

Ohio Association of Election Officials

Legislative Committee Meeting

March 24, 2017

The legislative committee of the Ohio Association of Election Officials met on Friday, March 24, 2017 at 1:30 PM via conference call. Tim Ward presided. Susie Bloom is retiring and was wished well by the group. Joyce Kale-Pesta is replacing Susie on the legislative committee. Aaron Ockerman, executive director of the Ohio Association of Election Officials was also present and assisted with the lead when asked.

Peggy Byers called the roll today. Present were: Susan Bloom, Cheryle Browning, Jocelyn Bucaro, Peggy Byers, Lyn McCoy, Ross McDonald, Debbie Reiter, Luke Scott, Brian Sleeth, Stephanie Slifko, Kathy Wyenandt, Cecilia Blevins, Terry Burton, Stephanie Clase, Kathi Creed, Sue Donohoe, Karla Herron, Jan Kelley, Julie Leathers, Renae Lentz, Brian Mead, Carla Patton, Sherry Poland, Kristen Ross, Shantiel Soeder, Tim Ward, and Lisa Welch.

Sarah Kneuss was excused today.

Guests today: Beth Ann Snyder, Rob Frost, Tony Perlatti, Joe Mallory

The minutes had been sent out by email. Julie Leathers moved a motion the minutes be accepted. Carla Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Many meetings have taken place between the Commissioner's Association and the OAEO committee seeking to secure state funding for new voting equipment. On March 22, 2017, Aaron had sent the OAEO this email:

I wanted to provide a quick update on our efforts to secure a state match for the purchase of voting equipment. Our OAEO/CAO committee has been meeting regularly to formulate a plan and strategy to accomplish this. Here is where we are:

- DAS has completed negotiations with vendors to achieve state pricing, terms and conditions. We expect this information to be available to counties in the VERY near future.
- Once this information is released, we expect a directive from the Secretary of State instructing boards to meet with their commissioners to facilitate a dialogue about what the needs of your counties are and begin planning for voting machine replacement.
- We will compile information from these conversations to provide a "best guess" at the total replacement cost statewide.
- We are working on a legislative plan/amendment to the state budget that would implement a similar cost sharing program to that of the e-poll book plan. The state/local match is still to be determined. We are gathering political intelligence to help guide us on these decisions.
- We have identified potential bi-partisan sponsors to carry this amendment forward.
- Today Tim Ward, OAEO President, provided testimony to the House Finance Subcommittee on State Government and Agency Review discussing the need for this program. I have attached that testimony for your information.

It is likely that the House will begin debating amendments to the state budget in mid-April with an eye toward unveiling them at the end of that month. We will continue working very hard to see this amendment included. As soon as we have legislative language it will be shared for comment. I will also provide regular updates as this effort continues. **Please continue to reach out to your state representatives and senators to make them aware of the need for state assistance in replacing our aging voting equipment. We cannot get this done without a substantial grassroots effort!**

Aaron reports there is a general understanding that new machinery is necessary. The powers that be are now actively seeking sources of revenue. Aaron is working on getting sponsors for the amendment and hopes to tell us who they are in the next week. There are technical details to work out like the match and the type of funding, so we will see where we end up. We have made significant progress. Aaron says they are working on setting up a day with the 6 vendors who are now certified so the legislators can see all the equipment available and make a better decision about what they are voting on.

We then moved on to the bills to eliminate the unnecessary primaries:

HB 18 – Eliminate unnecessary primaries

SB 10 – Eliminate unnecessary primaries

Aaron reported that SB10 contains many more of Paul Adams' thoughts. This bill has passed out of Senate and is now pending in the House of Representatives. The hope is to have something done on this bill in the very near future.

SB21 is the reintroduction of SB 212 from last year. This bill would reduce the number of poll workers in counties that use electronic poll books. This bill would also get rid of the death notice. We were reminded the reduction in poll workers would not be mandatory. It would be up to the board in each individual county. There were some concerns brought up during the hearing on this issue. Aaron reported we are responding to the issues and hope to garner the necessary support to make this move through the process. Concerns were the reduction and the impact on the voter. Are we cutting too much to save money? Aaron feels we have already addressed the issues in the real world and we just need to pass this info along. If there was a mistake on the death notice, how would the voter still be able to vote? Aaron felt the questions were significant, but nothing we can't address.

SB 44 on campaign finance has been reintroduced. This bill will allow local candidates to file their reports electronically. Aaron felt this bill was not controversial and should move through quickly.

HB 41 would make in-person absentee voting similar to Election Day voting. There would no longer be an application or an envelope for the in-person voter. Tim Ward and Peggy Byers testified on their own behalf in committee on this issue. Peggy reported there were a few questions before the session began, but just one question from Rep. Blessing after the hearing. The question related to the situation when you showed up without identification. It was clarified that this person could fill out the application as has been done in the past and could vote a regular ballot. There was a long discussion that followed as various members of our committee had questions on this day. Multiple forms of identification will still work. Will we need a signature book? The voter can sign electronically or in a signature book. Triad has already updated their software to allow for an electronic signature and other vendors are working on a remedy for this. The amendment allows flexibility for each county to decide how they want to handle absentee voters. The statute will be clear that each board can decide for themselves.

The absentee subcommittee met on the topics pertaining to an online absentee application and a permanent absentee application discussed at our January meeting. The meeting was held on Monday, March 20, 2017 via conference call and raised these questions for more discussion:

Permanent Absentee Voting request

- 1) How do you handle voter registration changes, such as address changes, name changes, or voters moving out of state?
- 2) How do you handle party affiliation? Do voters affiliate when they register or when they vote in a primary? If the latter, how do you address concerns from voters who want to change affiliation?

3) How do you address mailing address changes for voters who may spend part of their time at another address?

Several members agreed to call other states they work with and report back to the subcommittee, which will then report to the legislative committee. There will be more info to follow.

Dan Shebesta with Ballotsync.com has developed a piece of software for levies and issues that works entirely through the Internet to share ballot information with the Secretary of State and overlapping counties:

Share Election Data with Ease, Relay the most current election information, on-time and accessible to everyone

Automatically send notifications to everyone that needs to know.

Store all election information in one spot. Avoid confusion and get things right the first time.

Keep documents, artwork, and ballot language for future use.

Know at a glance which counties you've contacted, which artwork has been submitted, and what still needs approval.

The specs will be written in such a way at this point that Mr. Shebesta is the only person in the state that offers the software at this point. The thought is the Secretary of State's office is going to make the purchase and the costs would be prorated with the counties throughout the state. We expect to hear more on this topic this summer as Karla Herron shared that she feels the Secretary of State wants to get everyone using this before a busier year. Many of the other counties who have shared the beta version reported the software makes the process so much more accurate and eliminates so many other possibilities for error. Paul Adams raised the question about whether this would be a mandated cost we and would have to pay and would we have to stay with this company? Aaron thinks this will get in the appropriation by the end of June 2017. Brian Mead from Licking stated what he was paying to Triad and asked more questions about any of the new requirements and how they are going to work. Aaron was to contact Dan Shebesta to see if everyone could see a demo.

Aaron mentioned that he was contacted by the Lawrence County Board of Elections that the five days in revised code for the reorganization does not accommodate many unusual situations that counties might run in to. Some of the discussion was that these dates are not a surprise. Terry in Wood County mentioned it would be helpful if this code was changed to five business days. Aaron thought this might be a good happy medium. We will think about this and put it back on the next agenda.

There was one more shout out to Susie Bloom as she approaches retirement.

Susie Bloom made a motion that the group adjourn. Carla Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Byers

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