

The regular monthly meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Thomas Ferrell on Friday, January 24th, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call:	(D) Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman	Present
	(R) Lisa M. Crescimano, Member	Present
	(D) MaryAnn Groot, Member	Present
	(R) John C. Adams, Member	Present

Guests in attendance: Jason Hinnars from Erie County Prosecutor's office, Amy Grubbe, and Gary Smith

Ms. Groot motioned to approve the minutes from the December 18th regular meeting, with Ms. Crescimano seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried.

Alex Jones, director, presented the January bills to the board. He stated that we have two Then and Now Certificates for larger bills, because this time of year we get billed for annual contract fees. The board members reviewed the bills. Ms. Crescimano motioned to approve the bills and the two Then and Now certificates, with Ms. Groot seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried.

For the director's report, Mr. Jones noted that W2s have been issued. He also stated that there will be a county wide election in May. Depending on what the ballot looks like, we may recommend reduced staffing at certain precincts. He thinks most of the county will have just one issue. Ms. Groot asked what the issue was. Mr. Jones replied that it is a renewal of a piece of language in the constitution that sunsets in July.

Mr. Jones noted that we need to reschedule our February meeting. All issues and petitions must be certified by February 17th, which is the Monday before our next meeting. The filing deadline for issues and petitions is February 5th. After some discussion, the board members decided to reschedule the meeting for Tuesday, February 11th at 3:00 p.m.

Under new business was voting equipment allocation and PEO allocation for the May 2025 Special Election. Mr. Jones recommended the same equipment levels as the November election: one Expressvote and one scanner per polling location, except for the locations with three precincts, where we would issue two scanners. We will make a recommendation for PEO allocation after the filing deadline, at the next meeting. Ms. Groot motioned to accept this allocation of equipment, with Ms. Crescimano seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried.

Also under new business was approval of candidate petitions. Adrienne James, deputy director, stated that two candidates filed for a municipal court judge. Both candidates have more than enough valid signatures and completed their petitions correctly. The board reviewed the candidates' petitions. Ms. Crescimano motioned to approve the petitions, with Ms. Groot seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried. The candidates approved are as follows:

- Carl J. Kamm III, candidate for Judge of Erie County Municipal Court, Republican
- Michael D. Kaufman, candidate for Judge of Sandusky Municipal Court, Republican

Ms. Crescimano motioned to approve the ballot name change request for Mr. Kamm to go on the ballot as CJ Kamm. Ms. Groot seconded. All board members voted yes; motion carried.

The last item under new business was approval of issue filings for the May 2025 Special Election. Two subdivisions have filed their resolutions of necessity, resolutions to proceed, and auditor's certificates. We have submitted the ballot language to the Secretary of State. Ms. Crescimano motioned to approve the issue filings, with Ms. Groot seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried. The issues approved are as follows:

- Village of Bay View, additional tax levy, current operating expenses for police department, 4 mills, 5 years, commencing in 2025, first due in calendar year 2026
- Vermilion Local School District, bond issue, \$47,000,000, 30 years, 3.91 mills, commencing in 2025, first due in calendar year 2026

Mr. Ferrell asked if there were any other matters to come before the board. Mr. Adams noted that he and Ms. Crescimano attended a breakout session for medium counties at the Winter Conference. Somebody brought up what people did for the holidays. The vast majority said they shut their offices down. Mr. Adams stated he brought up what happened in our county, without mentioning names or parties, and they were aghast. We failed to do what most of the other counties did. We would have only given the employees six days off, which was in line with everyone else. No one was concerned about their constituents not being served, because everyone understood this is the least busy time for Boards of Elections.

Ms. Groot stated that had we done that in 2023, we would not have received the correspondence from the person filing an objection to a candidate. It's not that she doesn't want to give employees time off; it's just a matter of closing the whole office. We've already come to the terms that during non-election periods, only one member needs to be in the office. To give the employees additional days off, we could have had two employees come in one day, and two come in another day. This way the employees could have gotten extra days off, but the office wouldn't be closed.

Mr. Adams stated he shares the importance of having someone here, but we don't need to have someone here the whole time. Someone could have come in just to check the mail and the messages, and then leave. People still would have been served. Ms. Crescimano pointed out that Mr. Jones was willing to check the mail last year, so we were able to receive the challenge letter.

Mr. Ferrell indicated we would have this issue next year, and we would need to make a decision based upon personnel policies. Mr. Adams stated his purpose is not to be combative, but to find out what other counties did and report back.

Mr. Hinnars stated we can address this in the personnel policy as to what the policy will be regarding time off around the holidays. He also suggested addressing it before the December meeting. Ms. Crescimano noted we would have the same issue again with Columbus Day this year.

Mr. Adams motioned to adjourn, with Ms. Groot seconding. The board adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Alexander W. Jones, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman