

MINUTES

Erie County Council

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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

County Clerk Smith called the Reorganization Meeting of the Erie County Election Board to order at 3:34pm.

Roll Call

Members Present: Mr. Anderson; Mrs. Clear; Mr. Horton; Mr. Rastetter;
Mrs. Rennie; Mrs. Schauerman; Mr. Shank

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith; Thomas Talarico; Nicole Inan;

Hearing of the Public

None to be heard.

Nomination of Election Board Chair

Mr. Smith called for nominations for Chair of the Erie County Board of Elections. Mrs. Clear nominated Mrs. Mary Rennie, Seconded by Mr. Shank, and passed 7 to 0.

Nomination of Election Board Vice-Chair

Mr. Smith passed the gavel to Mrs. Rennie as Chairwoman to accept nominations for the Vice-Chair of the Erie County Election Board. He took a moment to recognize Mr. Anderson's tremendous leadership during 2020, and that of the assistance of all of the Board.

Chairwoman Rennie opened nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Mr. Anderson nominated Mrs. Kim Clear, seconded by Mrs. Schauerman, and passed 7 to 0.

Comments from the new Board Chair

Chairwoman Rennie thanked former Chairman Carl Anderson for leading through a very challenging 2020. Chairwoman Rennie reminded that a year ago, when the four newest members of Council were elected, Act 77/new Election Law was put in to place, and it has been very much a trial-by-fire past year. She stated that as an Election Board, they don't deal with questions of what "should be," but rather "what is, what is the law." She is proud of the work that has been done over the past year, in overseeing the election duties, the election staff, and the process; it was done with integrity, in a non-partisan manner, and with fidelity. Fidelity to the process and to democracy. Chairwoman Rennie stated

she was so proud for the Board, but even more so for the Clerk of Elections, Elections Supervisor, all of the Elections staff, the watchers from all of the various parties for bringing the extra layer of integrity; being the checks and balances. She views the elections process as one of the most patriotic things that can be done as citizens. She voiced her appreciation to be able to serve as Chair of the Board.

**Questions or Comments
from other Board Members**

Mr. Anderson was honored to have served as the Chairman of the Election Board and equally as honored to have served with his fellow colleagues in this difficult time. Echoing Chairwoman Rennie's comments, the Board worked with unity, integrity, and fidelity in the process. Acknowledged the hard work and dedication of the Clerk, the Elections Supervisor and all of the staff in the voter registration and elections office. He named all of the staff as dedicated and enthusiastic as they engaged in their positions and with love for the community. He recounted the times of working hand-in-hand with Mrs. Rennie in the prior election, and is honored to have her as the current Chair. He knows that the community will be served well under her leadership and the talent and commitment of the vice-chairwoman.

Vice-Chairwoman Clear thanked Mr. Anderson and Mrs. Rennie for their leadership in the last year. She complimented their ability to tackle continuous issues throughout the year. Mrs. Clear spoke of Mr. Smith with high regard; she stated she has the utmost confidence and respect for him. She is grateful to serve and is looking forward to working with Chairwoman Rennie.

Mr. Shank thanked Mr. Anderson for his mentorship. In a new year, with the Act 77 in place, times were difficult, but he is so grateful to have had the opportunity to experience all of it - from ripping open ballots to escorting. He thanked the entire team for working proficiently and well together.

Mrs. Schauerma welcomed and congratulated Chairwoman Rennie and Vice-Chair Clear and looks forward to working with the team.

Mr. Rastetter congratulated Chairwoman Rennie and Vice-Chairwoman Clear. He enjoyed working with the entire team.

Mr. Smith updated the Board on a Risk-Limiting Audit that will be being completed for states who have mail-in ballots. There will be a statistical number of ballots that are checked to ensure accurate scanner usage. Initially it appeared that this would require forty hours of staff time, but it appears with the assistance of State this may be more reasonable. They will be utilizing scales to pull specific numbers of ballots. Given the hearings throughout the year, it seems to be a good option for Erie to participate.

Mr. Anderson has been working closely with Secretary Boockvar to negotiate for

cost effective equipment and a cost effective option for Erie County. There are some funds left in the security grant, so it will be a cost effective option. The Secretary of State is appreciative of Erie County for participating. Mr. Anderson suggested that some members of the Election Board show support by participating in this process.

Mr. Smith to provide the address to the Board for the warehouse where the audit will be held on Saturday at 9:00am.

Mr. Smith also noted that a candidate packet for Questions and Answers will be posted online. Additionally there will be a zoom candidate Q&A session in early February. Petitions begin February 16th and run through March 9th.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mrs. Clear at 3:58pm, Chairwoman Rennie adjourned the meeting.