

**CITY OF SUFFOLK ELECTORAL BOARD MINUTES
JANUARY 5, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER:

Erin Rice, Chairman, called to order the telephone conference call meeting of the City of Suffolk Electoral Board at 9:00 a.m., on Tuesday, January 5, 2021. This meeting was monitored by Charlie Harcum, Network Manager of the Information Technology Department for the City of Suffolk. The telephone conference call was necessitated by the Covid-19 virus and under the guidelines presented by Governor Northam.

ROLL CALL:

The following persons were in attendance on the conference call:

Erin Rice, Isaac Baker, Beverly Outlaw, Lester Ward, Susan Saunders, Charlie Harcum, Miller Cary, Jimmy Larue and Tim Johnson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

Ms. Saunders read the minutes from the November 4-6, 2020 meeting and Ms. Outlaw moved that the minutes be approved as read and Erin Rice seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 2-0.

Ms. Outlaw introduced the new Electoral Board member, Rev. Isaac Baker, who has been appointed to serve on the Electoral Board representing the Democratic Party.

REORGANIZATION:

The first order of business is reorganization of the Board:

Beverly Outlaw made a motion to nominate the following slate:

Erin Rice:	Chairman
Isaac Baker:	Vice Chairman
Beverly Outlaw:	Secretary

Rev. Baker seconded the motion and the vote carried 3-0.

Ms. Outlaw made a motion for Lester Ward to continue to serve as special consultant to the Electoral Board. Ms. Rice seconded the motion and it was carried by a vote of 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

Issues Raised regarding the November 3, 2020 General Election:

Ms. Outlaw: Was there adequate personal protective equipment for officers of election?

Ms. Saunders: Yes

Ms. Outlaw: Were there reports of inappropriate activity or behavior at the polling sites?

Ms. Saunders: None Reported

Ms. Rice: Reported that Olde Towne Precinct, located at the Salvation Army Building, was holding a food distribution on the same day as the Election, which presented some challenges.

Mr. Baker: Reported that he observed social distancing and the wearing of masks at the Southside Precinct and the officers of election were very efficient and polite.

Ms. Outlaw: Inquired if there were any equipment problems.

Ms. Saunders: None reported

Ms. Outlaw: The parking at the Holland Precinct, located at Holland Community House, was not adequate.

Ms. Outlaw: At the Ebenezer Precinct, located at CE&H Community House, there was construction on the road in front of the building. After being reported, construction ceased.

Ms. Outlaw: Asked Councilman Timothy Johnson for his opinion of an alternative site for the Holland Precinct. He commented that the parking was not adequate and suggested using either the Pioneer Elementary School or Holland Baptist Church, adding that both had adequate parking and areas for voting. Ms. Outlaw suggested that James Banks be contacted regarding communicating with Mr. Worrell about delaying the relocation of the precinct until after the redistricting. Councilman Johnson reiterated that Pioneer Elementary School and/or Holland Baptist Church had adequate egress and ingress and either would make an excellent site as a polling place. Councilman Johnson then excused himself from the meeting.

Ms. Outlaw: Inquired as to the remote viewing set up for the canvassing of the votes and if there were any complaints from the viewers.

Ms. Rice: Responded there were no complaints

Mr. Cary: Commented that during the canvassing of votes, he would prefer everyone being in the same room, however the remote viewing was adequate. The placement of the camera could have been adjusted so he could view all the members of the electoral board (he could not see Mr. Banks).

Rev. Baker: Suggested other ballot drop boxes be placed throughout the city.

Ms. Outlaw: Reviewed a complaint regarding an election official dumping manila folders into the trash receptacle in front of the office building at 440 Market Street. The Registrar and an Assistant Registrar emptied the receptacle and did not find any discarded voting material. This was a serious accusation and was treated with high importance, diligence and effort.

Ms. Rice: Stated she saw a need for more in-depth training of the officers of election regarding provisional voters.

Ms. Rice: There is a need to redesign the election night call-in sheet and asked for samples to review at next Board meeting.

Mr. Cary: There were issues regarding access of the observers at the opening of the polls, viewing the voting equipment and results tape at the end of the day.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Outlaw reviewed the email from Ms. Sheila Flanagan from VMASC, which notified that VMASC would not be available for use as a polling site after this year. Ms. Saunders will prepare an acknowledgement letter with a copy to the city manager and request that the facility remain accessible through 2021.

Mr. Miller Cary stated that the Electoral Board minutes were not easily accessible on the Registrar's website. Ms. Saunders will contact the IT Department in effort to make viewing of the minutes more user friendly.

Ms. Rice commented on the email received from the Department of Elections regarding a possible FOIA request. She pointed out that the Board had not yet received a formal request from the person and to table this item for further discussion at the next board meeting.

Ms. Outlaw commented on the budget for fiscal year 2021/2022. In considering the costs, we should take into consideration the following:

- Possible addition of a satellite office
- Early voting, an additional site for early voting for 45 days prior to elections
- Personnel and training costs
- Adequate office supplies and materials connected to the elections
- Redistricting and increased precincts costs

Ms. Rice suggested discussing the redistricting timetable at the next meeting

Ms. Outlaw inquired as to the date of the next election. Ms. Saunders replied the next election would be the June Primary (if held) on June 8, 2021. Ms. Outlaw commented that the Democratic Party called for an election and Ms. Rice commented that the Republican Party was calling for a convention.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m. The next Electoral Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., via a telephone conference call.

Erin Rice, Chairman

Rev. Isaac Baker, Vice Chairman

Beverly Outlaw, Secretary