

**BERKS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 15, 2024 – 11:00 A.M.**

**Michael S. Rivera, Chair**  
**Christian Y. Leinbach, Vice Chair**  
**Dante Santoni, Jr., Commissioner**  
**Anne Norton, Chief Clerk**  
**Christine M. Sadler, County Solicitor – not present**  
**Cody L. Kauffman, First Assistant County Solicitor**

**CALL TO ORDER: 11:00 A.M.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Board approved the minutes for the February 8, 2024, Election Board meeting as presented.

**Agenda Items**

**1. Department of Homeland Security and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Reviews of Elections**

Anne Norton explained this is to allow DHS/CISA to conduct a joint cyber and physical assessment of the Elections processes at our different locations.

First Assistant County Solicitor Cody Kauffman noted that part of the motion would be to authorize Chief Operations Officer Kevin Barnhardt to execute any necessary confidentiality certifications and statements that come along as part of the assessment.

Commissioner Leinbach stated that this assessment is done on two separate days: one is a physical assessment of the different offices, and the other day is an assessment of the election equipment at South Campus.

Commissioner Rivera stated that the Elections Systems fall under Homeland Security because they are designated as critical infrastructure in the United States. DHS/CISA will be doing physical inspections of all four locations. Commissioner Rivera stressed that because the information deals with security, all findings from the assessments will remain confidential.

On the motion of Commissioner Santoni, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, the Board approved having DHS/CISA conduct a joint and physical assessment of elections processes at the Berks County Services Center, SAM Inc. facility, South Campus, and Agricultural Center, and to authorize the COO to sign any confidentiality forms.

### **Election Director's Report**

Ms. Norton noted that Election Services continues to work on processing mail-in and absentee ballot applications, which have been coming in quickly. Letters to poll workers have been sent out and the office is receiving calls from Judges of Elections confirming whether or not their boards will be working.

There are approximately 15,000 applications that have been received so far.

### **General Comments from the Board regarding current election-related issues**

Commissioner Rivera said he and Commissioner Leinbach attended the National Association of Counties legislative conference the past weekend and participated in an election summit. He said there were discussions during the summit about federal funding for elections, legislation to ban fraudulent AI content and protections for election workers. He said that nationwide, the focus is making sure there are safe and secure elections where everyone that meets the requirements to vote is able to do so.

### **Public Comment**

Jeffrey Wolfe, of Brecknock Township, referenced a letter he sent to the Election Board regarding concerns he has about reviewing signatures on mail-in ballots. He said his document included several recommendations, that included setting aside ballots that had signatures that did not appear to be genuine. He offered each Board member an opportunity to meet with him individually to discuss what he submitted in writing.

Commissioner Santoni reminded the voters that this is a Presidential year, and the election is a month earlier than normal.

**Adjournment:** On the motion of Commissioner Santoni, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, the meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m.