

New Castle City Board of Elections
Minutes
January 27, 2021 -- 6:30 p.m.
Meeting via Zoom Technology

Members Present: Susan Hagar
Richard Schiller
Joseph Davison
Connie Reese

Absent: Bob Blakely

Also Present: Kim Burgmuller
Marika Levin

In the absence of a Chair, the meeting came to order at 6:37 pm. Roll call followed, and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Ms. Burgmuller explained the Election Materials for the April 10, 2021 Election, and Election Notes from Marianne Caven, exiting Chair:

- Candidate Package
- Solicitation of Candidates
- Candidate List
- Election Planner
- Application for Machines
- Agreement between the City and the County
- Voter Registration Lists

General Discussion

Election Hospitality

Ms. Burgmuller noted that one member of the Board is responsible for hospitality during polling, and Ms. Hagar volunteered to oversee that role.

Members

Mr. Schiller recognized Mr. Davison and Ms. Reese as new members of the Board. Ms. Reese will be officially appointed at the next Council meeting.

During discussion, it was agreed that in the absence of Mr. Blakely, selection of a Chair would be postponed until the next meeting a full complement of Board members is present.

Meetings

A tentative schedule of pre-election meetings was set:

February 10, 2021

February 24, 2021

March 10, 2021

March 24, 2021

April 7, 2021

All meetings will convene at 6:30 pm.

Poll Workers

During discussion, it was opined that more Poll Workers may be needed this year due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Training is mandatory for all Poll Workers and Board Members, and will be scheduled and conducted by the County.

Covid-19

Ms. Burgmuller noted that additional supplies (masks, hand sanitizer, etc.) may be required at the polling place. It was suggested that there may be additional health requirements for food provided by the hospitality group. The Board can require that voters are masked and the City has a supply of masks that can be made available.

Absentee Ballots

Ms. Burgmuller explained the Absentee Ballot procedure for obtaining a Ballot and how the Ballots are assigned to each citizen. She noted that if an Absentee Ballot is requested for a family member the Ballot will be mailed directly to the individual who will be voting. An Absentee Ballot can be applied for up until noon on April 9th at the City Office, and Absentee Ballots can be dropped off to the City Office up until 4:30 pm on April 9th. Absentee Ballots will also be accepted at the polling location on April 10th. All Absentee Ballots dropped off at the City Office will be delivered to the Board of Elections at the polling place by the City Absentee Ballot Clerk. Absentee Ballots are opened and tabulated by the Board of Elections at the polling place in full view of participants. It was noted that there may be many more Absentee Ballots processed due to Covid-19.

Public Comment

Mr. Phil Gross

Mr. Gross commented on his experience as a State poll worker.

- Covid-19 supplies were included with the polling machines.
- Appropriate social distancing for training is not a problem.
- There is a Transportation Visioning Workshop scheduled on February 10th from 7-9 pm. Ms. Burgmuller noted it is a virtual meeting and should not conflict with the BOE meeting.
- Mr. Gross asked how Absentee Ballots would be distributed to individuals who do not wish to leave their home and Ms. Burgmuller explained the application for an Absentee Ballot would be on the website and an Absentee Ballot can be applied for at the City Office by a relative.
- In the State elections, counting the Absentee Ballots was ongoing but the ballots were not tabulated with the real-time ballot counting until later.

Other Business

Ms. Caven

Ms. Reese communicated with Ms. Caven during the meeting and was advised that Absentee Ballots were tabulated in the afternoon of Election Day, and that Ms. Caven would be available to assist the Board of Elections with its preparations for Election Day.

Candidates

Ms. Burgmuller noted that there are two candidates for City Council President, and two candidates for City Council. As new candidates register, the Board will be notified. It was noted that if a current City Council member ran for another office, they would be required to give up their seat on City Council.

Board of Elections Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2021

Election Day

Mr. Davison asked how sanitizing equipment and social distancing requirements will be met on Election Day. Mr. Schilling noted that Board of Elections would be responsible for keeping everyone safe and that all regulations are being followed, in accordance with Department of Election protocols.

Ms. Hagar suggested that the Board members monitor voters in line, and that folding chairs be provided for voters who cannot stand for long periods of time.

Mr. Schilling noted the required perimeter in front of the polling location door that candidates may not encroach upon may need to be increased due to Covid-19, noting he would bring a tape measure.

Mr. Gross requested permission to speak again and was recognized by the Board.

Mr. Gross noted that poll workers should wipe down the polling machines after each voter. He also explained how the perimeter was measured and how spacing was marked in the voting area; and concurred that bringing a tape measure would be a good idea.

Mr. Gross asked if a Candidate can be signed up for the challenger, or does it have to be a designee filling out the form to be a challenger. Ms. Reese noted that is not legal.

Mr. Gross noted that the Charter was changed so that at the time a Councilperson officially signs up to run for another position, that Councilperson must relinquish his/her seat on City Council. During discussion, the exact timing of when that seat would need to be relinquished pursuant to the City Charter was debated and will be clarified.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Caven called for a Motion to adjourn.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 pm was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Weirich
Stenographer