

Berks County Operations Minutes
November 9, 2021
9:30 am

Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner, Chair
Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner, Vice Chair
Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner
Ronald Seaman, Chief Administrative Officer
Christine M. Sadler, Esq., County Solicitor

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 26, 2021 Operations Meeting were approved as presented.

AGENDA ITEMS

9:30am – 9:45am

1. 2022 Employee Recognition Program (Proposed Changes) – Christie Bennett-Zellers, Human Resources Benefits Manager - Decision Requested

Christie Bennett-Zellers presented the Board with proposed changes to the employee recognition program. One of the significant changes is to no longer provide a folder with a printed certificate and printed catalog. The changes will make the certificate of recognition smaller to a 4x6 size in an acrylic frame that can be easily displayed. The other changes are removing the pin, replacing it with a pen, and making the catalog available online instead of printed. The cost of the changes will cost us less than it did the previous year.

Commissioner Rivera motioned to authorize the changes as presented and for all routine purchasing procedures to be followed. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt. Seeing no further discussion, motion carried.

9:45am – 10:00am

2. Adopt Resolution which approves additional post-election technical support provided by ES&S for November 11 and 12, 2021, at a total cost of \$3,400.00 – Decision Requested - Ron Seaman, CAO

Ron Seaman, CAO, informed the board there is additional Election technical training that is needed from ES&S, which they were unable to complete. The County was able to secure the return of ES&S on Thursday, November 11 and Friday, November 12. ES&S will provide additional training with the process of the write-in votes. The additional cost for the technical support is \$3,400.00.

Commissioner Barnhardt motioned to spend \$3,400.00 for additional support from ES&S for Thursday, November 11, and Friday, November 12. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Seeing no further discussion, motion carried.

Commissioner Leinbach gave a breakdown on the counting of mail-in/absentee ballots on Election day. He explained how the process works and the approximate number of mail-in/absentee ballots that came in before the close of the polls on Election day. He reminded everyone that we are also in the process of counting provisional ballots. He mentioned that many write-in votes are still being counted and gave a detailed explanation of how they should be filled out and how they are calculated.

Ron Seaman, CAO, emphasized that any vote totals from the close of polls on Election night until the total count is completed are deemed unofficial. He gave a breakdown of how our final certification is done and indicated our Election totals will be certified on November 19, 2021.

Commissioner Barnhardt detailed the intricate and time-consuming write-in vote counting done via a hand process. He informed everyone that the Election Services Director vacancy was approved and sent out to various media outlets and CCAP.

Commissioner Rivera reminded everyone that although listing names such as Abraham Lincoln on the write-in ballots may be comical, it will delay the counting process.

10:00am – 10:15am

3. Discuss moving Quarterly Reports to the Commissioners presented by the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance and the Reading Area Community College and possibly other entities from presentations at the Commissioners' Meeting to an Operations Meeting – Christian Leinbach and Pam Shupp Menet – Decision Requested

Commissioner Leinbach and Pam Shupp Menet discussed the possibility of scheduling the quarterly reports/presentations in Operations Meetings versus the Commissioners Meeting. The items that come before the board via presentations and reports do not require action. Having them scheduled during the Operations Meeting will allow for more dialogue and information sharing, and discussion.

Commissioner Barnhardt pointed out that having them scheduled during the Commissioners meeting is due to more viewership. He offered Berks Connections as an option to make sure we provide the information to the public.

Commissioner Rivera indicated that the Commissioners meeting is better suited for sharing information via presentation due to higher viewership.

Commissioners asked Ron Seaman, Pam Shupp Menet, and Stephanie Weaver to explore further options and make a recommendation to the board.

COMMENTS

No public comments.

There being no further business, Commissioner Leinbach adjourned the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmen Torres". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Carmen Torres, Chief Clerk