



**Pulaski County Election Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

Members Present:

Evelyn D. Gomez
Joshua A. Price
Kristi M. Stahr

Staff Present:

Bryan Poe
Betty Green
Jodie Dildy
Amanda Dickens

Visitors Present:

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Gomez. A quorum was present, with all commissioners present via Zoom. The staff and visitors were present via Zoom also. The commissioners gave Director Poe permission to use their signature stamp as necessary during the meeting.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Price.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Stahr moved to accept the minutes with amendments; seconded by Commissioner Price. Motion passed by voice vote.

Business

Discussion Regarding Staff Presents for Meetings at the Office

There was some discussion regarding the staff attending the meeting virtually, but no staff was present at the building. Chair Gomez made it clear that duties for setting meetings falls squarely on the shoulders of the chair. The public and the commissioners can attend the meeting virtually. She informed Director Poe that she was going to attend the meeting in person and that she expected Director Poe to be present at the building. The commissioners expressed their concerns regarding the meeting location specifying the Jeffrey Hawkins Conference Room in the Pulaski

County Regional Building and because a member of the staff was not present, a member of the media would not be able to gain access to the building.

Chair Gomez reiterated her request to be allowed to have keys to the Pulaski County Regional Building. Director Poe explained that she would need to submit the request in writing to the Comptroller. Commissioner Stahr requested clarification as to why a member of the staff was not present. Director Poe stated that he made the decision to allow the staff to attend the meeting virtually from home, because the staff would need to be in the office on the next day. Also, he is trying to minimize the staff's exposure to COVID-19. Commissioner Price requested clarification regarding the correspondence that no staff would be present. The commissioners were notified via email by Director Poe that no staff would be present.

Director Poe also expressed that his decision was based upon the cavalier attitude of the Chair Gomez towards COVID-19. During the two previous meetings he noticed that her mask was not fully covering her face. Chair Gomez explained that the reason she was coming to the building is because of the technical difficulties that she experienced during a previous meeting.

Commissioner Stahr requested clarification as to whether the media was contacted to let them know of the change. She also expressed that she did not think that utilizing the card key to the back door was an acceptable form of gaining entry to the building. Director Poe stated the staff will not be in the building whenever Chair Gomez is in the building. Director Poe will change the physical location of the meetings to reflect Pulaski County Regional Building. Commissioner Price stated he understood the reason for the change and requested that in the future the media be notified in advance regarding the changes.

Certification of Ballot Styles for the November 3, 2020 General Election

There are 342 ballot styles for the November 3, 2020 General Election. The commissioners reviewed the ballot styles for the November 3, 2020 General Election. The commissioners requested changes to the capitalization of some words and changing of the word mill/millage. Commissioner Stahr moved to certify the ballot styles with the requested edits for the November 3, 2020 General Election; seconded by Commissioner Price. Motion passed by voice vote.

Approval of Updated Vote Center Plan

Director Poe shared that the Quorum Court unanimously passed the ordinance regarding vote centers, with all members of the Quorum Court voting for it. There are going to be 12 early voting locations, and they will be open on election day in

addition to the election day polling locations. Director Poe will obtain a signed copy of the ordinance next week, that will be included in the vote center plan. Commissioner Stahr requested clarification regarding the number of members that voted for the ordinance because the article she read stated one person voted against. Commissioner Price reviewed the article published in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette and stated that all members of the Quorum Court voted to pass the ordinance. Commissioner Price moved to approve the update vote center plan with the addition of the signed copy of the ordinance once Director Poe receives it; seconded by Commissioner Stahr. Motion passed by voice vote.

Other Business

Discussion of Redistricting

Chair Gomez requested that everyone start thinking about the upcoming redistricting and evaluate the spending needs to avoid any criticism regarding budgeting monies for map drawings. This will need to be done in 2021 and 2022. She requested Director Poe to provide the commissioners with the cost of the previous redistricting expenses. Director Poe shared that Pulaski County utilizes Metroplan to provide the options, and it does not cost additional monies. She also requested Director Poe come establish a plan for upcoming redistricting.

Discussion of Election Officials/Recruitment

Chair Gomez shared that September 1, 2020 is National Poll Worker Recruitment Day. A list of election officials was provided to the commissioners for their review.

Election Monitors for the November 3, 2020 General Election

Chair Gomez requested a motion from the commissioners to request election monitors for the upcoming election. The request would be to have monitors stationed at polling locations, vote centers, absentee canvassing, and election central for the counting of ballots. Commissioner Stahr moved to request a monitor or monitors for the November 3, 2020 General Election; seconded by Commissioner Price. Motion passed by voice vote.

Budget for 2021

The deadline for submitting the 2021 budget is September 9, 2020. The commissioners requested descriptions from Director Poe regarding the changes that were made to budget, as well as the meaning of each line item. They would also like to have the quotes regarding new voting equipment, to possibly establish more voting centers for Pulaski County.

Public Comments

Director Poe read the following comments from the YouTube live stream:

“While we the people are waiting, perhaps you could scroll thru the spreadsheet so we can see it? And though not all 300+, perhaps show us a FEW of the ballot styles?”

“I though only the Governor, Circuit Clerk & Mayor had to be listed separately if unopposed due to initiative & referendum requirements.”

“Election Commissioners should be more concerned about voters having an opportunity to vote on ballot issues than potentially saving on printing costs. As a veteran, that’s my #1 concern.”

“‘12’ is not a font, it’s a type size. Changing to a more readable and compact font often allows you to increase the type size in the same amount of space: Just a suggestion.”

“JNPSD & East End (Bigelow) have their school elections with the primaries (normally May, but March this year). LRSD, NLRSD & PCSDD are in November.”

“It was unanimous without discussion. The only thing someone voted against was the mask proposal.”

“Easier to vote, or harder?”

Additional Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Stahr shared an alert regarding a letter that her husband received that was designed to spread fear about in person voting, COVID-19 and some incorrect information that was provided in the letter.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

September 8, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. for review of the 2021 budget.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.