

New Castle City Board of Elections
Minutes
May 5, 2021 -- 6:30 p.m.
Meeting via Zoom Technology

Members Present: Richard Schiller
Joseph Davison
Connie Reese
Susan Hager

Absent: Bob Blakely

Mr. Schiller called the meeting to order at 6:39 pm. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Approval of the Minutes

A Motion to approve the Minutes of the April 6, 2021 meeting as presented was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

Approval of the Agenda

A Motion to approve the Agenda of the May 5, 2021 meeting as presented was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

Mr. Schiller thanked the Board members for their work on the election and opined that the election went very well considering it was held during a pandemic and many of the Board members were new to the Board.

Voter Registration List

The Commissioners discussed ways in which the Voter Registration List update process can be improved.

Mr. Schiller stated that there were issues with a number of individuals not being on the Voter Registration List on Election Day. Ms. Reese noted that some individuals whose names did not appear on the Final List from the County were on the list submitted to the County by the City. Ms. Hager recommended that the Board hold a post mortem with the Department of Elections to discuss the issues experienced on Election Day and determine where any flaws in the system exist. It was also noted that other municipalities have their own zip code, while the City of New Castle shares the zip code of the entire County of New Castle. The hope was expressed that in the future the County can pull the City of New Castle addresses out from the entire 19720 zip code before sending the List to the City.

It was noted that individuals who are residents of the City for more than 30 days have up until five days before the election to register to vote; the Commission did not review the List until the week before the election; and the Final List was not received until the day before the election. Mr. Davison suggested that the Commission begin reviewing the Voter Registration List much earlier.

After discussion it was agreed that Ms. Hager will gather relevant data and contact the Department of Elections to discuss the situation to ensure that future elections do not have

similar issues. She will report her findings to Mr. Schiller and it will be determined if another Board of Elections meeting should be convened to discuss the matter.

Municipal Board of Elections Training

Mr. Schiller noted that general Municipal Board Training is offered through the County. He noted that he intends to take the training and opined that it would be helpful for all Board members to take as well. Whether taking the training should be mandatory for all Board members was discussed. Ms. Hagar volunteered to speak with Mayor Quaranta to ascertain whether there are expectations/rules for new Board members and whether the general Municipal Board Training should be mandatory for new Board members. She will report her findings to Mr. Schiller.

Mr. Schiller asked that any Board members who are interested in taking the training contact him and he will contact the Ms. Debbie Greer for further information and scheduling.

Board of Elections Manual

The Commissioners discussed preparing a Manual for the Commission to use as a guide for future elections.

Mr. Schiller stated that the role of the Board of Elections is to:

- Secure the poll workers
- Secure the polling location
- Complete and send the necessary form to the Department of Elections notifying them of the election
- Complete and send the necessary form to the Department of Elections notifying them of the candidates

Ms. Hagar suggested that each Board member write down recommendations for discussion at a future meeting. Mr. Schiller noted that direction provided by the County focuses on Election Day; and that Mr. Losco suggested the Board develop a document detailing a Board of Elections process for future Boards to use as a guide.

Public Comment

Ms. Ellie Green

Ms. Green commended the Board of Elections for its work on the election.

Ms. Green commented on the election process and asked if Ms. Caven gave instructions to the Board. Mr. Schiller explained that Ms. Caven did provide general instructions; however, he noted that this year's election was not a typical election due to the pandemic.

Ms. Green concurred that the Department of Elections should be contacted as soon as possible to discuss the issues experienced on Election Day.

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Mr. Phil Gross

Mr. Gross commended the Board of Elections for its work on the election.

Mr. Gross noted that based on his experience the Voter Registration Lists in past elections have contained similar errors. Mr. Schiller and Mr. Gross discussed a number of possibilities to correct the issue. Mr. Schiller opined that the current review process of the Voter Registration List needs to be simplified and possibly automated.

Mr. Gross noted that a Councilperson inappropriately meddled during the vote count. He stated that the Board of Elections is responsible for the continuity, success and integrity of the election and that Council members should not impose themselves on the process.

Mr. Gross opined that “vote spoilers” should be prohibited from running for office and that he intends to pursue the issue. Mr. Schiller stated his understanding that the issue is not within the purview of the Board of Elections and suggested that Mr. Gross bring the issue to City Council.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Schiller called for a Motion to adjourn.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Weirich
Stenographer