

Board of Elections Minutes - Tuesday, March 5, 2019

Absent: Dennis Mullen

February minutes approval: First Loretta Sullivan and seconded Bill Standinger.

FINANCIAL:

February Year to Date financial report attached, reflecting expenses for Commissioner Wahls' Dominion training.

OLD BUSINESS:

Poll Site Agreements were sent to 18 sites, and so far 14 have been signed and returned.

Election Law Updates: State/Local primary elections will occur on 4th Tuesday of June from here forward, coinciding with federal primaries. Due to the earlier primary, it is now petitioning season, which began Feb 26th and will run thru mid-April. Early Voting will begin this year at the November general election. Tioga County Early Voting Site is TBD. Electronic pollbooks (e-pollbooks) will be certified for use in 2020, but legislation is being processed in State Legislature that will likely certify e-pollbook use for 2019 general election to help facilitate Early Voting.

Deputy Commissioners have been using our TEAM software to update signatures from poll books.

NEW BUSINESS:

IT firewall upgrade issues resulted in our loss of connection with NYSVOTER and SBOE Network for ~3 weeks. Fortunately, the problem was resolved within hours after this meeting.

Commissioner Wahls attended Dominion EMS and Technician Training in February

NCOA File – National Change of Address File from NYSBOE was processed by Deputy Commissioners to satisfy annual list maintenance requirements

Commissioners attended ES&S Voting Machine/Region Demonstration on Feb 19th and were notably impressed with the voter-friendly machines. Estimated time to purchase new machines is after 2020 election.

Prospective candidates seeking guidance from our office are referred to their Party Chairs, and/or given a Petition Packet/Financial Disclosure Packet, which includes the booklet “Running for Office in Tioga County 2019,” two blank petitions, a 2019 political calendar, a financial disclosure notice, and blank campaign financial report forms.

2019 Signature Requirement: Chapter 17 of the Laws of 2019 reduces the ceiling for signature minimums set by Election Law Sec. 6-136 [2], pertaining only to designating and opportunity to ballot petitions, and only in 2019. Chapter 18, applying only to party positions (members of county committee), reduces the minimum signature requirement to “not less than” 3% of active voter enrollment, down from 5%; this law will expire at end of 2020.

Commissioners met with Town Clerks on Feb 27th to discuss and explain the impacts of the new Election Laws. We also requested they ask their Town Justices to not schedule hearings/sessions on the fourth Tuesday of June so there is no conflict with the primary election at Town Halls used as poll sites.

After three years of attempting to get our systems updated in preparation for the upgrade to NTS “Suite” software, we absolutely must be ready as soon as possible so that the upgrade can occur by July at the latest. This is an upgrade of our voter registration maintenance system (TEAM), and will allow for automatic transfer of voter registrations between counties within NYS, as per Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2019.

Commissioner Wahls has been attending Bill Ostrander’s ArcGIS Class in order to update maps of election districts and poll sites.

PERSONNEL:

Democratic Machine Technician search (actively seeking FT employment)

RESOLUTION: None