order at 1:58 p.m.

The minutes reflecting the activities of the Electoral Board beginning June 12 and continuing through June 15, 2017 in connection with the simultaneous Democratic Party Primary Election and Republican Party Primary Election of June 13, 2017, were unanimously approved.

The DoE/GR reported two precincts encountered and successfully dealt with significant disruptive events on June 13.

The Greenfield Precinct experienced difficulties with the processing of paper ballots by the Optical Scanner equipment which was found to have been caused by excessive ambient humidity which altered the mechanical handling properties of the ballot. Adjustment of related interior climate equipment controls resolved the problem.

An electric power outage at the Troutville Precinct was addressed by switching electric power supply feeds to an unaffected section of the school building. The Botetourt County Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department was enroute with a backup generator when the alternate power supply routing was established.

The DoE/GR reported that certification of candidates for the General Election in November has been completed, and that a total of five ballot styles will be in use because of the array of contests between School Board,

Board of Supervisors, and municipal office candidates across Botetourt County's ten voting precincts.

The Electoral Board was informed by the DoE/GR that the roster of Botetourt County Precinct Election Officials now includes 145 workers, 14 of whom have been added since the November 2016 General Election. Thirty-two of the PEOs are signed up for split-shifts.

The DoE/GR reported that final figures for FY 2017 showed an amended allocation total of \$327,280.00 and an actual expenditure of \$294,499.64 (90.0 percent utilized, \$32,780.36 unused). The Department's authorized budget for Fy2018 is 263,234.00

The possibility of voter registration drives in connection with three events—Fincastle Frolic – August 22; Third Friday Block Party in Buchanan – September 15; and Mountain Magic in Buchanan – October 7—is being evaluated.

Vice-Chairman Heartwell initiated a continuation of a discussion which had received the Electoral Board's attention during its meeting of June 14, 2017. In that previous meeting, Secretary Fitzgerald expressed a concern that delays and errors by Botetourt County administrative personnel in the on-line posting and maintenance of Electoral Board minutes could render the Electoral Board subject to criticism and penalties for non-compliance with statutory obligations of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The Electoral Board unanimously approved (June 14, 2017) a motion made by Vice Chairman Heartwell, directing the DoE/GR to notify the county personnel, who are involved in processing Electoral Board requests for online posting and maintenance, of the FOIA requirements that exist. Vice Chairman Heartwell's request for a report from the DoE/GR regarding her actions in response to those instructions and the reaction of county administrative personnel, coupled with an expansive discussion involving all three Electoral Board member, established the following:

- ❖ One person is assigned responsibility for county website posting and servicing, with no standing provision for alternates during absences, or other periods of non-availability;
- ❖ County Information Technology (IT) personnel advise that the current design/construction of the official Botetourt County website is such that specific-page access for posting/deletion/correction is not possible, and they are not amenable to granting site-wide access to the DoE/GR for the purpose of posting/deletion/correction as necessary for only the web-page serving the Department of Elections and Voter Registration;

- ❖ Time-frame requirements arising from the FOIA involve Notices of Future Meetings, Draft Minutes of Meetings, and Approved Minutes of Meetings;
- ❖ A major portion of other information that needs to be given website distribution to the general public is sequential in nature and calendar-related, resulting in short-fuse progressive-detail availability and a resulting critical need for quick-change capability;
- ❖ The most readily apparent solution is to continue use of the Department's page on the Botetourt County website for the display of relatively static administrative information, such as mission/personnel/locations/long-term future events/plus gateway linkage to a quick-action Department web-site and other official Commonwealth websites.
- ❖ The Electoral Board unanimously approved a motion by Vice Chairman Heartwell directing the DoE/GR to research costs of creating and servicing a quick-change Department Website, and to be prepared to discuss that matter with the Electoral Board at its next meeting.

At 3:12 p.m., on a motion made by Vice Chairman Heartwell and unanimously approved, under the provisions of Code of Virginia 2.2-3711(A)(1), the Electoral Board went into executive session for the purpose of considering a personnel matter—Annual Performance Appraisal of the DoE/GR. The Electoral Board returned to open session at 3:40 p.m. with a roll-call affirmation that during the Executive Session its stated subject was the only matter discussed and no decision/vote was taken.

The next meeting of the Electoral Board is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Botetourt County Court House.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul E. Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul E. Fitzgerald, Secretary
August 17, 2017