

VOTE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Board Meeting
9/20/2023

Attending:

Henry F Curtis, IV, Chairman
Lisa M. Stickan, Board Member
Terence M. McCafferty, Board Member
Anthony Perlatti, Director/via teleconference
Tony Kaloger, Deputy Director

Mary Bejjani, Clerk to the Board
Skip White, 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 Curtis noted that Board Members McCafferty and Stickan were in attendance. Board Member Davis Chappell was excused from today's meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of the minutes from the August 16, 2023, Board Meeting

Chairman Curtis moved to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2023, Board Meeting. Board Member Stickan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 2: Determination of the validity of provisional ballots and authorization to count provisional ballots from the September 12, 2023, Primary Election

Hasani Wheat, Registration Manager, presented the September 12, 2023, Primary Election Provisional Report to the Board, as provided in the board meeting materials.

Chairman Curtis moved to approve the determination of the validity of provisional ballots and authorization to count provisional ballots from the September 12, 2023, Primary Election. Board Member McCafferty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Acknowledgment of appointment to elected office

Chairman Curtis moved to acknowledge the appointment to elected office, as set forth in the board meeting materials. Board Member McCafferty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: Acknowledgment of the Early In-Person Voting PEO Performance Report from the August 8, 2023, Special Election

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

Steve Doell, Candidate and Petition Services Supervisor, presented a summary regarding the Early In-Person Voting PEO Performance Report from the August 8, 2023, Special Election.

Chairman Curtis moved to acknowledge the Early In-Person Voting PEO Performance Report from the August 8, 2023, Special Election, as provided in the board meeting materials. Board Member McCafferty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Discussion of the 2024-2025 biennial budget

Shaunquitta Walker, Fiscal Services Manager, presented the proposed 2024-2025 Recommended Biennial Budget, as provided in the board meeting materials. Ms. Walker presented the budget timeline, which included the Board reviewing the Budget on September 20, 2023, and consider approving it at the September 27, 2023 Board Meeting. The County Office of Budget Management (OBM) and County Executive then review the Budget. The County Council will hear the first reading on October 10, 2023, and then the CCBOE meets with the County Council on November 2, 2023. The Budget is then considered and adopted on December 5, 2023. Ms. Walker stated the overall recommended Budget is \$19 million for the 2024 Presidential Election year, an increase of \$1.9 million (11%) from 2022, and \$16 Million for the 2025 municipal election year, an increase of \$156,720 (0.99%) from 2023. The new initiatives are limited as the CCBOE goal is to have a new operation center. The new initiatives include the purchase of an Agilis In-Bound Mail Ballot Processor and the purchase of two sorting stackers. The second initiative is increasing the hourly rate for seasonal temporary employees from \$15.00 per hour to \$15.25 in 2024 and from \$15.25 to \$15.50 in 2025. The third initiative is the purchase of Electronic Pollbooks and ancillary equipment. The CCBOE was awarded \$821,449 to acquire new pollbooks and ancillary equipment. The County seemed receptive to giving balance of the funds of approximately \$250,000. The CCBOE will meet with the OBM person to determine the process of procuring the equipment in 2023 and pay for the equipment in the 2024 budget. The fourth initiative is the election cycle overtime for CCBOE employees. The employees would receive straight rate paid time, not to exceed five (5) hours per week, during three pay periods of a County-Wide election cycle. Then, weekly overtime worked above five (5) hours would be eligible for exchange and compensatory time. The continued initiatives include: maintaining the election equipment's maintenance and licensing; to rent or lease off-site storage for retention materials; continuing the maintenance projects of CCBOE facilities; and cybersecurity enhancements to procure hardware and software to comply with cybersecurity initiatives. The Board thanked Ms. Walker for the comprehensive overview of the 2024-2025 Biennial Budget.

Agenda Item 6: Approval of the personnel agenda

Chairman Curtis moved to approve the personnel agenda, as provided in the board meeting materials. Board Member McCafferty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Deputy Director Kaloger provided an update to the Board on voter cancellation. In 2019, the CCBOE sent letters to voters who did not have any voter activity for the previous two years, or the CCBOE was notified by the U.S. Postal Service that they had moved to another state. Four years later, in 2024, per an SOS Directive, for any of those voters who have not had voter activity, the CCBOE is sending a last chance letter to those voters. Due to the August 8, 2023, Special Election, the date was pushed back to September 27, 2023. The SOS then stated that any County that had a September 2023 Election should wait to cancel those voter registrations, and the CCBOE is presently awaiting further instructions from the SOS. There

will be approximately 3,600 voters that are currently scheduled to be canceled. Those individuals can re-register.

Deputy Director Kaloger provided an update on the November 7, 2023, General Election. The Ballot Department had completed the final round of proofing of the ballot language, and yesterday, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that there was a slight change in the language on the ballot. Although it is a very small change, it still means the Ballot Department will need to go back and re-proof the entire ballot to ensure everything is still the same. On Thursday, September 21, 2023, the Ballot Board will meet to accept the change in language. The CCBOE is expecting by the end of that day, and the Ohio SOS will issue a Directive with a sample ballot. The CCBOE will need to have the language translated, and then the ballot must be re-proofed. The Ballot Department will be working through the weekend and by early next week, to have the ballot finalized. The deadline for UOCAVA absentee ballots to be ready is Friday, September 22, 2023. The CCBOE is waiting for instructions from the SOS on how it should be handled with the change. There are currently about 500 UOCAVA voters who are slated to get the ballot. There are presently about 6,000 ballot applications for Vote-by-Mail. The Vote-by-Mail ballots will go out in the mail on October 11, 2023. The Election Officials Department started phase 1 of pollworker training, which included those who worked in August and were trained on House Bill 458 and the new voting equipment. Those workers will receive Lessons Learned training on updates. Next week, training will begin for pollworkers who did not work in August, and they will receive the full pollworker training. The County has advised the CCBOE that parking has been secured at the old Bryant and Stratton parking lot. The most challenging aspect and the reason the CCBOE is hoping to get a new facility is because of the increasing limitations on parking. The CCBOE is fortunate that the Bryant and Stratton parking lot is available, but it will only be until February 2024, when new tenants will occupy the building. The CCBOE does anticipate greater Early In-Person Voting for the 2024 March Presidential Primary and November Presidential Elections.

Deputy Director Kaloger stated that Tuesday, September 19, 2023, was National Voter Registration Day. The Community Outreach Department set up a drive-thru voter registration station in the CCBOE parking lot. The Outreach staff was also at several libraries promoting the event.

Board Member McCafferty asked if the new scanners had some jamming issues and how the multiple-page ballots would be affected. Deputy Director Kaloger stated the jamming issue did not occur with the feeding of the ballots but when the cash register type tape that prints the reports was printing. When the machine is being transported, the register tape unwinds, creating slack and binding in the paper when it prints. The CCBOE has already made alternate plans for the 2023 November Election. After the moving company delivers the equipment to the voting location, the CCBOE staff “chase” the delivery to ensure all the correct equipment is at the site. Those staff members will install a new roll of printer paper. A solution to the problem will need to be addressed by Clear Ballot. The issue is not feeding the ballots, but printing the reports for the pollworkers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session

Chairman Curtis moved to recess the meeting at 9:59 a.m. Board Member Stickan 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 September 20, 2023.

Henry F Curtis, IV, Chairman



Inajo Davis Chappell, Board Member

Terence M. McCafferty, Board Member



Lisa M. Stickan, Board Member



Anthony Perlatti, Director


