

Ohio Association of Election Officials

Legislative Committee Meeting

January 10, 2019

The legislative committee of the Ohio Association of Election Officials met on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 5:00 PM in Pierce Rooms A and B at the Downtown Columbus Hilton. Tim Ward and LaVera Scott presided. Aaron Ockerman, executive director of the Ohio Association of Election Officials was also present and assisted with the lead when asked.

Peggy Byers sent a tablet around the room for a sign in roll call today. Present were: Penny Brooks, Cheryl Browning, Luke Burton, Peggy Byers, Beth Goldenfield, Judith Craig, Ross McDonald, Jeanette Mullane, Tony Perlatti, Carol Perry, Deborah Reiter, Bill Rich, Brett Riffle, John Welker, Michelle Wilcox, Lavera Scott, Cecili Blevins, Terry Burton, Kathi Creed, Jane Hanley, Jan Kelley, Sarah Kneuss, Julie Leathers, Ranae Lentz, Brian Mead, Carla Patton, Sherry Poland, Kristen Ross, Shantiel Soeder, Olga Thomas, Tim Ward, Lisa Welch. Tonya Wichman and Kay Wick.

Excused: Sally Krisel

Guests today were Curt Braden, Paul Adams, Paul Johnson, Jody O'Brien, Sarah Greathouse, Llyn McCoy, Deb Snedden, Charlie Hardman, Brian Sleeth, David Karmol, Ron Knight,

The minutes had been distributed by email. Lisa Welch moved we accept the minutes. Jeanette Mullane seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Tim took a moment to thank Ed Leonard for serving as co-chair and introduced Lavera Scott as the new co-chair.

Aaron introduced Chris Oliveti, Legislative Director, who was representing the office of Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose. Tim Ward talked about how advantageous it was for the Ohio Association of Election Officials to team up with the County Commissioners Association of Ohio in obtaining the voting machine money.

Aaron led us on the Legislative updates:

Cleanup language for SB135 – the 14 or so counties that have already purchased could only be reimbursed for what they have already spent. The cleanup would allow them to have access to the additional money to purchase additional equipment. With Aaron's help, an amendment was added for those counties who had already purchased to get their money.

SB 10/HB 18 (unnecessary primaries) –House Bill 18 passed but only dealt with special Congressional Elections. It was signed by the Governor over the summer so it is the law of the land.

SB 21 (reduce poll workers) – allows a county to use 2 poll workers instead of 4 in a multi-precinct location. The House attached a rider at the last minute pertaining to property tax values and the Senate could not agree so this bill did not make it through. Representative Blessing agreed to get HB 21 reintroduced with the hopes of keeping it clean of other legislation. The hope is the bill will zoom through the legislature. This will be optional. The counties can each make their own decisions in this matter the way the bill is written. Aaron expanded that he had spoken to Senator Eklund this morning and he had already sent out a co-sponsor request. Aaron will send the bill draft to all of us when he gets back to his computer.

SB 44 (local campaign finance/recall reform) – allows local candidates to file their campaign finance reports electronically. It had passed out of the Senate. It came out of committee in the House and just died. Aaron says we will need to find someone to pick this back up.

HB 41 (early in person voting procedures) – this bill would make in-person voting similar to voting on Election Day. This bill did pass. We are waiting for the opportunity to add these streamlined possibilities to our procedures.

Also in this bill UOCAVA Saturday was moved to the 46th day before the election so we will no longer have to come in on Saturday and wait to be released by the Secretary of State's office.

The reimbursement amendment was part of this bill. The language for the 14 counties who had already purchased equipment was cleaned up so those counties can get their full allotment from the state.

HB 237 (overlap bill) – Would have asked the state to provide money for software for each county so we could avoid missing any districts when there are overlaps. This bill did not pass. Aaron pointed out to us that this is a budget issue. He plans to talk to the trustees to see if they want to make this a priority this year

As we moved to new business, Aaron shared:

SB21 will be reintroduced. He has already had some conversations.

Secretary of State LaRose has already expressed interest in:

Days and hours for overtime

Vote Centers

Prepaid postage for absentee ballots

Automated Voter Registration

Online absentee applications

In many cases, Aaron says the priorities of the Secretary of State and our organization overlap. We need to give the new Secretary of State some time to get his feet on the ground and work with him for our mutual benefit.

Janet Carson mentioned that in meetings earlier that day she learned our Trustees had voted to **eliminate Monday voting, the day before the election. Those 6 hours will be moved to other days.** Janet wanted more transparency for the full body of Board Members and employees on these major issues. Tim Ward spent time explaining how this came about. Janet asked that more emails might be sent to the body saying we plan to consider this legislation. Aaron suggested we get our agendas out on the website and in emails so more people can join in if they are particularly interested in a topic. It was pointed out that this topic did come up with the Legislative Committee with no position decided upon. Aaron explained the time frame this time did not accommodate another meeting. The Trustees had to make a decision in order for us to be represented on this issue if we wanted to weigh in. It was explained there was a roll call vote among the Trustees. The discussion ended with the agreement for more emails and putting the agenda on the website. Bill Rich made a motion that this item becomes a priority on this year's agenda for the Legislative Committee. Debbie Reiter seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Lisa Welch then started a discussion and made a motion that we make it one of our priorities **that all counties be represented in SB296 that gave a raise to Board Members**. Lisa pointed out that the way the bill was written, small counties did not get the raise. Penny Brooks seconded this motion. The motion passed. Aaron was going to seek an opinion from the State Auditor to make sure we understand the bill correctly.

Paul Adams started a discussion about **partisan primaries when one person withdraws in Municipal Elections; we still have to hold a Primary**. Debbie Reiter moved a motion we make this issue a priority. Beth Goldenfield seconded the motion. The motion passed.

A second item from Paul was that on **Provisional ballots where a voter fails to print their name on the suggested line versus writing in cursive**, we have to reject that ballot. Brett Riffle moved we make this item a priority. Bill Rich seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Tony Perlatti then started a discussion about an **electronic online absentee application process** as a priority. Tony moved a motion. Carla Patton seconded the motion to make this a priority. The motion passed.

Tony then asked we have a discussion about the **statewide mailing of absentee applications every November**. Tony moved a motion to make this a priority. Terry Burton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Tony then mentioned **acceptable postmarks on absentee ballots, in particular, the date we will accept (Election Day)**. Aaron interjected another issue on **absentee ballots that do not have a barcode. It was mentioned that online postage does not have a barcode**. Tony moved a motion we make this a priority. Penny Brooks seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Debbie Reiter asked that we consider **permanent absentee voters unless you opt out**. Debbie made this a motion. Bill Rich seconded the motion. The motion passed. There were three nay votes on this issue.

Carla Patton asked that we consider the **software for the overlap issue so that counties would not have to pay for this software**. Carla wanted the Secretary of State to pay for this software instead of the counties. Consistency statewide was an issue for Carla. Carla moved this be moved to the priority list. Jane Hanley seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Terry Burton asked we consider the **PERS exemption that prevents retirees from being part-time employees** for the Board of Elections. Aaron informed us that he feels it is Federal Law that is creating this problem. Terry moved we put this item on our priority list. Jeanette Mullane seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Tonya Wichman wanted us to address **the address line on the absentee application that asks the voter for the address at which they are registered to vote**. The wording is very confusing to voters. Some voters put down the address of their precinct rather than their home address. Tonya moved we make this fix a priority. Michelle Wilcox seconded the motion. The motion passed. Aaron was going to do some research to see if this might be something the Secretary of State could address without a change by the legislature.

Some discussion went to how big our list of priorities is getting. We will spend some time on this list deciding how we want to approach the list. It was noted this list of priorities is ongoing. It will continually change.

LaVera Scott spent a couple of minutes to introduce herself and volunteering her services to the Legislative Committee.

Aaron mentioned how wonderful it was to have the group together and see the faces. He finds this very helpful in his work. Aaron asked if we would agree to come together 2 or 3 times each year rather than always doing conference calls. The group agreed to do this.

Tony Perlatti made a motion that the group adjourn. Ranae Lentz seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Byers

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**Ohio Association of Election Officials
Legislative Committee
Priorities 2019**

- 1. eliminate Monday voting, the day before the election. Those 6 hours will be moved to other days**
- 2. that all counties be represented in SB296 that gave a raise to Board Members**
- 3. partisan primaries when one person withdraws in Municipal Elections; we still have to hold a Primary**
- 4. Provisional ballots where a voter fails to print their name on the suggested line versus writing in cursive**
- 5. electronic online absentee application**
- 6. statewide mailing of absentee applications every November**
- 7. acceptable postmarks on absentee ballots, in particular, the date we will accept (Election Day)**
- 8. absentee ballots that do not have barcode. It was mentioned that online postage does not have barcode**
- 9. permanent absentee voters unless you opt out**
- 10. software for the overlap issue so that counties would not have to pay for this software**
- 11. PERS exemption that prevents retirees from being part-time employees**
- 12. address line on the absentee app that asks the voter for the address at which they are registered to vote**