

Amelia County Electoral Board  
Minutes – April 11, 2024

ATTENDEES: Mary Alice Williams, Chair                      Brenda Johnson, Secretary  
Stephanie Henkle, Vice-Chair                      Deborah Hathorn, Director of Elections/GR  
Martha Muniz, ACRC Chair

The Amelia County Electoral Board met on Thursday, April 11, 2024 in the Commonwealth Attorney's conference room. The meeting was called to order by Chair Williams at 2:06 PM. Chair Williams welcomed our new Board member, Stephanie Henkle, to the meeting. She will fill an unexpired term commencing March 1, 2024 and expiring December 31, 2025.

Minutes of the February and March 2024 meetings were approved with noted corrections/deletions. The agenda was approved by consensus with a few additions. Henkle asked about the wording used to describe our meetings "in the hallway behind the Registrar's office" (election related) as well as why we use the Commonwealth Attorney's conference room versus a neutral location for our regular monthly meetings. After some discussion, we agreed to move the regular Electoral Board meetings to other locations such as the library or the County Administrator's conference room. It was noted that in some cases, due to materials needed for the meeting as well as post-election meetings, this may not always be possible.

**BUDGET** – Hathorn stated that the FY '24 budget looks good with just a few months remaining in the budget year. She stated that the change to making all Officers of Elections (OOEs) county employees (W-2 v 1099) created a minor change in dollars to cover required tax withholdings and other deductions. Hathorn was asked to send an email with 24 hours to OOEs who had not completed the paperwork the county needed to pay/employ/them. We expect the State to provide some reimbursement to the county for the March 2024 Primaries. The Board of Supervisors is reviewing the county's FY '25 budget and we do not expect any significant change to the \$245,000 budget that was submitted for the Registrar and Electoral Board.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATES:**

- The General Assembly passed a bill that provides for the Canvass to be extended from seven (7) days to ten (10) days effective July 1, 2024.
- A bill to afford Election workers and Electoral Board members "Protected Voters": status provides the opportunity for these employees to register their address with a P. O. Box number versus their actual residential address for safety and security concerns.
- ACRC Chair Muniz informed us that a bill was passed that will require local political parties to have a Primary election and not a mass meeting or convention if more than one person runs for the local office. This would impact our local elections in 2025.
- The General Assembly veto session is over and no bills vetoed were overturned.

Stephanie Henkle was elected Vice-Chair of the Board.

## **2024 JUNE DUAL PRIMARY:**

The June primaries will be held Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. The Republican Primary has five (5) candidates running for the United States Senate and two candidates running for Member, House of Representative, 5<sup>th</sup> District. The Democratic Primary has three (3) candidates running for the House of Representative, 5<sup>th</sup> District. We reviewed the ballots and discussed how we can be assured that the ballots have the candidates' name spelled correctly. Muniz informed us that the statewide Republican Party has responsibility for the correctness of the spelling of the names of their candidates and Hathorn stated that for the ballots, the names come from the information in the VRIS system. Hathorn stated she has ordered 20% Democratic ballots and 35% Republican ballots based on past voting results.

Hathorn informed us that every three years voting machines must be upgraded in order to be recertified. Our representative from Dominion Voting Systems (Jay) performed the upgrades and added features to all eight (8) machines. These upgrades and changes are designed to help the machines run more efficiently. We expect L&A testing to take place between April 19- 26.

Office preparation for the Primary election has begun and all supplies have been ordered. Early voting will begin Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. OOE's will be used to assist in early voting and preparation for the election. We reviewed the calendar for activities for the Primary; it was noted that Juneteenth, a federal holiday is Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, the day after the Election. Therefore, canvas will not resume until Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Secretary Johnson agreed to contact Mr. Krause at ACHS and Vice-chair Henkle agreed to contact Amelia Academy to identify students who may be interested in serving as a Page this year.

We reviewed the updated list of OOE's scheduled to work on in the June Primary. In Precinct #4, Lunsford had an injury and is unable to work. C. Royal will serve as the Chief and M. Scott will be asked to serve as the Asst. Chief. In Precinct #5, Asst. Chief Wilcox is not interested in serving as the Chief as a result of the Chief (Waldron) retiring last year. Lewis and White have agreed to serve as Co-chiefs. Wilcox be asked to serve as a regular OOE. For CAPS, Wingo-Whyte is unable to work this election and Abel will replace her.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Muniz inquired as to the possibility of splitting the hours OOE's need to work on Election Day in hopes that we will be able to get more voters to work. We all agreed it's a long day as OOE's currently must work 5:00 AM - 8:00 PM or later.
- She stated that Adria Dieffenbach's resignation date was February 19<sup>th</sup>.
- She also stated that the Republican Party can no longer have mass meetings to select their candidates. We expect this change, which will require a Primary Election if more than one candidate runs for local office in the same party to be effective in 2025.
- She inquired about our ability to secure additional ballots at the last minute and Hathorn stated that we could; the vendor keeps extras on hand just in case. Additionally, the Registrar can print more ballots with approval from ELECT.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. at the Library.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

The Amelia County Electoral Board went into Closed Session in accordance with State Code §2.2-3711-A (A) (1) at 4:10 P.M. to discuss an update to the Security Plan. Hathorn was asked to attend the closed session. At 4:25 P.M., we voted to reconvene to open session and certified that to the best of each Board Member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as were discussed. Vote: Williams-Yes, - Henkle-Yes, and Johnson- Yes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 P.M.

## **Notes – Friday, April 19, 2024**

ATTENDEES: Mary Alice Williams, Chair                      Brenda Johnson, Secretary  
                  Laura Spittle, Deputy Registrar                Lauren Whittington, ACDC Chair  
                  Deborah Hathorn, Director of Elections (attending an out of town meeting)

The Amelia County Electoral Board met at the Registrar's office at 8:30 AM to observe Darren (Rep from Dominion) program our voting machines for CAPS and Pre-processing with a firmware upgrade. Machines designated to go to the precincts will be programmed at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brenda H. Johnson, Secretary