



Marion County Election Board Meeting

November 14, 2024 | 2:00 p.m.

Election Service Center | 3737 E. Washington St.

Board Members and Officials Present: Paul Babcock, Proxy for the Board Chair; Jennifer Ping, Vice-Chair; Kate Sweeney Bell, Secretary; Patrick Becker, Director of Elections; Brad Boswell, Election Board Outside Counsel; Adam Wicker, Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC)

Others Present: Betty Allen, Angela Battaglini, Ed Berry, Lowell Bridgewater, Bryan Chatfield, Charlotte Cialek, Andrea Drygas, Etta Dycus, Dan Goldblatt, Derrick Johnson, Carmen Kruer, Jennifer Handlon, Betty Lynch, Lin S. Mung, Alex Nyirendah, Bill O'Laughlin, Bryan Lilienkamp, Arlene Pepper, Dionna Raglin, Madelyn Smith, Brent Stinson, Barbara Tully

I. Call to Order

Paul Babcock, Proxy for the Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

II. Absentee Ballot Review

Director of Elections Patrick Becker said voters cast 300 blank ExpressVote ballot cards in the general election because they mistakenly didn't finish the voting process. He said Marion County Election Board (MCEB) staff would run them through the ExpressVote machine again, skipping all the way to the end so each race would be marked "No Selection," which would enable the ballots to be tabulated.

He said there were also ballots MCEB staff recommended counting in the following categories:

- A. Five in-person early-voting ballots that were missing labels, which staff remade.
- B. Six ballots that were damaged on Election Day that should have been remade but had been mislabeled as rejected ballots.
- C. Five absentee-by-mail ballots that were received before the deadline but filed incorrectly by staff.
- D. Nine ballots from members of the military that were received before the November 15 deadline.
- E. One absentee-by-mail ballot that was processed incorrectly in the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). It was a traveling-board application that mistakenly generated a mail-in ballot, which the voter marked and returned.

Secretary Sweeney Bell confirmed there were only a couple dozen mistakes among the 330,000+ ballots. Vice-Chair Jennifer Ping said she witnessed voters putting their ballots into their secrecy envelopes too soon at the early-voting site where she worked, so she understood why some of the labels had gone missing. Director Becker said all the ballots in question had

been reviewed by bipartisan teams from the Voters Registration office. He said there was one military ballot, however, that had just arrived that day and had not been reviewed.

Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendations on the absentee ballots and any military ballots that came in before the November 15 deadline. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Provisional Ballot Review

Director of Elections Patrick Becker said there were over 2,000 provisional ballots that MCEB staff had researched and provided a recommendation to count or reject. Bipartisan teams from Voters Registration (VR) had done the same review. Director Becker presented the Board with a log of the provisional ballots, along with challenged absentee ballots.

- A. **Ballots #1-35:** Absentee-by-mail ballots that were missing a signature, but the voter had returned an ABS-18 curing document.

- B. **Ballots #36-151:** Absentee-by-mail ballots that contained a mismatched signature, but the voter had returned an ABS-18 curing document. Director Becker said both MCEB staff and VR staff recommended the Board count these ballots. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to count Ballots #1-151. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

- C. **Ballots #152-167:** Absentee-by-mail ballots that were not signed by the voters, who did not return an ABS-18 curing document. Director Becker said both MCEB staff and VR staff recommended the Board reject these ballots. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to reject Ballots #152-167. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

- D. **Ballots #168-214:** Absentee-by-mail ballots that were challenged by bipartisan review teams, deemed as mismatched signatures, for which ABS-18 curing documents were not returned. Director Becker said he asked VR staff members to provide a third signature review and they concluded 39 of them should be counted. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to count Ballots #168-206 and not count Ballots #207-214. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

- E. **Ballots #215-242:** Provisional ballots for which the voter did not meet the ID requirements on Election Day. They still had another day to show their ID to an election official for their ballot to count. Vice-Chair Ping made a motion to count Ballots #215-242 if the voter came in to show their ID before the deadline. Secretary Sweeney Bell seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

- F. **Ballots #243-276:** Provisional ballots marked as category #1 on Election Day, voters who are not in the poll book or entitled to the fail-safe procedure. Director Becker explained the fail-safe is when a voter would be allowed to vote using their old address one last time if they did not cross U.S. Congressional District lines when they moved. Director Becker said staff research showed the voters were registered and entitled to the fail-safe, so the poll workers either made an error or were unable to get the correct information for the voter on Election Day. He said staff recommended the Board count these ballots. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to count Ballots #243-276. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- G. **Ballots #277-300:** Provisional ballots in which the voter was entitled to the fail-safe procedure, but the poll worker did not give it to them. Director Becker said staff recommended the Board count these ballots. Vice-Chair Ping made a motion to accept the staff's recommendation to count Ballots #277-300. Secretary Sweeney Bell seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- H. **Ballots #301-302:** These ballots were flagged in the poll pad as voters who needed additional documentation. Director Becker said the poll pad showed some inactive voters as needing to affirm their residency. He said that was different than needing to prove their residency with documentation. He said the voters could have affirmed their residency simply by pressing a button on the poll pad. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to count Ballots #301-302. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- I. **Ballots #303-480:** Director Becker said these were provisional ballots that fell into various categories. Poll workers should have processed them as an address change, certificate of error or PRE-5 form that allows voters to vote in-person after surrendering an absentee-by-mail ballot. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to count Ballots #303-480. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.
- J. **Ballots #481-2,056** Director Becker said staff recommended these provisional ballots be rejected. He said voters who showed up in person would be allowed to ask questions during this portion of the meeting. No one did. Secretary Sweeney Bell made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to reject Ballots #481-2,056 unless a voter came forward before the deadline to provide additional information. Vice-Chair Ping seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

The Board observed staff process the provisional ballots that were approved, to prepare the ballots for tabulation. Upon return, Director Becker said staff discovered three provisional ballot envelopes that didn't have any ballots in them and another ballot that was blank. He said there

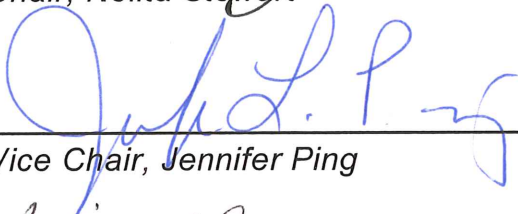
was one vote center from which staff was reviewing ballots to look at the write-in candidate images. He said the Board authorized the review process and staff would continue the write-in canvass the following morning.

IV. Adjournment

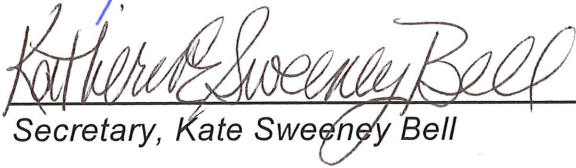
Proxy Babcock adjourned the meeting.



Chair, Nolita Stewart



Vice Chair, Jennifer Ping



Secretary, Kate Sweeney Bell