



**Employees' Retirement Board of Rhode Island
Elections Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 23, 2012
8:45 a.m.
2nd Floor Conference Room, 50 Service Avenue**

The Monthly Meeting of the Elections Subcommittee of the Retirement Board was called to order at 8:53 a.m. Monday, January 23, 2012, on the 2nd Floor Conference Room, 50 Service Avenue, Warwick, RI

I. Roll Call of Members

The following members were present at roll call: Gary R. Alger; Daniel L. Beardsley; Deputy Treasurer Mark Dingley, Esq. for General Treasurer Gina M. Raimondo, and Jean Rondeau.

Also in attendance: Frank J. Karpinski, ERSRI Executive Director; Attorney Michael P. Robinson, Board Counsel.

Recognizing a quorum, Vice Chair Dingley called the meeting to order.

Frank R. Benell, Jr. excused himself from this meeting.

II. Executive Director's Report

Director Karpinski said there is a little situation that has transpired with the ballots. The blue sheets are for the active teachers, and the white sheets are for the retirees. Director said roughly 40,000 ballots were sent out which were accompanied with a return envelope, instruction booklet, and the ballot that came in a No. 10 envelope which is slightly bigger than the business reply envelope. When the ballots were mailed, there appeared a line which was created in the folding where the machine is picking up this line from the ink which possibly happened during mailing from the pressing of the rollers. As a result, the machine is not reading the ballot correctly because this line is so sensitive. When the Director went to the Board of Elections on Wednesday and witnessed that when the ballots were forced through, a bit more than half were successful in being read. Consequently, there are ballots that need to be manually read for the count as an option. Director spoke to Mr. Robert (Bob) Raposa at Board of Elections who recommended begin processing them now. Otherwise, on February 3, 2012, the candidates would have shown up where the count wasn't a smooth transition. In conversation with Mr. Raposa last Friday, January 20, 2012, Director Karpinski said Mr. Raposa had a bit over 12,500 ballots. Director expected around 20,000; Board of Elections thought there to be around 14,000. Director Karpinski said potentially looking at between 7,000 and 10,000 ballots to be counted manually. Mr. Raposa said it could take 3-5 days depending on the manpower which would include his own staff of 10 -12 of what can be read with no charges incurred. If the manpower isn't sufficient enough, then Mr. Raposa would have to hire temps where the ERSRI staff would provide assistance do the full count. Putting them back into the machine can tear them if overused, so caution is to be taken when feeding the ballots through the machine.

Mr. Beardsley reaffirmed that the machine can read some of them, but wanted to know the Board of Elections questions the accuracy of the machine read since the machine could misread information. Director said the machine would be able to read what can be read. The machine does provide reason codes if not read properly; and as an example, if someone checked off all the boxes instead of one when choosing a name, the machine would default with a rejected reason code that it couldn't read it.

Mr. Boudreau asked why not just read them all on February 3, 2012, and Mr. Raposa felt that the more read at an earlier stage, the less manpower that may be required in the event his staff couldn't handle the influx of unread ballots—just trying to get ahead of the game before February 3, 2012. Otherwise, if the process is left until February 3, 2012, more than likely more manpower would be needed.

General Counsel Dingley, Esq. asked how to separate the read and the unread, and Director said the ones that get read go to the bottom, and the unread ones go to the top. The machine is sophisticated enough to work at reading 400 ballots per minute along with a count of how many had run through at that given time. General Counsel Dingley, Esq. asked what happens to the ones that are written in ink, and Director said Mr. Raposa has a machine that can read ink depending on the kind of ink. For those that can't be read, Mr. Raposa will pull them and put them in the pile to be read manually.

General Counsel Dingley, Esq. wanted to be assured that Gaines'(??) question as to whether the ballots are being read are valid counts where a reading error could be evident without knowing. He felt that the process would be better if it wasn't done early so that when the candidates are there and the numbers are tallying up, they can get an idea where they stand in the count—giving them the ability to witness the process. The Subcommittee felt that the integrity of the ballot questioned is not what you want and to put the cost factor secondary. They felt what is more important is to have accurate information live.

Director said they rope the area off; and if there are discrepancies, they are addressed at that moment in time. Director wants to be assured of the integrity of the accuracy of the reading of the ballots once processing through the machine.

Recounts can be available. Mr. Rondeau asked if there are any stipulations for allowances before a recount wouldn't be applicable, and Attorney Robinson said there is nothing in the Retirement statutes, but there is something in the regulation that deals with elections, and it basically vests the Subcommittee with authority to run the process either through the Subcommittee or via the agent, e.g. Board of Elections and then to certify the results to the Board. However, it must be addressed to the Board first regardless of the spread in the count to be applicable—the Board would make the decision if a recount was prudent or not.

On a motion by General Counsel Mark Dingley, Esq. and seconded by Daniel L. Beardsley, it was unanimously

VOTED: To refrain from counting the ballots ahead of time but rather to count them the day of the February 3, 2012 and for Director Karpinski to check the validity of the ballot machine's reading each ballot with the Board of Elections

Director Karpinski said that the final count will more than likely not be accessible at the February 8, 2012 Retirement Board meeting. He also said the installation of the chosen candidates is not even until March, where at the March meeting the results of the election will be said

III. Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Board, on a motion by General Counsel Mark Dingley, Esq. and seconded by Jean Rondeau the meeting adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank J. Karpinski

Executive Director