Albemarle County Electoral Board

Virtual and Regular Morning Meeting and Afternoon Work Session

August 12, 2020

Morning Meeting:

Location: Albemarle County Office Building, 5th Street
Attendance: Jim Heilman, Michael Rodemeyer, Peter Wurzer, Jake Washburne, Clarice Schermerhorn, Lauren Eddy, and Erin Davis
Guest: Abigail Turner, Albemarle Democratic Party

The meeting began at 9:33 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. The following individuals are physically and electronically present: (Erin Davis and Abigail Turner electronically; all others were physically present.)

The agenda was unanimously adopted.
The minutes for July 29 were unanimously approved.

Comments from Public. Abigail noted that:
• Our new website is a great improvement. She also noted that putting “Albemarle County Voter” into a search engine takes one to our webpage.
• She noted concern about the ability for officers and voters to properly distance themselves inside our school polling places.
• She also noted concern about the ability of officers and observers to socially distance (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic) at the Central Absentee Precinct.

New Website. Peter asked that we make sure the two constitutional amendments are mentioned on the site. Discussion ensued on other aspects of the new site. He also asked that we have consistency in nomenclature of the three ways to vote. To that end, we tentatively decided that the terms to be used are:
• “Early Voting in Person”
• “Voting by Mail”
• “Election Day Voting in Person”
and that the term “absentee ballot” no longer be used in information for the public.

Mail Ballots Brought to Polls on Election Day. A discussion was held on how election officers should handle these ballots.

Early Voting Satellite Site Update. Jake said that we have virtually run out of usable places for setting up a satellite site(s) and that the legal deadline for proposing a site is just a few days off. Discussion ensued. We decided that we will attempt to keep legally open the concept of having a satellite site as long as possible.

Early and Mail-in Voting Issues. Peter asked what problems we will have if we get overloaded – especially with mail ballots. Lauren replied that she alone can enter up to 1,000 ballots a day in VERIS, but that that would be much more than an inexperienced person could do. Pre-processing of ballots was then discussed. Clarice noted that on June 23rd, the Central Absentee Precinct Officers processed about 7,000 ballots in 15 hours. Peter asked whether all mail ballots received by November 3rd have to be processed by November 3rd – or can they flow over to November 4th or 5th? While this would be apparently legal, we reached consensus that we want to have everything received by November 3rd processed by November 3rd. Michael raised the issue of having public notice of dates/times of pre-processing so party observers will know.
**Session with Chiefs on Lessons Learned from June 23 Primaries.** Clarice announced that 24 Chief Officers have responded to her request for their wishes on how to hold such a session in the COVID-19 environment. Many said they could come to an in-person meeting; 8 said they preferred an in-person meeting. Because of room/social distancing constraints, we decided that only those who really need to come in person should come – and that all others should participate electronically. 6:30 pm on Thursday, August 20 was set as the date/time for this meeting. The format of the meeting was discussed.

**New Barcode Labels for Outgoing and Incoming Mail Ballots.** Jim asked how these barcodes will work. Discussion ensued.

**Executive Session.** Michael moved the following: RESOLVED, that the Albemarle County Electoral Board go into a closed meeting, as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia, under Section 8, for the purpose of discussion and consideration of the appointment, assignment and performance of one or more current and prospective Albemarle County election officers for the election cycle that begins on March 1, 2020. The motion passed unanimously. The Board went into Executive Session at 11:59 am.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 12:22 pm. 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.

Jim moved the appointment of 45 new Officers of Election for a term of one year beginning March 1, 2020. The motion passed unanimously. Their names shall be attached to these minutes.

The morning meeting was adjourned at 12:23 pm.

**Afternoon Work Session:**

Attendance: Same as morning meeting but with addition (electronically) of Diantha McKeel, Board of Supervisors; Graham Paige, School Board; Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive; and Emily Kilroy, County Communications Director.

The work session began at 1:30 pm. A wide-ranging discussion was held on how best to plan and implement a robust voter education/public outreach program in the run-up to the November 3 election.

The work session ended at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Heilman
Secretary, Albemarle County Electoral Board