Albemarle County Electoral Board

July 10, 2025

Location: Albemarle County Office Building, 5th Street
Attendance: Jim Heilman, Clara Belle Wheeler, Bucky Walsh, Erin Davis, Jeania Pace, Lauren Eddy, Alex Branch
Guests speaking: Betsy Eubanks, Richard Banko, Lewis Johnson, Ann Brubaker

The meeting began at 9:31 am. The final agenda was approved.

Public Comments. Clara Belle made the following statement: Guests will have a maximum of three minutes to speak at the beginning of the meeting. The Board may waive the three-minute rule.
Betsy asked about the process for the public to review returned mail. Lauren told her she just needed to set up a time with Jeania, and she can review the mail.

The minutes for June 9 and June 18 and 23 were approved unanimously.

Old Business:

- Assistant Chief Education Program. Bucky said that he would like to get back to finishing this online program. A work session for this was set up for July 21 from 9 to 11 am.
- Baker-Butler Precinct. Because of the population size of the precinct, Bucky discussed previous consideration of changing precinct lines to make it smaller. But a closer look at the law shows that we are well within the Code concerning size. Richard (the Chief Officer there) noted that he felt they were comfortable with last fall's Presidential turnout.
- Chief/Assistant Chiefs' Manual. Richard said that he would like to tune up the Manual, particularly in regard to sections on our new equipment. A work session was set up for this purpose for July 23 at 9 am.
- Manual for Central Absentee Precinct (CAP). Betsy said she would like a CAP Manual. Erin noted that there is a State-produced CAP Manual. Discussion ensued. It was decided to have a work session about creation of a local CAP Manual. It was set for July 28 at 9 am.

New Business:

- Provisional Ballots. Clara Belle said we need a Manual section/handout for those election officers (EO's) who are handling provisional ballots. Bucky raised the question of where provisional ballot logs should go at the end of the day. Currently, we have been telling EO's to attach them to the outside of Envelop 1A. However, State guidance says they should be put in Envelope 8. Lauren explained why we have been using Envelope 1A for this purpose. Much discussion ensued. Bucky moved that we change our instructions and tell EO's to put the logs in Envelope 8. The motion

passed unanimously. Lauren suggested that we give each precinct at least two Envelope 8's in order to hold everything that goes in them.

- EO Precinct Assignments. Bucky noted that many (most?) EO's have not been working in their home precinct, even though the Code says that they should be as far as practicable. He wondered if there is an opportunity to canvass our EO's as to whether they would rather work in their home precinct. Erin said that we already assign them to their home precinct as much as we can and that she has not gotten complaints about this. Discussion ensued. Ann stated that she feared we would be "stirring up a hornet's nest" by querying everyone as to where they wanted to work. Bucky suggested that we do a one-time survey on this and asked the Registrar's Office to draft a script for the survey.
- Provisional ballot review process. Bucky expressed concern that this November – if we (the Board) use the same process we used last fall – we won't get done in the required time. Jim noted that we used approximately 30 hours on the review process last fall. Bucky further wondered if we can make better use of the registrar staff to work more efficiently. Discussion ensued, but no vote was taken on changing the process.
- Contracts with Polling Places. Clara Belle brought up a concern about whether we have proper contracts with all our non-public school polling places. To a particular concern about our new Harvest Church Polling Place, Lauren said that we **did** have a contract with the Church in place on Primary Day, and further, that such contracts are the purview of the County Attorney's office. Clara Belle said that she would like to meet with the County Attorney about this.
- Absentee Ballot Mailing Process. Lauren reviewed this process, noting that (1) PrintElect was contracted to do the initial mailing last fall and our office did the daily mailings, (2) our office did all mailings for this June 17 Primary, and (3) she has contracted with PrintElect to do all the mailing this fall - both the large initial mailing and the daily mailings.
- New Branchlands Precinct Polling Place. To a question of how things worked out at the Harvest Church Polling Place, Clara Belle said there were no problems and that the Chief Officer said he was very happy with the set-up.
- Other Polling Place Issues. When receiving their materials on Election Eve, the Chiefs at Free Bridge and Hollymead accidentally picked up each others' ballots. The mistake was discovered early enough to get it corrected.
- Poll Pads. Jim brought up the issues that (1) checking in as "provisional" voters who were issued absentee ballots but didn't bring them to the polling place, and (2) the street file lookup function did not work. Lauren explained how these should work correctly for the November election. A discussion of Poll Pad training ensued.
- Hot Wash. Jeania said that she has two rooms reserved for the planned December 4 review of the November election.
- IT issue. Lauren reviewed the ransomware cyber attack on the County starting on June 10 and how it critically affected preparing for the June 17 Primary. There was no way to load the election on the Poll Pads or create the backup paper pollbooks until a workaround was worked out between the County and ELECT in Richmond on Sunday, June 15 at 3:30 pm. Jim gave kudos to Lauren for having both Poll Pads and paper pollbooks ready by noon on Monday, June 16. She said that a

representative from KnowInk came in and was tremendously helpful in getting the job done. She noted that the County IT Department and County Executive were also very helpful through this crisis.

- List Maintenance. Lauren distributed the latest statistics on deletes and additions to our voter rolls. She noted that, in 2015, we had 71,574 registered voters. Now we have 87,951.

Registrar Update.

Jeania and Lauren introduced our summer intern Tyler Campfield. The Board welcomed him.

Bucky asked about the would-be candidate who filed on June 17 but was disqualified for filing after the deadline. Lauren explained the situation and that she reviewed film footage that showed him putting his candidate filings in our drop box long after the 7 pm deadline for candidates to file.

Lewis asked whether the 2025 Election Law Code Book was out. Lauren said not yet.

The next meeting was set for July 24 at 9:00 am. The purpose of this meeting primarily is to perform a personnel review required by law. This review will be in closed session.

Executive Session. Clara Belle moved the following: RESOLVED, that the Board enter into executive session for the purpose of discussion and consideration of the appointment, assignment, and performance of one or more current and prospective Albemarle County election officers and personnel for the election cycle that begins on March 1, 2025 as provided by Section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia. The motion passed unanimously. The Board went into executive session at 12:05 pm.

The Board came out of executive session at 1:20 pm. (Board members and staff (for part of it) participated in the executive session.) Clara Belle moved the following: RESOLVED, that to the best knowledge of each member of this Board, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of Chapter 37 (Virginia Freedom of Information Act) of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia and (ii) only such business matters as were identified in the motion by which today's executive session was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the executive session. The motion passed unanimously.

Jim moved the appointment of 4 new officers of election for the term of one year beginning March 1, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

James M Heilman

James M. Heilman
Secretary, Albemarle County Electoral Board