

A P P R O V E D

BOTETOURT COUNTY ELECTORAL BOARD

M I N U T E S

DECEMBER 21, 2017

The Botetourt County Electoral Board met on Thursday, December 21, 2017, in the offices provided by Botetourt County for the Department of Elections and Voter Registration on Court House Square in Fincastle, Virginia. Chairman John W. Rader, Vice Chairman William L. Heartwell, III, and Secretary Paul E. Fitzgerald were present. Director of Elections and General Registrar (DoE/GR) Traci Clark also was present. The DoE/GR provided a detailed agenda with supporting information packet.

Chairman John Rader called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Heartwell, the minutes reflecting the actions of the Electoral Board in the period November 7-16, 2017 regarding the General Election of November 7, 2017 were unanimously approved.

Updates were provided to the Electoral Board by the DoE/GR regarding:

- ❖ The Botetourt County Department of Elections and Voter Registration hosted the December meeting of Region 7 of the VRAV, including a luncheon and gift exchange at the Kyle House in Fincastle, with 13 Registrars and 3 Deputy Registrars attending;
- ❖ Personnel changes at the Virginia Department of Elections related to the change in Governors;
- ❖ The Virginia Electoral Board Association annual conference will be at The Homestead March 2-4, 2018, and our DoE/GR, with those of Salem and Bedford County, will handle registration;
- ❖ No response has been received from the Botetourt County administration regarding the Advisory Memorandum provided to the County Administrator and Deputy County Administrator summarizing Botetourt County DoE/VR actions regarding the November 7 General Election;

- ❖ Certificates of Election for local officials elected November 7 were completed and delivered November 17 to the Clerk of the Circuit Court;
- ❖ Immediately after Christmas, Precinct Election Officials, whose terms expire February 28, 2018, will be mailed letters and forms related to three-year renewal appointments that will expire February 28, 2021; and
- ❖ Following a telephone conference call involving the Executive Board of the Voter Registrars Association of Virginia, registrars statewide are being contacted in a JLARC survey examining the extent and effectiveness of actions and efforts by the Virginia Department of Elections (VDoE) in support of election officials at the local level, with specific focus on concerns regarding the VERIS electronic registration base/system, lack of guidance from VDoE, and difficulty in reaching VDoE staff members.

The Electoral Board reviewed the tentative Department budget prepared for Fiscal Year 2019 by the DoE/GR and reached the following conclusions:

- ❖ Most of the operational line-items that are under the Department's controls are unchanged;
- ❖ The more significant budgetary line-items remaining to be determined involve voting equipment modification, repair, and replacement (Totems, Electronic Poll Book batteries, OCR Scanner batteries, Desk Scanners, and Security Carts improved design for recessed handles and locks) with the timing and pace subject to negotiation and guidance within the Botetourt County Administration budgetary process; and
- ❖ The DoE/GR is authorized to move forward in that process with an emphasis on the essentiality of voting equipment dependability.

In continuation of a discussion that began during a review of the recent General Election, the Electoral Board agreed that the current office facilities provided for the Department no longer meet established standards for Ready Accessibility by Handicapped Persons, and safeguards for assuring Secrecy of the Ballot for Absentee/Early Voters doing so in person. It was pointed out that current legislative trends to expand reasons for Absentee/Early Voting, and to ease restrictions thereof, will exacerbate these challenges.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul E. Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Paul E. Fitzgerald, Secretary
January 10, 2018