

**MINUTES**  
**ELECTORAL BOARD CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG, VA**  
**1 PM, October 5, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER:** 1 PM by Chairperson Pam Legere

**PRESENT:** Chair Pam Legere; Vice-Chair Cathie Allport; Secretary Tom Mainor; General Registrar Tina Reitzel; City Planning Director Carolyn Murphy; GIS Director Sela Gordon

**MINUTES** of September 7, 2021 were Approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**PRESENTATION:** To facilitate planning for anticipated growth of new voters in the city, **Carolyn Murphy, City Planning Director**, provided a thorough update on the progress of current and new developments in the City. This provides the Board and Registrar helpful information in planning on precinct size and any necessary additional precinct,

**Sela Gordon, Geographic Information Systems Director**, was present to offer GIS assistance in Census-mandated redistricting and reworking lines of precincts. She will do research on Census results and requirements for redistricting, and will be available for the December EB meeting to assist in plans for redrawing precinct lines. Tina is working on additional contact information from the State Board of Elections. She will send out information showing proposed maps for the House and Senate Districts as well as the Virginia Redistricting Commission website address.

**REGISTRAR'S REPORT**

- **Early Voting** is going well (581 in-person to date; 559 mailed, 234 returned and 325 outstanding). There has been only one incident with a poll watcher on first day which was resolved. No problems reported since. The Mask Mandate has not been an issue in Early Voting, Both Stryker and Matoaka locations require masks.
- **Election Observers:** There was extensive discussion on maintenance of order, logistical implications and the legally permissible role of election observers designated by political parties. Across the Commonwealth and nation, political observers have become more aggressive to the detriment of order in polling locations, resulting in voter and elections officer intimidation. The GR and Board reviewed Virginia Election law (24.2-604.4—608) to clarify the legislation. Locally appointed political observers have priority over those which may have been appointed from outside the local parties' jurisdiction (W-JCC). Concern was expressed that due to permitting an observer (24.2-604.4A) for each poll book, a minimum of six and possibly more observers in both Stryker and Matoaka precincts could quickly become an intimidating factor for elections officers and voters. Additional neutral observers could increase the number (cf. 24.2-604.4Bff). This challenging prospect will be included in Election Officer & Precinct Chief Officer Training on October 26th, from 5-7 PM. The GR and Electoral Board expressed firm commitment to maintenance of order in Williamsburg City voting precincts and the protection of voters and elections officers from intimidation. Election integrity is a high priority. Each precinct captain will have a blue packet containing orange-colored identification lanyards for each certified observer. They are to be returned to the precinct captain when the observer leaves the precinct.
- **Training Materials for Officer Training** (Oct. 26, 5-7 PM) are ready to go, including a Survey on their responses to Training and Election Day. CAP training will be October 26<sup>th</sup>.
- **Republican Breakfast Club/Dinner** September 29. Registrars from Williamsburg, York and James City Counties were invited to discuss registration and voting concerns, and respond to questions from those in attendance. Conclusions are that it was a good opportunity for the registrars to inform and build confidence in the elections process.
- **Voter Registration in assisted living facilities:** A number of requests to Envoy Nursing Home have been sent. They are in administrative transition with no Activities Coordinator. We are following up. The League of Women Voters has also offered its resources to assist in support of voter registration in Nursing Homes and Extended Care Facilities. We continue our Registration and Voting Efforts with Assisted Living and Nursing facilities.
- **Dolan-Reed Law Firm** is sending a representative, Kendall, for a requested public inspection of our list of registered voters October 8<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM. The list is available to all under FOIA. The list may not be copied, and neither addresses nor the personal information of voters accessed. Of concern is the fact that the increase in numbers of self-appointed watchdogs impose significant additional time demands upon Registrars.

- **Ballot Pre-processing Days** are October 26<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> from 12-4 PM.
- **Close of Books is October 12<sup>th</sup>.** Big push."
- **GRAV REGIONAL DIRECTOR.** Tina elected Southeastern Regional Director of VA General Registrar association.
- **City and Registrars received The Virginia Municipal League Innovation Award October 3<sup>rd</sup>.** *Within the span of five weeks the City of Williamsburg's Voter Registrar organized two drive-thru elections, consolidating the City's two physical voting locations into a single drive-thru system at the Williamsburg Fire Department. The City used this drive-thru system for the City Council election on May 19, 2020, and the Virginia Republican Primary for U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives on June 23, 2020. (The City did not have a Democratic Primary race last June.) This system included a robust campaign to encourage voters to vote absentee and allowed residents to feel safe as they exercised their right to vote amidst the uncertainty of the pandemic. The two precincts were split between the two bays of the fire station; a ballot box was set up for walk-up voters, as well. Voters filled out their ballots and handed them to an election officer, who put them into the ballot box in full view of the voter, who remained inside the car. City employees made up the majority of the roughly 40 volunteer election officers, who split the work into two shifts. The volunteers wore masks and gloves, issued disposable pens and privacy screens to the voters, cleaned clipboards after each voter's use, and sanitized their hands after handling each ballot.*
- **What the judges said:** *What an ingenious and effective use of existing resources to manage the health risks associated with an essential civic event! After a year of not feeling safe doing ordinary things, the citizens of Williamsburg were given the option to exercise their right to vote and to feel safe doing it. The measurable results shown in the number of citizens who used the drive-thru option show that this innovative approach not only worked for Williamsburg but also could be easily replicated elsewhere. The EB extended plaudits to the General and Deputy Registrars, the City Manager and many City employees for exemplary efforts in earning and receiving this award.*
- **November 2<sup>nd</sup> Officers of Elections List** Thirty Officers of Elections were approved for CAP, Stryker and Matoaka Precincts for the November 2<sup>nd</sup> election (attached). Training is October 26<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 PM.
- **City Website shows City Registrar Calendar of Events** The Website will show Six Events upcoming. As the Event passes the next one will appear.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Follow-up** on traffic pattern and parking at Stryker Precinct and VCU/WM health center on Election Day. Tina met with Chief Dunn. There will be signage indicating "VCU Health & Voter Parking." Entry and Exits will be clearly designated including a controlled entry on North Henry Street.
- The Emergency Generator for Stryker<sup>[SEP]</sup> Tina has received confirmation that the generator will be there.

**NEW BUSINESS**

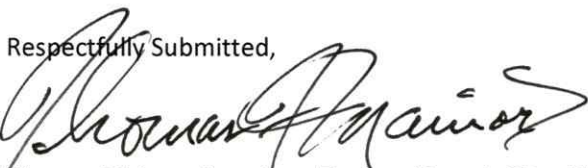
**Pam reported** on RPV training, noting the Clara Bell Wheeler had done an excellent presentation and response to questions.

**Food for election day** was discussed and assigned.

**Next meeting:** canvassing/certification of election will be November 3rd at 1PM.

**Adjourned:** 3:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas Mainor, Secretary, Electoral Board, City of Williamsburg

