

Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners

4422 Brandywine Dr., STE 1 · Peoria, IL 61614

Phone: 309.324.2300 Website: www.peoriaelections.gov

The October 2022 Monthly Meeting of the Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners was held at the Election Commission Office at 4422 Brandywine Dr. on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 2:00 PM.

PRESENT: James Manning, Chairman
Matt Bartolo, Vice Chairman
Valerie Timmes, Treasurer
Jeanne Williamson, Secretary
Ryan Brady, Commissioner (attended via phone)
Elizabeth Gannon, Executive Director
Jessily Joseph, Assistant Executive Director
Jennie Cordis Boswell, Assistant State's Attorney

GUESTS: Irene Pritzger, Becky Kelley, Jackie Petty, Theresa Johanson, Stacey Bruce, Jody Oltman, Kris Losby, Darcy Waugh, Helen King

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.

A Roll Call of the Commissioners was taken by Chairman Manning finding all Commissioners present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval for Commissioner Brady to attend via phone

Vice Chairman Bartolo moved to allow Commissioner Brady to attend the meeting via phone as there was a quorum present. Treasurer Timmes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Treasurer Timmes moved to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2022, Monthly Meeting. Treasurer Williamson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Stacey Bruce introduced herself as a coordinator for the Darren Bailey campaign. She stated their campaign was working diligently to ensure that election fraud was not occurring in the upcoming election. The campaign had been recruiting poll watchers to assist in this effort. Ms. Bruce expressed concerns over the drop boxes in Peoria lacking cameras. Ms. Bruce brought up the movie *2000*

Mules, stating that the concern was over the drop boxes not being watched sufficiently. Ms. Bruce also expressed concerns over findings from the campaign noting that Peoria county had a moderate election risk going into the General Election due to the acceptance of Zuck bucks.

Jodi Oltman expressed concerns about how poll watchers have been portrayed in the media. Ms. Oltman mentioned a Peoria Journal Star Article that had a headline of "Election Officials Brace for Confrontation with Pollwatchers." She noted that poll watchers are not trying to be confrontational, but rather that they want to be involved in the election process to be another check within the system. She asked that the board and election staff treat citizens who are qualified to be poll watchers fairly and respectfully. Ms. Oltman also expressed concerns over the former Executive Director of the Election Commission accepting a job with the company Hart. She proposed that the board and county have guidelines to prevent this in the future.

Theresa Johansen expressed concerns over the portrayal of poll watchers. She stated that she understood why election staff and judges would take poll watching negatively as it has not been around for a long time historically. However, Ms. Johansen noted that poll watching is not something that staff should take personally. She emphasized that poll watchers are not trying to catch staff or judges in mistakes, but rather they are trying to ensure trust within the election process. Ms. Johansen also mentioned the Peoria Journal Star Article that Ms. Oltman initially brought up. She reiterated that poll watchers are not trying to be adversarial. She acknowledged that the article was from North Carolina, but also questioned why it deserved a full page on the Peoria Journal Star newspaper.

Approval of Expenditures

Executive Director Gannon explained the bills (see attached) to the Board. Vice Chairman Bartolo moved to approve the bills. Commissioner Brady seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Report of the Executive Director

General Election Update

Executive Director Gannon stated that the Commission had over 13,200 vote by mail ballots sent out (11% of registered voters in the county). She stated that 310 ballots were pulled from the office drop box the previous day and emphasized that it was being used. She also noted that almost 50 ballots had been returned and verified by that point. Signature verification for the ballots occurs every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 1 pm. This information is posted on the website as the Election Commission is required to make this public knowledge. Executive Director Gannon stated that anyone can come watch this process if they have poll watcher credentials.

Executive Director Gannon informed the board that over 750 voters had also been processed via early voting in our office. Early voting outside of the office at satellite sites begins on October 24th.

Executive Director Gannon also stated that the Public test was conducted 10/10. She thanked Treasurer Timmes and Secretary Williamson for their attendance. Executive Director Gannon expressed that she believed the event was successful and noted that she hoped those in attendance learned more about the election process.

Executive Director Gannon stated that the Election Commission was doing well in regard to having a sufficient amount of election judges. She noted that the Commission was a bit short in Republican

judges in a few locations. She stated that the same issue was occurring at Rosefield township but with Democratic judges.

Chairman Manning asked Executive Director Gannon if any poll watchers had come in yet. Executive Director Gannon noted that the Commission has had three poll watchers come on two different days of early voting. She stated that there had been no issues with the poll watchers. Chairman Manning also asked about how they sign up to be a poll watchers. Executive Director Gannon noted that one would have to present valid poll watcher credentials to us. She noted that one must be a registered voter in the state of Illinois and that they must be representing either a party, candidate, or referendum. The credentials must be presented to staff upon entry to the office in order for the poll watcher to observe the election process. Chairman Manning asked a follow up question regarding how far in advance the credentials must be given to the office. Executive Director Gannon noted that they could be given to the office on the morning that that the poll watcher was hoping to observe. She also stated that credentials could be obtained from the Peoria County Election Commission Office or from the State Board of Elections.

Secretary Williamson expressed to the board that Executive Director Gannon did an excellent job at conducting the Public Test. She noted that the process was educational and informative. She also emphasized that the Public Test exhibited the amount of security in place in our elections. Executive Director Gannon thanked Secretary Williamson for her attendance.

Millbrook Township Voter Turnout

Executive Director Gannon provided the Commissioners with a bar graph showing voter turnout (see attached) at Millbrook Township as a result of the complaint received at the previous monthly meeting. The complaint noted that voter turnout had decreased as a result of the loss of the polling place at Millbrook Township.

Executive Director Gannon noted that Millbrook Township lost their polling place in late 2015, when the City Election Commission and the County Clerk's office were merged through the referendum to create the county-wide Election Commission. She stated that many polling places, including that in Millbrook Township, were changed or eliminated as a result of this merge. Voters at Millbrook Township were moved to Brimfield library, effective as of the 2016 election cycle.

Executive Director Gannon explained that she compared voter turnout in similar elections in the bar graph. She noted that voter turnout had increased or remained relatively consistent in the Off-Year General Primary Elections, Presidential General Elections, and Off-Year General Elections. She stated that there were three points of low turnout that were of initial concern to her on the graph and conducted research on these points. The first was the April 2021 Consolidated Election (turnout was 5.03% compared to 30.79% in April 2017). She noted that the low turnout was due to that election only have one race on the ballot for Millbrook Township. She expressed that there was not much on the ballot pushing Millbrook Township citizens to vote in that election. She stated that the race was for ICC Trustee.

Executive Director Gannon stated that the second area of initial concern was the March 2020 Presidential Primary (turnout was 15.55% in comparison to 40.95% in March 2016). She stated that county-wide turnout was 20%. Thus the March 2020 Presidential Primary was in line with the rest of the County for that election, when considering the rurality of the location. She stated that rural areas in the county had turnouts ranging from 15-18% in that election. The turnout for the county and rural areas within the county rectified her concern for this point.

The third area of concern was the April 2019 Consolidated Election (turnout was 3.85% in comparison to 11.11% in April 2015). Executive Director Gannon explained that the low turnout was a result of no races being on the ballot for Millbrook Township. She expressed that the low turnout made sense when considering no races being contested as less citizens felt the push to go out and vote.

Executive Director Gannon concluded that she did not see any sort of significant change in voter turnout for Millbrook Township, based on comparing the voter turnout in elections of the same type.

Report of the Attorney

No Report

New Business

Executive Director Gannon requested that the next monthly meeting be moved from Tuesday, November 8th due to this date being Election Day. She requested that the meeting be moved to Tuesday, November 15th. The Commissioners approved this change.

Thus, the next monthly meeting will be held on November 15th at 2:00 p.m.

Executive Director Gannon also introduced the new Assistant Executive Director, Jessily Joseph. She stated that Assistant Executive Director Joseph has a background in Political Science and has worked in the financial industry. The Board welcomed Assistant Executive Director Joseph.

Executive Session to Discuss Litigation pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act.

Treasurer Timmes moved to enter Executive Session to discuss litigation pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act. Vice Chairman Bartolo seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The Board entered into Executive Session at 2:25 pm.

Vice Chairman Bartolo moved to come out of Executive Session. Secretary Williamson seconded. Motion passed unanimously and the Executive Session was adjourned 2:55 p.m.

Personnel Matters

Vice Chairman Bartolo expressed his concerns over the Election Commission's staffs' compensation. He stated that the County relies on the Hay Study to determine compensation, but he did not believe that the roles were accurately reflected via this study. He expressed concerns on how the compensation has affected the turnover and lack of applicants in the job post for the Election Specialist Warehouse Operations position.

Vice Chairman Bartolo noted that re-evaluation was needed on compensation for the Election Commission Staff. Chairman Manning agreed and asked how the compensation figures came about. Executive Director Gannon responded noting that the county conducted its own Hay Studies when the Election Commission was created and arrived to the current compensation ranges. Executive Director Gannon informed the Board that she has requested to go in front of the Hay Committee to

have the gradings for the roles in the office re-evaluated. She stated this meeting was occurring the following week on October 20th.

Vice Chairman Bartolo asked if the board had the ability to pay its staff what is desired by the board. Chairman Manning confirmed this was true as long as the budget was still adhered to. Secretary Williamson agreed that the Election Staff were not paid sufficiently. Chairman Manning asked Executive Director Gannon if it would be acceptable to wait until the meeting with the Hay Committee was over to decide. Executive Director Gannon responded stated that she was willing to wait and that it would be the Board's decision. She further stated that she did not believe her staff was paid adequately based on the work that they do on a daily basis. She also noted that election work has evolved from when the Hay Studies were done for the Commission in 2015.

Treasurer Timmes asked for more info on the Hay Study. Executive Director Gannon noted that the Hay Studies involved grading the job description and putting the role within a compensation range based on a formula for the county.

Secretary Williamson asked about how evaluation was done for the Executive Director. Assistant State's Attorney Boswell noted that there was a process in place. Secretary Williamson stated that she believed it would be beneficial to update the process. Chairman Manning agreed. The Board decided it would revisit the matters of compensation and evaluation in the future.

Adjournment

Treasurer Timmes moved to adjourn. Secretary Williamson seconded. Motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 3:02 pm.

Monthly Expense Summary

Monthly Expenses	Description	Amount	Acct #
Ameren	Gas & Electric	\$257.34	53600
*Ludy's Cleaning	Office Cleaning	\$316.67	54367

*Digital Copy Systems	Copier Lease	\$111.00	54380
Illinois American Water	Water for Brandywine	\$75.05	54363
GFL	Garbage Service	\$30.22	54366
Stratus	Phone Service	\$288.50	54320
Verizon 1420	Wireless Phones	\$4.80	54338
Verizon 5507	Mifi	\$0.00	54338
Ziad A. Musaitif	October 2022 Rent & CAM	\$3,679.09	54390

Total \$4,762.67

MISC

LocaliQ	Notices	\$61.75	54340
Scytl	Online EJ Training Year 2 of 3	\$7,100.00	53081
Inclusion Solutions	Ramps, Cones, ADA Signs	\$1,772.25	52081
Warehouse Direct	Office Supplies	\$37.78	52201
Intab	security seals	\$111.80	52081
HomeDepot Pro	toilet paper	\$99.28	53081
Heart Technologies	Fire Alarm Monitoring	\$651.00	54407
FedEx	mailing to State Board of Elections	\$14.49	53021

Total \$7,161.75

Pcard

\$0.00

Payroll

Staff	9/9/2022	\$9,022.60	51031
Staff	9/23/2022	\$7,864.09	51031
Staff	10/7/2022	\$7,864.11	51031
Part-Time	9/9/2022	\$569.59	51040
Part-Time	9/23/2022	\$740.44	51040
Part-Time	10/7/2022	\$813.67	51040
Temp	10/7/2022	\$1,630.00	51050
Overtime	9/23/2022	\$85.72	51060
Overtime	10/7/2022	\$605.42	51060
Commissioners	9/9/2022	\$492.32	51145
Commissioners	9/23/2022	\$738.48	51145
Commissioners	10/7/2022	\$615.40	51145
Medical Benefits	9/9/2022	\$2,003.88	51241
Medical Benefits	9/23/2022	\$2,003.88	51241
Medical Benefits	10/7/2022	\$2,003.88	51241

Total \$37,053.48

* Awaiting Invoice

Total Expenditures \$48,977.90

Millbrook Election Turnout Comparison

