Albemarle County Electoral Board

Meeting Minutes for Virtual and Regular Meeting

April 2, 2020

Location: Albemarle County Office Building, 5th Street
Attendance: Jim Heilman, Michael Rodemeyer (electronically), Peter Wurzer, Jake Washburne, Clarice Schermerhorn, and Lauren Eddy
Guests: Abigail Turner and Seth Ragosta, Albemarle Democratic Party (both electronically)

The meeting began at 9:00 am.

Peter made the following statement: This meeting is being held pursuant to and in compliance with the Continuity of Government Ordinance adopted by the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors. Pursuant to prior public notice, the meeting is being made publicly accessible through an internet-based conferencing service. The following individuals are physically and electronically present: (Jim Heilman, Peter Wurzer, Jake Washburne, Clarice Schermerhorn, and Lauren Eddy. The following individuals participated through video conference: Michael Rodemeyer and guests Abigail Turner and Seth Ragosta electronically present. All others physically present.) The Board will take public comment immediately before any closed session or just prior to the conclusion of the meeting, at which time each person will have a maximum of three minutes to address the Board.

The agenda was unanimously adopted.
The minutes for March 6 were unanimously approved.

Abigail announced that the Albemarle Democratic Party opposes any voting system that would provide only for all-mail voting in the coming elections and primaries.

Meeting with School Administration about issues with schools on election days. Peter and Jake met with Rosalyn Schmitt (School Administration) and Diantha McKeel (Board of Supervisors) and presented a recap of issues at the public schools during recent elections, particularly in regard to voter parking. Peter noted to them that we expect a very high turnout at this November election and expressed his hope that parking problems we have had in the past can be ameliorated. Discussion ensued. We await a response concerning limiting external activities at the schools that take away parking for voters. Peter noted that we will need to develop a special plan for Jack Jouett School. Abigail noted that we will need to pay special attention to parking at the University Precinct (Slaughter Recreation Center) also.

Scottsville Town Election, May 5. We discussed many issues surrounding holding this election on this date in light of the current COVID-19 Pandemic and the Governor’s Executive Orders concerning the health and safety of our citizens during the pandemic. Jim presented various options for protecting health and safety if the election must go forward on this date. These were discussed along with other options. To the question of whether we can field enough election officers to run the election, Clarice responded that we do have enough who have volunteered. Also discussed was the issue/complaint of a Scottsville voter who received an absentee ballot but declared that, because she is an elderly voter living alone and self-quarantining, she has no way to safely get a witness to sign her absentee ballot envelope. After much discussion, the Board – with staff input – devised a process to ensure that the voter and those similarly situated are not disenfranchised.
June 9 Primaries.

- Clarice announced that a University official has informed her that, due to the closing and shuttering of the UVA Grounds due to the Pandemic, the Slaughter Recreation Center will not be available as a polling place for June 9. It was noted that we have no legal alternative but to use it. Peter noted his thinking that we should try to solve this issue before resorting to the use of higher authorities to force the University to open the building for the Primary.
- Clarice noted that we need to notify all polling places that, by law, we have to go forward with using them as polling places on June 9, even if they have closed their doors, per current instructions from the Governor. We should also inform them that we will be prepared to contract for post-voting deep cleaning of all areas used for the primaries.
- In light of concerns about the effects of COVID-19 on older populations, Clarice developed a demographic breakdown of the 432 election officers we currently have on our list, to wit:
  - Age 18-25 = 4
  - Age 26-40 = 32
  - Age 41-60 = 77
  - Age 61-70 = 153
  - Age 71-80 = 137
  - Age 80+ = 29
- **Informing the Public about Absentee Balloting for June 9.** We discussed creative ways to provide public education on this. Peter suggested contacting business owners (who could then inform their employees) in addition to more traditional methods of voter education. Abigail suggested talking to Susan Payne, who runs a media relations firm. Jake said he would talk to the County Director of Communications and Public Engagement. Abigail urged that we send postcards to all registered voters informing them of their opportunity to vote by mail.
- **Coding for Machines.** Clarice noted that we will create new passcodes for use on the machines.
- **Order for Ballot Printing.** After discussion, we came to the consensus that we will order ballots totaling 20 percent of registered voters – for each party ballot. Clarice said that she will order all of them to be pre-folded by PrintElect – assuming most of them will be used for absentee-by-mail voters.

**Canvass for Scottsville Election.** We set the canvass for the election for May 6 at noon.

**Executive Session.** Michael moved the following: RESOLVED, that the Board enter into executive session for the purpose of discussion and consideration of a personnel matter involving a current Albemarle County election officer as provided by Section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia. The motion passed unanimously. The Board went in to Executive Session at 11:17 am.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 11:29 am. Michael moved the following: RESOLVED, that to the best knowledge of each member of this Board (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of Chapter 37 (Virginia Freedom of Information Act) of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which today’s executive session was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the executive session. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Hylton
Secretary, Albemarle County Electoral Board