

# Meeting Minutes of the Sussex County Electoral Board

January 28, 2021

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING:** The purpose of the meeting was to elect Electoral Board officers for the upcoming year and to schedule a meeting to approve Officers of Election for the 2021 election cycle.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting of the Sussex County Electoral Board was called to order at 1:04 p.m. at the Office of the General Registrar of Sussex County by Electoral Board member Ronald Hicks.

## ROLL CALL:

Ronald Hicks  
Laverne Ford  
Al Peschke

A quorum was established. Also present at the meeting were:

William R. Jenkins, General Registrar of Sussex County  
Sareese Messier, Assistant Registrar of Sussex County

Ms. Ford was welcomed as the new member of the Electoral Board.

Mr. Hicks demanded the room be cleared of non-Board members and was reminded this was a public meeting. Mr. Hicks then demanded to go into private session to elect officers but was informed he could not do that. Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting but the motion failed for lack of a second.

## AGENDA:

### *Minutes.*

Mr. Peschke read the minutes of the November 6 Electoral Board meeting and moved to accept them as read. Ms. Ford seconded. The motion was carried with Mr. Hicks dissenting.

### *Certification of Sufficient Meeting Notice.*

Mr. Jenkins stated notice for this meeting was properly posted as required by law.

### *New Business.*

Mr. Hicks raised for discussion the pay records of the poll chief who, during the October 29 Electoral Board meeting, lodged a complaint against Mr. Hicks' behavior in her precinct during the November 3 election in particular and in previous elections in general. The Board agreed to table the discussion until such a time as Ms. Ford can become familiar with the matter.

Ms. Ford has not yet received the reference material customarily provided to new Electoral Board members. It was noted that the Registrar Liaison of the Virginia Department of Elections indicated he was mailing the materials to Ms. Ford. Mr. Jenkins volunteered to provide her with the reference materials he has and she was advised that past minutes of the Electoral Board can be found on the Electoral Board's page of the Sussex County website.

Mr. Hicks moved that the Chairmen of the Democrat Party of Sussex County and the Republican Party of Sussex County be notified of Electoral Board meetings. Mr. Peschke noted that he does notify his Republican Chair and asked Mr. Hicks if he notifies his Democrat chair. It was noted the law does not require individual notices to the party chairs. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Mr. Hicks questioned the integrity of the minutes heretofore submitted by the Secretary and said he will have the Board hire an outside party to take minutes in the future. A heated exchange ensued over the question of Mr. Peschke's integrity. A citizen observer left the room, stating she felt anxious and unsafe. Ms. Ford interceded and insisted the meeting proceed in a calm and orderly manner.

Mr. Peschke nominated Ms. Ford to fill the office of Chair of the Electoral Board for the upcoming year and Mr. Hicks seconded. As State law dictates the Chairman and Secretary must be of opposing parties, absent special circumstances, Mr. Peschke was therefore re-installed as Secretary and Mr. Hicks filled the remaining position of Vice Chair.

The members of the Board were provided with a list of candidates to serve as Officers of Election during 2021. A discussion ensued on whether to approve the candidates during this meeting or convene again next week to do it. Mr. Hicks questioned the county of residence of the listed candidates and wanted additional time to review the list and determine the political party of each before approving the names. Mr. Peschke moved to accept the list of potential officers of election for 2021 as submitted by the General Registrar. Mr. Hicks dissented. The chair recommended the issue be tabled until the following week. Mr. Peschke recommended the meeting be scheduled for Thursday, February 4, at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Peschke raised the subject of the State's mandatory annual Electoral Board training, which he completed online earlier in the month. Mr. Hicks did not complete it, and Ms. Ford had not yet been notified.

Mr. Hicks said Mr. Peschke does not qualify to be a member of the Electoral Board because he was chair of the Republican Party. Mr. Peschke clarified he was chair of the Republican Party until March of 2020, at which time a different person took that position and recommended him to replace the previous Republican Electoral Board member, who had resigned at the end of February.

*Adjournment:*

Mr. Peschke made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Hicks seconded, and the motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

*Next Meeting:* Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Al Peschke, Secretary  
Sussex County Electoral Board