

Benton County Election Commission

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Russell J. Anzalone
Chairman

M. W. Sevak
Member



Robbyn Tumey
Secretary

Kim Dennison
Coordinator

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MINUTES OF THE BENTON COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

March 10, 2015

Election Commission members present: Chairman Russell Anzalone, Secretary Robbyn Tumey, and Mike Sevak

Others present: Election Coordinator Kim Dennison, Sharon Rose, Serena Green, Voter/Elections Administrator Dana Caler, Deputy Clerk Tiffany Underwood, and John M. Brown, Jr.

Media: Tom Sissom, Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette

Chairman Anzalone called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes:

Chairman Anzalone asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes from September 26, 2014 through January 28, 2015. There being none, Chairman Anzalone made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Tumey. Motion carried by voice vote.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

- A. Discussion of new voting equipment presented by Unisyn Voting Solutions and Election Systems & Software: Chairman Anzalone stated that he, Commissioner Sevak, Election Coordinator Kim Dennison, Sharon Rose, and Serena Green attended the presentation by Unisyn Voting Solutions and Election Systems & Software hosted by the Washington County Election Commission. Chairman Anzalone reviewed the information that was presented and asked the commission and staff for discussion. The commissioners and staff favored ES&S stating that they meet the needs of Benton County. Commissioner Sevak added that ES&S knows how our county operates and the county has used their equipment since, 2006. Kim stated that ES&S will reimburse the state approximately \$200 per Ivotronic Machine and \$5,000 per Central Ballot Scanner Model 650. Kim added that fifty (50) of the

Ivotronic machines were purchased by Benton County and that reimbursement would go back into the County's General Fund. Commissioner Sevak stated that there is the possibility that \$30 million will be appropriated for new voting equipment, but the final decision will be made by the Arkansas Secretary of State's Office and the State Board of Election Commissioners. Commissioner Tumey asked Kim when a decision would be made on the allocation of funds. Kim stated that finalization will be made during the State's budget process in July. Kim presented the commissioners with a spreadsheet which showed an estimated cost from ES&S on voting machines, ballot counting machines, and other equipment which came to about \$1.8 million compared to \$1.1 million from Unisyn Voting Solutions. Chairman Anzalone asked Kim to prepare a report for the Quorum Court's Committee of the Whole next meeting on April 14, 2015 to advise them on how the Election Commission is planning on bringing Benton County to the next level. Kim stated that she would prepare this report.

Coordinator's Report:

Kim stated that she has been looking into additional early voting sites and is making contact with six (6) new locations to include the areas of Pea Ridge, Avoca, Rogers, Bella Vista, and Vaughn.

Kim handed out to the commissioners the Arkansas Secretary of State Rules on Vote Centers for their review. Kim stated that this booklet contains nine (9) pages of rules and difficult guidelines.

Kim also reported that there are precincts that need to be adjusted due to: (1) exceeding the 3,000 registered voters per precinct limit; (2) not being able to use a facility; and (3) the addition of new precincts. Commissioner Tumey asked how many active and inactive voters there are in Benton County. Deputy Clerk Tiffany Underwood reported that there are 79,515 active voters and 44,047 inactive voters. Voter/Elections Administrator Dana Caler reported that this year is the required odd year mailing, whereas the inactive voters are sent notices. If these inactive voters complete and return the information required, their voting status will be reactivated. Deputy Clerk Tiffany Underwood presented a report showing statistics of precinct growth between 2013 and 2015 for the commissioners to use as a guide when splitting precincts. Dana pointed out that with increased precinct splits, more ballot styles would be created and that the number of new voter cards that will be mailed will depend upon the new boundary lines of the precincts.

Other Business:

Chairman Anzalone stated that in the most recent election, approximately 45 percent of the county's votes were cast during early voting. Chairman Anzalone added that there is pending legislation to reduce the time early voting is available from two (2) weeks to one (1) week and that he sent an email to legislators cautioning them that reducing the early voting period would cause delays for voters on election day.

Chairman Anzalone stated that he spoke with Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson, President of Northwest Arkansas Community College about students in government being poll workers and working on Election Day. Chairman Anzalone commented that Dr. Jorgenson would look into seeing if the student could receive an excused absence from class and would schedule a meeting with him later in the month.

Public Comments:

None

Announcements:

Chairman Anzalone stated that the next Election Commission meeting would be April 7, 2015 at 1:00 P.M.

Adjournment:

Chairman Anzalone made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Sevak. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Robbyn Tumey, Secretary
Prepared by Deputy Clerk Sharon Rose
Benton County Election Commission