

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY ELECTION BOARD

101 S. MAIN ST.
SOUTH BEND, IN 46601

CHARLES LEONE, DEMOCRATIC CHAIR
BEN HORVATH, REPUBLICAN MEMBER
RITA L. GLENN, SECRETARY

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September 1, 2022

St. Joseph County
Election Board Meeting
3:00 PM

1. Call to order

It being the appointed date and time, Chairman Charles Leone calls the St. Joseph County Election Board Meeting to order. Present are Ben Horvath, Republican Member and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Circuit Court, Rita L. Glenn, also present are:

Dave Smith-Machine Tech
Mike Misch-County Attorney
Gregg Hixenbaugh – Democratic Vice-Chair
Michelle Engel – Democratic Party
Susan Baxmeyer-Republican Party Vice-Chair
Amanda Govaert Konrath-Dem. Member Voter Reg.
Trisha Carrico-Rep. Member Voter Reg.
Mike McManus – Citizen
Pat Schafer – Citizen
John Hagen – League of Women Voters
Nick Abernathy – RBM
Amy Rolfes – Candidate
Charlotte Pfeifer – Democratic Party
Pam Claeys – League of Women Voters
Terry Rethlake-Chief Deputy Clerk
Lana Cleary-Deputy Clerk
Penny Stratton-Election Clerk

2. Approval minutes 08/12/22 So moved by Ben Horvath. Seconded by Rita Glenn.

Old Business

3. Ballot room security and key access. The statute that sets the key allocation doesn't have provisions. Chuck checked with the State for best practices and no clear answers. Mike Misch states that the Board must follow the law and that it is statute that the ballots must be sorted in precinct order. Absentee /Early Ballot Procedure. Chuck states the Board

should set hours of business. Mike Misch states everyone be on the same page and suggests they start with an outline of procedures. Chuck wants policy in place to set clear expectations. Mike Misch hopes to have outline to the Board by tomorrow. Rita gives an update on the ballot room. She is having Brian from maintenance put a wall up where the accordion wall is currently located. She further suggests that the room be rekeyed and have witnesses to this action. She states she never wanted to keep the Republican keys, no one ever came to retrieve the keys. Rita states that the hours of operation are from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. Rita states she would like an additional camera placed inside the ballot room besides the camera outside the room. She wants the camera on the inside of the room for additional transparency. Chuck says he doesn't want to get to far ahead, however Rita needs answers now because ballots will start coming into the office after September 19th. Chuck asks Rita to put a plan together for next meeting. Penny reiterated that the plan must be in place by the 19th. Ben states that there isn't an account of all the keys to the room. Rita explains there is three sets of keys. Penny stated she brought the second set of keys to the meeting today. She states no one has asked for the keys. Ben said he thought in an email that the Board should have the extra keys. Penny and Brian approach the Board and relinquish the two sets of keys to the Board. Brian Davidson approaches the podium to address the Board. He states when he was questioned by the Election Board, under oath a few weeks prior, that the keys he brought to the Board today are still the only set of keys to the room in his possession and that nothing has changed. He states he was aware that Lana Cleary, a clerk, was a candidate for office and that the ballot room had to be moved. Brian states after the new ballot room was chosen, that he replaced the door with a solid wood door. His intention was to put a BEST system lock on the door. He is the only one that can order a key to be made for that system. Covid slowed down delivery, so Brian had to go with a commercial Yale lock with standard keys. He gave Rita two keys and one of those were given to Ben. Brian states that he is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and says that over the years has earned a level of trust from the county. Ben says he wants transparency. Brian states he will not have any keys to the room once he gives Ben and Chuck his set of keys. Chuck designates his key to Rita and one to Amanda from Voter's Registration. Ben keeps one key for himself and designates one to Tricia from Voter's Registration. Mike Misch asks the board if it is ok if Brian keeps a set of keys for safety reasons. The Board is asked if they are all ok with these designations. The answer is yes. Brian requests of the Board if anything changes, he be informed. Brian states he is having a masonry wall installed. Brian states if you want an additional camera installed, he needs to know asap. He will make sure the camera is capable of night vision recording too. Motion to install additional camera in ballot room. So moved by Ben Horvath. Seconded by Rita Glenn.

4. Vote Center locations. Ongoing discussion regarding lack of Vote Centers in South Bend District 6. Dave Smith provides list of equipment at each of the current Vote Centers. Dave states that the current list and proposed additions and deletions were discussed amongst the Vote Center technicians. The technicians stated they didn't believe Navarre was a good site for a Vote Center. Techs stated it would be a better idea to keep Washington and remove Kennedy or LaSalle. Dave stated it would be feasible to take out equipment from one location and add two locations. Dave states Kennedy had the lowest turnout at the last two elections. Chuck asks the Board how they feel about adding both

Navarre and Harrison as Vote Centers. The Board verified with Lana that there are funds in the budget to add another Vote Center. Pam Claeys asks if Board is removing Kennedy because of parking. Charlotte Pfeifer. She is favor of Vote Centers in the sixth district, but why are you adding two so close together. She asks why not pick one in the sixth district closer to Rum Village. Charlotte hopes by next election that the Board would consider adding more Vote Centers. They converge with 5th and 6th district. Mike McManus states voting is very important. He asks everyone to come together and resolve the Vote Center issue for a simple act of democracy. Gregg Hixenbaugh states he has no objection to the changes and additional Vote Center. He states the democratic party will gladly take on the burden to recruit workers. Susan Baxmeyer stated if the needs for equipment are met, there is no objection by the republican party to the addition to the Vote Centers. Motion to add Harrison and Navarre and remove Kennedy as Vote Centers. So moved by Rita Glenn. Seconded by Ben Horvath. By unanimous decision Vote Center Plan amended.

5. Absentee Hours Resolution. It was stated that there is typically two Sundays in a General County election. Board has a draft resolution for absentee hours. Motion to adopt Absentee Hours resolution. So moved by Ben Horvath. Seconded by Rita Glenn.
6. Candidate certification by IED update. Certification came from the State last week. Penny received ballot proofs from RBM and Penny and Giggitt proofed. Nick is ready to send tonight or tomorrow the ballots to Penny and she can forward to the parties and the Board to proof. She asks everyone to proof and send back to her by Wednesday, September 7th with any comments. If there is no response, it will be assumed, the parties and/or the Board that they are ok with the ballots. Rita noted there will be a specific layout by the courts for the special election that will be held on Election Day. Rita also noted that Absentee will have 14 workers in South Bend and 6 workers in Mishawaka.
7. Election Board Budget – update. Chuck has concerns with low voter turnout in 2022 Primary Election. His concern is voters don't know what Vote Centers are and how they can be utilized. He asks Lana if there was money in the budget to print literature to distribute throughout the county to the voter with information on Vote Centers. Voters Registration stated they are having a voter outreach. At this point, they are signed up to go to five places to get the vote out. Chuck wants Voters Registration to work with the Clerk's office to design literature to reach the voter. Charlotte Pfeiffer asks about absentee voting on weekends and Rita explains that there are two weekends for absentee voting. Charlotte encourages that social media should be where to advertise for voting.
8. Public Records Request for 2020 Vote Information. Overview by Mike Misch that a technology group wants a ballot-by-ballot review from 2020 Election. States a discussion is ongoing with the Clerk's association and attorneys about this request. Rita says Microvote doesn't have that capability. Rita has been in contact with our vendor, RBM, and they are looking into if this request is possible. Technology group is threatening to sue the Board if they don't receive the information. The Board and Mr. Misch are looking into this and if its legal under the law to see a voter's electronic version of their vote or is it protected. Mike Misch doesn't think actual ballot by ballot can be provided.

9. USPS. Having issues with the mail. Rita says got a ballot back after 2 years. Just wanted to make everyone is aware of the issue. Make sure you send your ballot back sooner than later. She has been in contact with the USPS.

10. Public comment. Pam Claeys. She has thoughts on ballot room security. That every step of the way you lay out the steps and have a fallback procedure. She also encourages the Board to get voter information on how to vote to libraries and public schools.
Pat Schafer. Pat states if Mr. Ben Horvath had shown up on that Monday, we wouldn't be in this mess. Pam Claeys seconds that thought.

Next meeting is at 2:00 pm September 9, 2022.

The Chairman makes a motion to adjourn at 4:21 pm. So moved by Rita Glenn. Seconded by Ben Horvath.

Respectfully submitted,



Rita L. Glenn, Secretary
St. Joseph County Election Board
rlg/lrc