

**BERKS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
MEETING MINUTES
June 13, 2024 – 11:00 A.M.**

Michael S. Rivera, Chair
Christian Y. Leinbach, Vice Chair
Dante Santoni, Jr., Commissioner
Anne Norton, Chief Clerk
Christine M. Sadler, County Solicitor – not present
Cody L. Kauffman, First Assistant County Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER: 11:26 A.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes for the May 13, 2024, Special Election Board meeting as presented.

Agenda Items

1. Voting System Malfunction Report Approval

Ms. Norton explained that this report is part of a directive from the Department of State to identify voting machine errors that either delayed the casting of votes or the tabulating of ballots. During the General Primary, she said machine technicians were sent out to 10 precincts to review machines. She said the only issue that met the criteria of the report was related to the ExpressVote ballot-marking devices. She said there were several incidents where poll workers had to conduct hard restarts of the machines, but none of them hindered voters' ability to vote since each precinct has several machines available.

Commissioner Leinbach noted that the ExpressVote simply marks the ballot and does not hold any data or results.

Commissioner Rivera mentioned that there are extra machines at all precincts.

On the motion of Commissioner Santoni, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, the Board authorized the submission of the Voting System Malfunction Report for the 2024 General Primary to the Department of State.

2. Election Security Grant

Ms. Norton shared that the elections office received a notification from the Department of State about available funding through a 2024 Election Security Grant. She said the notification included the expected award amount and permissible uses for the funding. She asked the Board to authorize submitting an intent form that confirms the County is interested in receiving this grant.

On the motion of Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Santoni, the Board authorized the completion and submission of the Notice of Intent to accept the 2024 Election Security Grant funds.

3. **Act 88 Grant Application**

Ms. Norton explained that typically the application window for the Election Integrity Grant Program (Act 88) opens in August, but there is a small window between when it opens and when the application is due. Due to summer scheduling difficulties, she asked the Board to proactively approve the submission of the application for the grant so that the elections department can move forward at the appropriate time. She said the funding would be for the 2024 General Election and 2025 Municipal Primary.

On the motion of Commissioner Santoni, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, the Board authorized the submission of the application for the Election Integrity Grant Program (Act 88) for funds to be utilized for the November 5, 2024, General Election and the May 20, 2025, Municipal Primary.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Norton noted that Election Services is sending out the National Change of Address (NCOA) and 5-year notices as part of its annual list maintenance process. The NCOA notices are sent to voters to confirm their addresses and the 5-year notices are sent to voters that have not participated in any Election within the last 5 years. This is part of the ongoing process to keep voter rolls clean and accurate.

She said the elections staff is also continuing to process new voter registrations as they are received. She said the staff is currently up-to-date, but that she anticipates more coming due to distributing registration forms for several voter drives. Finally, she shared that the elections staff is holding weekly trainings throughout the summer.

General Comments from the Board regarding current election-related issues

None.

Public Comment

Jeffrey Wolfe, Brecknock Township, spoke about transparency and gave an analogy to the way restaurants are inspected. He said he believes the Election Board can improve transparency by making all forms available online and giving poll workers access to inspect machines and the secure storage of ballots. He also said he believes watchers should be allowed to order hand-count audits and recounts.

Mr. Kauffman noted that access to the majority of election records is dictated by the Election Code and various restrictions apply. He said that with each request for election records, the County does its best to follow the law. He also noted that there is a specific legal process in place for citizen-initiated recount requests.

ADJOURNMENT 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Anne Norton, Chief Clerk