

Sylvia Engel – President

Daniel Frankel – Secretary & Commissioner of Registration

Donald Katz – Commissioner

Beatrice Moskowitz – Commissioner



BOARD OF ELECTIONS
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Thomas Lynch – Administrator

Valerie Henry – Deputy Administrator

Linda Palughi – Chief Clerk

MINUTES

BOARD OF ELECTIONS REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
JUNE 4, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Middlesex County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Engel at 5:00 p.m. Flag salute followed.

Maria Tani called the roll as follows:

Chairman Engel (present)
Commissioner Katz (present)

Commissioner Frankel (present)
Commissioner Moskowitz (present)

In attendance were:

- Staff: Thomas Lynch, Administrator
Linda Palughi, Chief Clerk
Sharonda Rice-Mc Farlane, Deputy Chief Clerk
Maria Tani, Administrative Assistant
Stephen Nyers, Supervisor VMB
Guests: Per sign-in sheet

Motion was made by Commissioner Moskowitz to adopt the minutes of the May 18, 2020 New Brunswick Post-Election Mail-in Ballot Hearing. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Frankel. Voice vote 4-0. Chairman Engel stated that regarding the second set of minutes, she would like to request that they be held for the next meeting due to the minutes not being changed as requested. Motion was made by Commissioner Frankel to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Moskowitz. Comm. Katz made a motion to table the motion. Chairman Engel seconded the motion. Chairman Engel and Comm. Katz voted yes; Comm. Frankel voted no. Before Comm. Moskowitz voted, a discussion was held on which motion takes precedence; a motion to table or a motion to amend. Administrator Lynch stated that a motion to table supersedes a motion to amend. The Board proceeded to vote as follows: Comm. Moskowitz voted no to table the motion. Voice vote 2-2. Since the vote to table the motion was 2-2, the Board voted on the initial motion to approve the minutes as follows: Chairman Engel and Comm. Katz voted no; Comm. Frankel and Comm. Moskowitz voted yes. Voice vote 2-2. The motion failed and the minutes were not adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Engel inquired if there was any update on conversations with the Post Office about the lack of postmark issue. Administrator Lynch stated that he was on a conference call with the Governor’s Office and the Division of Elections about the need for the Post Office to work towards an election outcome where on Election Day all mail-in ballots are postmarked. It has been elevated to the highest levels within the Governor’s Office. A meeting was requested between the East Brunswick Post Office and the Kearney Post Office prior to the July 7, 2020 election.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Stephen Nyers – Supervisor VMB**

Stephen reported that he is almost finished with the inspections; there are only three towns left. The ADA requirement is to have at least one machine at each polling place. Currently, there are going to be emergency ballots inside the machines. However, Stephen is waiting to hear back from the State on whether there should be emergency ballots and if the Executive Order covers emergency ballots. Comm. Katz inquired if anything was received in writing about this. Stephen stated that nothing was received in writing, however he was told by Bob Giles, Director Division of Elections that this is a federal law. Comm. Katz requested that we get something in writing. Administrator Lynch stated that he will send an email to Mr. Giles.

### **Linda Palughi – Chief Clerk**

Linda reported that she sent a drawing of how the layout of the room will be at the Middlesex County College on Election Day. She mentioned that the locks will be changed on the room where the ballots will be held. Also, there will be a camera in the room where challenges will take place. Comm. Katz mentioned that there will most likely be limited challenging for the Primary Election. However, there should be more than one camera in the room. Linda reviewed the challenge dates for the Primary Election. The first challenge will be held on June 23, 2020. It has not been determined yet if the challenge will be in person or virtual. No review is scheduled for Election Day. Regarding the ADA machine, the State is requiring that the signature of a voter that votes by machine be verified. There is currently no capability to do this in the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). There are under 10,000 MVC records to be processed. MVC agencies are still closed, this will allow the staff to catch up with the work. Post June 15, 2020, staff at the Middlesex County College will process mail-in ballots. The ballots will remain at the college until Election Day.

Chairman Engel inquired if a poll worker report is available. Linda stated that she emailed an updated list of towns that came in to Commissioners.

### **Thomas Lynch – Administrator**

Administrator Lynch reported that the list of seasonal employees (8 Democrat and 8 Republican) has been submitted for approval at tonight's Freeholder Meeting. The full-time employee will start on June 15, 2020. Administrator Lynch stated that weekly meetings will be held with the Municipal Clerks. A request was received from seven towns that are interested in the drop boxes. The County may purchase additional drop boxes. Administrator Lynch will forward a mock-up of what the drop boxes will look like to the Commissioners. The Board of Elections will have the keys to the drop boxes. The Municipal Clerks will be asked to keep the drop boxes in place until after the General Election. The staff will be picking up the mail-in ballots. A schedule is being worked on. Comm. Katz inquired if there are two choices: putting the drop boxes within a municipal building or anchoring them outside as a stand-alone that is available 24/7. Administrator Lynch stated that there is no distinction at this point if the drop boxes need to be inside or outside. They just need to be available 24/7. Comm. Frankel inquired who will make the final determination on where the drop boxes will be installed and will the Commissioners vote on it. Administrator Lynch stated that he would provide a list to the Commissioners and they can take a vote. Comm. Frankel mentioned that he would prefer the drop boxes not be installed in police headquarters. Administrator Lynch mentioned that once the polling locations are finalized, the poll worker list will be worked on. Some poll workers will be assigned to the ADA machines and others will be assigned to distribute and accept the provisional ballots. At this point in time, in-person training will be held only for the poll workers that are assigned to the ADA machines. The State will supply 6ft apart decals and other PPE supplies for the polling places.

### **Commissioners Comments**

Comm. Katz thanked the staff for the great job they are doing. Chairman Engel thanked Administrator Lynch and the staff for organizing this meeting.

The Board discussed the possibility of meeting before July 7, 2020 to review ballots. The Board determined they would meet on July 2, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

**Public Comment**

No public

Motion was made by Comm. Katz to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m. Motion was seconded by Comm. Moskowitz. Voice vote 4-0.