

VOTE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Board Meeting
5/24/2022

Attending:

Jeff Hastings, Chairman
Inajo Davis Chappell, Board Member/via teleconference
Lisa M. Stickan, Board Member
David J. Wondolowski, Board Member
Anthony W. Perlatti, Director
Tony Kaloger, Deputy Director

Mary Bejjani, Clerk to the Board
Linda Walker, Clerk to the Board

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections Meeting began at 9:30 a.m. Hereinafter referred to as the CCBOE/Board.

Chairman Hastings noted that Board Members were in attendance. Board Member Davis Chappell attended via video conference as allowed per House Bill "H.B." 51.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of the minutes from the May 16, 2022, Board Meeting

Chairman Hastings moved to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2022, Board Meeting. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. Chairman Hastings, Board Members Stickan, and Wondolowski voted to approve the minutes. Board Member Davis Chappell abstained from voting.

Agenda Item 2: Acknowledgment of Secretary of State Memorandum 2022-03: Organizational Meeting of Major Political Party County Central Committee

Chairman Hastings moved to acknowledge the Secretary of State Memorandum 2022-03: Organizational Meeting of Major Political Party County Central Committee. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Certification of the official results of the May 3, 2022, Primary Election

Brian Cleary, Ballot Department Manager, presented information from the Board Packet concerning the certification of the official results from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election.

One contest resulted in a tie vote for Member of County Central Committee – Cleveland 03-E. The candidate votes were tied at 57 votes each for Karen Connavino and Chris Martin. Both candidates were present for today's meeting. Chairman Hastings explained under the law; a coin flip will decide the contest. The candidates determined the call of the coin flip. Chairman Hastings flipped the coin, and it landed on tails. Mr. Martin was declared the winner.

Narrative that is underlined in the CCBOE minutes relates to a motion that was acted on by the Board.

There will be an automatic recount for the contest for Member of County Central Committee – Cleveland 03-E. Mr. Cleary also stated the requested recount deadline is Tuesday, May 31st at 4:00 p.m.

- Authorization to approve the remake of the optical scan ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election
Chairman Hastings moved to authorize to approve the remake of optical scan ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Authorization to approve absentee ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election
Chairman Hastings moved to authorize approval of absentee ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Authorization to approve provisional ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election
Chairman Hastings moved to authorize approval of provisional ballots from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Acknowledgment of the pre & post-test results of the vote tabulation system from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election
Chairman Hastings moved to acknowledge the pre & post-test results of the vote tabulation system from the May 3, 2022, Primary Election. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Acknowledgment of Official District-Wide Results of the May 3, 2022, Primary Election for Cuyahoga, Medina, Ottawa, and Wayne Counties
Chairman Hastings moved to acknowledge the Official District-Wide Results of the May 3, 2022, Primary Election for Cuyahoga, Medina, Ottawa, and Wayne Counties. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Hastings moved to certify the official results of the May 3, 2022, Primary Election. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: Acknowledgment of the date, time, and place of the post-election audit for the May 3, 2022, Primary Election

Brian Cleary, Ballot Department Manager, indicated the post-election audit for the May 3, 2022, Primary Election is scheduled for Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. The two races eligible for the post-election audit are the Cuyahoga Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile FTC 1/1/2023, and the Democratic County Executive races. An even roll of the di determined the Democratic County Executive race would be audited. Director Perlatti stated the additional contests to be audited as directed by the Secretary of State include the Republican United States Senate race and the Democratic Governor's race.

Chairman Hastings moved to acknowledge the post-election audit for Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Board Member Wondolowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Acknowledgment of appointment to elected office

Chairman Hastings moved to acknowledge the appointment to elected office as provided in the meeting materials. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Approval of the personnel agenda

Chairman Hastings moved to approve the personnel agenda as provided in the meeting materials. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Perlatti stated the CCBOE had completed the investigation into the issue of ballot stubs not being read by the electronic poll books, which occurred on May 3, 2022. Director Perlatti provided the results of the investigation. The fundamental purpose of the barcode is to track the number of people voting. Additionally, it is a safety net in multi-precinct voting locations to minimize the opportunity to hand out the wrong precinct or party-type ballot to a voter.

Director Perlatti stated there is a bar code on the ballot stub that contains four parts. The first part is the precinct abbreviation. The second part is the precinct split. The third part is the partisan type which is represented by an "R," "D," or if issues only an "N." The fourth part is the stub number. The first three portions of the bar code, the precinct abbreviation, the precinct split, and party affiliation, are created by the CCBOE. This information is put into a ballot stub spreadsheet to create and test sample ballots. The data is then provided to Midwest Direct, the CCBOE ballot printer, which prints test ballots for every precinct. The CCBOE staff tests the sample ballots on the Electronic Poll Books test module. The sample ballots worked successfully in the test module. The CCBOE Ballot Department management team then uses the information from the ballot stub spreadsheet and additional data to print the entire ballot. The ballot spreadsheet is provided to Midwest Direct to print the whole ballot. When the data was copied and pasted from the ballot stub spreadsheet to the ballot spreadsheet, it was transferred as "data" rather than as a "value." This caused the issue with the electronic poll books.

When a bipartisan team of temporary employees proofed the information, the team did not recognize the error in the transfer. Typically, the proofing is split into multiple teams. However, only one team proofed the information due to the compressed schedule. The issue of the ballot not being read by the poll books was an internal oversight; though not acceptable, the error was not malicious. Both vendors, Tenex and Midwest Direct, performed as required.

Going forward, when the Ballot Department proofs the ballots, the teams will be precise in reading the "01" vs. "1." Also, when the ballots come into the CCBOE, quality assurance will review all parts of the naming convention, including the required leading zero. The CCBOE will also include additional training for poll workers to emphasize the workarounds to manually enter the stub number into the electronic poll book and continue to issue ballots using this as a preferred method.

In investigating how the polling locations proceeded when encountering the issue of scanning the ballots, there are workarounds in place. Approximately half of the polling locations manually inputted the information into the electronic poll books. The other half of the locations used the paper poll books, which take approximately ten to fifteen minutes to set up.

The CCBOE will be creating a quick reference guide for the poll workers focusing on urgent situations. The CCBOE sent out messages through the electronic poll books and called cell phones. The CCBOE will utilize the County Emergency Management System to blast messages to the poll workers in the future. Director Perlatti stated that the poll workers did a good job handling the unanticipated situation. The bar code issue had nothing to do with the tabulation of the ballots, as the bar code stub is removed before scanning a ballot into the DS200 scanner. By 8:00 a.m., the poll book vendor Tenex was able to fix the issue by reading the bar code and sending it out to all of the poll books in the county.

Board Member Wondolowski clarified the time of the update was not 10:00 a.m. as one newspaper reported. Director Perlatti stated that the reporter was incorrect. However, several media outlets helped report accurate information, which is appreciated. Board Member Wondolowski stated one newspaper editor indicated every county was ready for the May 3, 2022, Primary Election except for Cuyahoga County. Board Member Wondolowski stated that reporting could not have been further from the truth; the unfair criticism from that individual is unappreciated. The CCBOE has the best employees in the State of Ohio and was prepared for the election. The issue was a mistake that happened, and the CCBOE learns from mistakes. Director Perlatti stated the CCBOE welcomes any media member to reach out for the facts and accurate information for those who want to be educated.

Board Member Davis Chappell stated that when the CCBOE revisits, the proactive measures being taken to ensure this does not happen again would include poll workers communication with voters when there is a delay. The CCBOE poll worker training should consist of how to communicate with voters. Voters should not be turned away but given a time frame when the delay will be resolved and let the voter determine if they are willing to wait or return later. The CCBOE should consider what the messaging should look like to voters when there is a hiccup. Delays in voting are not always well received, but effective communication with voters is essential. The CCBOE does appreciate the hard work the poll workers encounter on Election Days, especially when there is a glitch. While mistakes do occur, it is important we continue to remain transparent and continue to improve through lessons learned. Board Member Davis Chappell stated she previously went on record saying the May 3, 2022, Primary Election may not be a flawless execution because of all the unreadiness and the compressed timelines.

Director Perlatti said the Ohio Secretary of State provides all 88 counties an "After Action Review." The CCBOE anticipates the issue will be on the review, and the CCBOE will be able to respond and provide the facts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Delgado commented on his experience as a Voting Location Manager for the May 3, 2022, Primary Election.

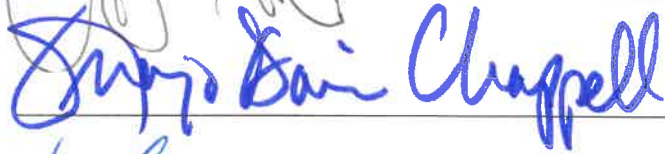
Chairman Hastings moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 a.m. Board Member Wondolowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Certification: I have reviewed the above minutes and certify that they are an accurate summary of the actions taken by the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at its meeting held on May 24, 2022.

Jeff Hastings, Chairman



Inajo Davis Chappell, Board Member



Lisa M. Stickan, Board Member



David J. Wondolowski, Board Member



Anthony Perlatti, Director

