



STATE OF DELAWARE
BOARD OF ELECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER
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Minutes of April 13, 2020 State Board of Elections Meeting

PUBLIC SESSION

**Members Present via
Teleconference:**

Mr. Pasquale, [D]-New Castle County, President
Mr. Sterling, [R]-New Castle County, At Large
Ms. Hopkins-Pugh, [D]-Sussex County
Ms. Philpotts, [D]-Wilmington
Mrs. Sandstrom, [D]-Kent County
Mr. Schneikert, [R]-Wilmington
Ms. Sikora, [R]-Sussex County
Mrs. Williams-Mayo, [D]-New Castle County, At Large
Dr. Warfield-Walker, [R]-Kent County
Mrs. Whittington, [R]-New Castle County

**Staff Present via
Teleconference:**

Mr. Albence, State Election Commissioner
Ms. Dixon, County Director, New Castle County Office
Mr. Sholl, Deputy County Director, New Castle County Office
Mrs. Young, County Director, Kent County Office
Mr. Greig, Deputy County Director, Kent County Office
Mr. McDowell, County Director, Sussex County Office
Mrs. Turner, Deputy County Director, Sussex County Office
Mr. Broujos, Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice

**Public Present via
Teleconference:**

Willie Collins

1. Mr. Pasquale called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.
2. Ms. Hopkins-Pugh moved (Mr. Sterling seconded) a motion to approve the Public Session meeting minutes, as amended (updated regarding staff in attendance) from the Board's March 9, 2020 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Commissioner Albence provided an update on the current financial status of the Department per its appropriation in the FY2020 State Budget. Normal allocation on spending is expended as usual. On additional funding, federal HAVA funds awarded require a 20% funding match from the State. Details on the distribution of the federal CARES Act funding is being finalized. These funds cover-COVID-19-related elections expenses, and these funds also require a 20% funding match from the State.

4. Commissioner Albence provided an update on the current statewide voter registration total. The total number of registered voters in the State as of April 1, 2020, was 720,193.
5. Commissioner Albence provided a summary of upcoming elections that were impacted by the Governor's sixth modification to the State of Emergency declaration on March 24, 2020:
 - The Presidential Primary Election has been rescheduled to June 2, 2020 (previously April 28, 2020). The voter registration deadline has been moved to May 9, 2020 (previously was April 4, 2020).
 - The School Board Election has been rescheduled to June 16, 2020 (previously May 12, 2020).
 - The Christina School District Referendum is still scheduled to occur on June 9, 2020.
 - The Cape Henlopen School District Board of Education has not yet set a new date for the cancelled March 31, 2020 referendum election.
 - The Department has worked with the Governor's office to communicate with municipalities regarding accommodations to adapt to the provisions of the current State of Emergency. All municipal elections have been postponed until at least May 15, 2020.
 - Voting machine demonstrations have been curtailed for the foreseeable future due to current group gathering restrictions.
6. Commissioner Albence provided an update of the Department's activities to include the following:
 - The Department continues to make progress on the system conversion and quality control of data that are being provided to internal recipients and customers.
 - Correction to error in the meeting materials provided electronically: the first bullet on page 4 under "System Conversion" should read, "Most all items are resolved."
 - The Department and Superior Court continue to work together on needed updates/revisions to the Board of Canvass procedures for General/Special Elections due to the conversion to new elections systems.
7. Commissioner Albence provided an overview of the Governor's orders regarding permissible reasons for voting absentee. Voters impacted by COVID-19, including those who are asymptomatic, and are self-quaranting and/or social distancing qualify to vote absentee under the existing absentee reason of: "I am sick or temporarily or permanently physically disabled" on the absentee application.
8. Commissioner Albence updated the Board on the following legislation being considered by the General Assembly:

- HB175: This bill which would eliminate needing a reason to request to vote by absentee ballot. The bill effective date has been amended from January 1, 2022, to take effect immediately (when signed law). The Department has requested that the bill be further amended to provide additional days for ballot preparation and scanning.
9. Commissioner Albence provided a response to Mr. Pasquale's inquiry on acquiring cleaning/disinfecting supplies for polling places. The Department was able to purchase isopropyl alcohol (in bulk), spray bottles, and lint-free cloths for disinfecting voting machines and pollbook screens and surfaces. The Department is also purchasing face masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, and gloves for poll workers, and hand sanitizer for use by voters. The Department will be directing poll workers to clean the voting machines after every use. Discussion ensued on poll workers including a video supplement as an additional resource to training.
 10. Commissioner Albence provided an update on enhancements to technology and additional equipment acquired for processing absentee ballot requests.
 - The Department's system for secure electronic delivery, marking and return of absentee ballots for UOCAVA voters and voters who are sick or temporarily or permanently physically disabled. The Department is piloting a system for the Presidential Primary that is hosted by Democracy Live, which replaces a prior system that was developed in-house, but is not compatible with the updated voter registration system implemented in 2019. This tool is not an online voting system, but a means for the voter to mark the ballot, which produces a paper ballot, which is the ballot that is tabulated with all other absentee ballots (e.g., those sent and returned via U.S. Mail). Delaware law has authorized electronic delivery and return of absentee ballots for UOCAVA voters since 2010, and for voters who are sick or disabled since 2012.
 - Military voters in areas with irregular mail service benefit from this service, as they may not otherwise be able to vote. Also, voters with disabilities may utilize this system, which is compatible with a host of assistive technologies and adaptive devices, to vote privately and independently.
 - The Department discussed with vendors regarding upgrade to absentee equipment and implementation of technology through USPS for Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb). The IMb would give the Department ability to track outbound absentee ballots in detail and be able to provide the public more information in which privacy will be maintained.
 11. Mrs. Whittington moved (Mr. Sterling seconded) a motion to approve the removals as presented. The motion passed by majority of the members voting in favor of the motion.
 12. OLD BUSINESS:

- Mr. Pasquale notified everyone in attendance (via teleconference) that the Board of Elections Meeting for June will take place on the usual date of June 8.
- The Campaign Finance Report Appeals Subcommittee will reconvene when the restriction for gathering in groups is lifted. Discussion ensued on the procedure for hearing the remaining appellants.

13. NEW BUSINESS:

- The Board will adjourn the Public Session meeting and enter in Executive Session to discuss details on filling vacancy and appointment for Kent County Office Deputy Director.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Collins inquired information on school elections. He indicated that a reference on a Department website displays May 12th as the School Board Election date.
 - The Department will correct the website.

15. Mr. Greig was recognized by the Board and offered his thanks to the Board and the Department staff as he leaves his position. Mr. Greig is retiring from his position as the Deputy County Director for Kent County.

16. Ms. Hopkins-Pugh moved (Mrs. Sandstrom seconded) that the Board adjourn the public meeting. Motion passed unanimously, and the public meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Meeting minutes approved
by conference call.*

James A. Sterling, III
Board Member and Board Secretary

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, MAY 11, 2020

LOCATION: OFFICE OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER, 905 S. GOVERNORS AVE; DOVER, DE 19904