

Benton County Election Commission

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Russell J. Anzalone
Chairman

M. W. Sevak
Member



John M. Brown, Jr.
Secretary

Kim Dennison
Coordinator

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MINUTES OF THE BENTON COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

January 21, 2016

Election Commission members present: Chairman Russell Anzalone, John M. Brown, Jr., and Mike Sevak

Others present: Election Coordinator Kim Dennison, Sharon Rose, and Deputy County Clerk Tiffany Underwood

Media: Tom Sissom, Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette

Chairman Anzalone called the meeting to order at 11:00 A.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes:

Chairman Anzalone asked if there were any additions or corrections to the December 31, 2015 minutes. There being none, Chairman Anzalone made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion carried by voice vote.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

A. **Discussion of Inclement Weather Procedures:** Chairman Anzalone stated at the meeting held on November 10, 2015, the commission discussed concerns about inclement weather with representatives from the Benton County Road Department, Benton County Weather Alert System, Emergency Management System, and the Sheriff's office in assisting our poll workers getting to the polls. The commissioners reviewed the following suggestions: (1) provide poll workers with up-to-date information in case of an emergency, (2) communicate with the public about the possibility of a vote center closing or late opening. Election Coordinator Kim Dennison added that she has access to the county's BC Alert system and is

working to get the poll workers signed up for the service. Kim also stated that the Benton County Information Technology Department would post election information on the county's website. Chairman Anzalone asked Kim if there was a stipulation in the law to close a vote center due to inclement weather. Kim stated that she spoke with State Board of Election Commissioners Director, Justin Clay and he stated that there is no provision in the law for any given scenario. Kim indicated if the commission is unable to open a vote center or open late due to inclement weather, Mr. Clay suggested posting a note updating the other vote centers that are available. Kim continued by stating that she will contact Benton County Attorney George Spence in regard to opening vote centers late due to inclement weather.

Chairman Anzalone asked Commissioners Sevak and Brown for comments. Commissioner Sevak stated that he would like to see the policy broadened to cover other types of emergencies. Commissioner Brown stated that a part of any emergency response, whether it is for weather, fire, or any other emergency, one should rely on common sense and the poll workers knowing what to do. Commissioner Brown added that the poll workers should know what equipment to move out in case of an emergency. Chairman Anzalone asked Kim to inquire into the emergency plan for the county. Kim agreed and will report at the next meeting.

- B. Discussion of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Parish Hall, Vote Center 41: Chairman Anzalone stated that St. Mary's Catholic Church, Parish Hall, Vote Center 41 would be closed for the Preferential Primary & Nonpartisan Election due to the Vote Center Sheriff resigning and a replacement could not be found. Chairman Anzalone asked for additional discussion. There being no further discussion, Commissioner Brown made a motion to close St. Mary's Catholic Church, Parish Hall, Vote Center 41 due to the unavailability of a vote center sheriff for the Preferential Primary & Nonpartisan Election to be held March 1, 2016, seconded by Chairman Anzalone. Motion carried by voice vote.

Other Business:

Deputy County Clerk Tiffany Underwood stated that the Information Technology Department updated the online voter information website and asked Chairman Anzalone when doing PSA's or any type of advertising to share the website information. Tiffany also stated that the website will provide the voter with early voting locations and list the vote centers on Election Day, sample ballots, and any other information a voter may need.

Public Comments:

None

Announcements:

Chairman Anzalone stated that the Commissioners were invited by the Republican Men's Club to meet at the Golden Corral in Rogers on Friday, January 22, 2016 at 11:30 a.m.

Chairman Anzalone stated that the next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2016 at 1:00 P.M.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Brown made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chairman Anzalone. The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Brown, Jr., Secretary
Prepared by Sharon Rose
Benton County Election Commission