

**BERKS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
June 6, 2022 – 9:00 A.M.**

Kevin S. Barnhardt, Chair
Michael S. Rivera, Vice-Chair (not present)
Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner
Paige Riegner, Chief Clerk
Christine M. Sadler, County Solicitor (not present)
Cody L. Kauffman, First Assistant County Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER- 9:02 A.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes for the May 26, 2022 Election Board meeting as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Adrian Jadic, Wyomissing: Mr. Jadic spoke in support of Kathleen E. Baisch’s write-in petition. He also expressed support for current agenda items #4 and #5, adding postage to mail-in and absentee ballot return envelopes and adding a ballot collection site at South Campus respectively.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1. Cumulate Write-In Votes Cast during the May 17, 2022, General Primary**
On the motion from Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, the Board approved five write-in petitions submitted by petitioners Ana Mendoza, Anthony Digirolamo, Kathleen E. Baisch, Charles Adler, and Samantha Kaag to cumulate votes during the May 17, 2022, General Primary. The Board recognized that Kathleen E. Baisch’s write-in votes are being accepted, however the Board agreed it is up to the Ms. Baisch’s political party to determine eligibility as Ms. Baisch did not have enough write-in votes as registered.

- 2. Certify Votes Cast during the May 17, 2022, General Primary**
Elections Director Paige Riegner explained there are two sets of election results, one including the undated mail-in ballots and the other which does not include the undated mail-in ballots. Riegner further explained that results from any Provisional ballots cast at the polls between 8 P.M. to 9 P.M. on election day are not included in these reports. An amended certification will be submitted to the Department of State once these Provisional ballots are canvassed.

On the motion from Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, the Board approved the submission of these results to the Department of State.

3. Election Litigation Update for Undated Mail-in Ballots and Provisional Ballots

First Assistant County Solicitor Cody Kauffman gave an update regarding the legal challenge to Provisional ballots cast between 8 P.M. to 9 P.M. on election day, informing the Board that this challenge has been lifted on Saturday, June 4, 2022. The Elections office can now begin canvassing these Provisional ballots. Mr. Kauffman recommended filing a “no answer” letter to the court by noon.

On the motion from Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, the Board agreed with Mr. Kauffman’s recommendation to file a “no answer” letter to the court.

4. Postage for Mail-in and Absentee Ballots

On the motion from Commissioner Barnhardt, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, the Board approved adding business return postage to Mail-in and Absentee ballots, so long as Act 77 is in place. On the motion from Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, further discussion was tabled until all Commissioners are present.

5. Mail-in and Absentee Ballot Collection Site

Elections Director Paige Riegner informed the Board that the Elections office is working to get a secondary office space where voters can be issued ballots and return at the South campus. However, Commissioner Leinbach favors the ease and accessibility of a drop box overseen by Sherriff’s deputies at South campus, rather than having voters enter a secondary drop off site. Commissioner Barnhardt agreed that great importance is given to voter convenience and accessibility.

On the motion from Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, the Board agreed to discuss this item as well as Sunday drop box hours at the next meeting where all commissioners are present.

6. General Comments from the Board of Elections Regarding Current Election-Related Issues

Commissioner Barnhardt broached the subject of the current mail-in and absentee ballot printer, suggesting possibly drop-shipping ballots to Harrisburg for future elections. Cody Kauffman suggested revisiting the contract with the current printing company at the next Election Board meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT – 9:49 A.M.