

New Castle City Board of Elections
Minutes
December 28, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
1 Municipal Boulevard

Members Present: Richard Schiller
Connie Reese
Susan Hager
Bob Blakely

Mr. Schiller called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Mr. Schiller stated they do not expect any changes from the last election with the exception of social distancing and masking. The election will be held on April 15, 2023.

Mses. Hager and Reese stated they would remain on the Board. Mr. Schiller stated that he would not remain on the Board, but would not officially resign until after City Council is advised of how many new Board members must be appointed. Mr. Blakely is considering leaving the Board of Elections.

Minutes

A Motion to approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2021, meeting was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

Old Business

Voter Registration List

Mr. Schiller noted that there were issues with identifying eligible voters on the Voter Registration List provided by the County at the last election. Ms. Hager will contact the New Castle County Board of Elections to see what options are available in their Office to facilitate the process. Ms. Schiller noted that the past Chair, Marianne Caven, had a working relationship with the NCC Board of Elections; however due to staff changes in the County Board of Elections, the City had more challenges in obtaining the necessary data. Mr. Schiller opined it would behoove the current Board of Elections to try and establish a relationship with the County.

Training

Mr. Schiller noted that the County had indicated they would be holding training for new Board of Election members, and opined it would be worth investigating for the new Board members.

New Business

Ms. Reese noted that “Historic” was added to the postal address for New Castle and that may help the County when they prepare the City of New Castle Voter Registration List. Ms. Hager noted that it seems there is no easy way to manage the list other than manually pulling the City voters out of the list provided by the County. Mr. Schiller noted that residents are eligible if they have been a resident of the City for at least 30 days, and they can register up to five days prior to the election.

Public Comment

Andrew Zeltt – 33 East 6th Street

Mr. Zeltt asked how other municipalities handle the Voter Registration List. Ms. Reese explained that other municipalities have their own postal system; whereas the City of New Castle zip code (19720) includes not only the City of New Castle but a large portion of New Castle County that shares the 19720 zip code.

Mr. Zeltt asked why the City does not hold its elections during the General Elections. Mr. Schiller noted his understanding that the State does not include municipality elections because of the difficulty for Poll Workers to identify those voters who are only eligible to vote in the General Election and those voters who are eligible to vote in both the General Election and the City Election. Ms. Reese opined that would be a question for City Council.

Mr. Zeltt asked if the list of City taxpayers could be used to review the Voter Registration List. During discussion it was noted that the tax list would not include everyone who is eligible to vote in the City. Ms. Reese added that the Board did receive a list of all the streets in the City from the Board of Water and Light; but every person who pays taxes, water, or electric, would not be on their list. Mr. Schiller added that one of the primary problems at the last election was that could not verify someone's address as being in the City. Ms. Reese noted that the County required the City to review the Voter Registration List.

Ronald Pratt – 402A Chestnut Street

Mr. Pratt clarified that having "Historic" in the postal address may assist the County in pulling out eligible voters in the City of New Castle.

Mr. Pratt asked if the current Board members can elect new Board members. It was explained that each City Council member appoints one Board of Election member. Mr. Schiller suggested that Mr. Pratt notify City Council that he would be interested in serving on the Board of Elections.

Mr. Pratt asked if it would be a conflict of interest in the election if appointed Challengers have made public inflammatory statements about State Representatives or Senators. Mr. Schiller explained that Challengers are only allowed to "watch" and they are not allowed to interact with the Poll Workers, speak to the voters, or have any propaganda with them in the Polling Place. He added that Challengers are selected by the Candidates and the Board of Election does not qualify them or interact with them in any way during the election. Mr. Blakely opined that it would have no impact on the City election if a Challenger had a public issue with a State Representative or Senator. Ms. Reese added that Challengers are only allowed to listen for the names and take the names of the individuals who vote.

Miscellaneous

Future Meetings

Ms. Delgado, City Absentee Ballot Clerk, asked if the Board would be calling a meeting in January 2024. Mr. Schiller stated that he wanted to inform City Council that they need to appoint three new Board members.

Poll Workers

During discussion it was agreed that 10 Poll Workers should be sufficient for the April election.

Prior Election

Mr. Schiller noted that he thought absentee and early voting numbers would have been larger during the last election, but it seemed that many people voted in person and it was not what he expected. Ms. Delgado stated that she has those numbers and can provide them to the Board members.

New Board Members

Mr. Schiller noted his understanding that Marianne Caven had indicated her willingness to return to the Board of Elections.

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Schiller called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned the meeting at 7:33.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Weirich
City Stenographer