

March 15, 2024

### Switzerland County Election Board Meeting

The Switzerland County Election Board meeting was called to order by Karin Dutkiewicz. Those in attendance were: Karin Dutkiewicz, Tom Conroy, William Johnson, Lisa Fisher, Cindy Haskell, Travis Richards, Glenn Scott, Vicky Hinman, Ryan Marshall, Annie Hicks, Sondra Furnish, Carla VanNorstran, Rita Brogan, Stacey Mathews, Connie Christman, Laurie Peters, Lisa Leap, Shona Hysell, Cyndi Harris, Pamela Reed and Jamie Peters.

Karin opened the meeting stating they were trying to video the meeting so others could see/hear the meeting. Karin stated she had written a statement and would be presenting it to the group and asked that everyone hold their thoughts and questions until she completed her speech.

Karin's speech is italicized below:

*First of all, thank you for being here.*

*2<sup>nd</sup>, I'm not entertaining discussion until the end of our meeting.*

*And, here's why:*

*First, the Secretary of State requires the Election Board to post a notice 48 hours prior to the meeting. That WAS done. The Secretary of State does not require the meetings to be held at a specific time. I WILL address that in a bit.*

*Second, those that started a firestorm on Facebook and those that added fuel, should be ashamed. Rumors were started based on half-truths. This is NOT the way I conduct business. All anyone had to do was call and speak to me. I may not always have the answers but, I will make sure I find time to get them. Your questions are that important to me.*

*Yesterday, the phone in my office rang off the hook. My staff spent the better part of the day fielding questions looking for contact information for local officials, political figures, etc.*

*My staff has a very pivotal position within the courthouse, work extremely hard to keep the paperwork flowing and are extremely busy, even more so with such short time before to the election. They were taken away from doing their jobs which, wasted resources, their time and taxpayer money slowing courthouse work.*

*Throughout the day, NOT ONE person actually contacted me with the exception of Connie Adams and I promised her that I would be her voice. Connie voiced concerns about Moorefield, plus, she didn't like the fact that the meeting was at a time not convenient to the taxpayers.*

*So, thank you Connie for your honesty. **Our public meetings will now be scheduled at a time that is more conducive to people that work during the day.***

*Now to Moorefield. This board met in good faith. The decision to remove Moorefield was not unilateral. It was not because of one individual. It was simply because there were not enough resources to accommodate the additional locations. And, it entails much hands-on work to make it happen. So, at that meeting the board voted unanimously to remove two locations.*

*Our Election Board sent the amended plan to the State Elections Division.*

*Our amended plan was then sent back to us. We were found in violation of State of Indiana Election Law. Here is the excerpt from the State Election Division email:*

*I'd flag you that I believe the plan does not comply with state law. The early voting locations required the two Saturdays before Election Day must be a vote center location used on Election Day. See page 148 of the 2024 Election Administrator's Manual or IC 3-11-18.1-4(15). Because the East Enterprise Fire Department and Posey Fire Department are not used on Election Day, then they cannot be used as an early voting location. If you added the SwitzCo Technology Center to the two Saturdays of early voting, then using the other two sites would be fine. Otherwise, you would need to add the fire stations as Election Day voting sites to be in compliance with IC 3-11-18.1-4(15).*

*I spoke with the Secretary of State to verify that this information is correct.*

*Each open polling site requires 6 people to run it every hour they are open. One clerk from each party, one judge from each party and one inspector from each party. It also takes a huge amount of volunteers to move a mountain of which we are seriously lacking. There has been shrinking interest in helping with elections. So, here's the new plan with the following conditions: we will vote to approve the plan by adding Moorefield. Our community will put their money where their mouth is and sign on as volunteers.*

*The harsh reality is that if we do not have enough volunteers to help maneuver equipment for the duration of our election cycle, Moorefield may remain a thing of the distant path. And no one wants that.*

*Here is a sign-up sheet and I can wait while we get some signatures.*

*Or, I can table the discussion, leave the clip board in my office until we have a new crew of volunteers.*

*Our strength lies with its greatest asset. Our community.*

*As a community, the choice is yours.*

*I will entertain some discussion.*

*If all of us are ready, we will take a vote.*

The speech ended by stating the Election Board simply needs help with setting up the election. A volunteer sign up sheet was passed in the audience while the meeting was continuing and the audience was assured that Moorefield Fire Department was indeed going to be voted on favorably.

Karin opened up some discussion for the audience and several questions were asked.

At which time, Ryan Marshall spoke stating he was not there as a Prosecutor, but as a citizen of the county from Jefferson Township and a taxpayer. He stated that he "believed that this was an attempt at voter suppression". And, then very quickly he asked the audience "By a show of hands, who here believes that this was an attempt at voter suppression"?

Jamie Peters stated there was a public meeting scheduled and this was not for voter suppression. William Johnson, Election Board member, stood up and stated this was definitely NOT voter suppression. "We offer 30 days voting to individuals that are unable to vote election day in the

Courthouse basement. If individuals are unable to get to the poles they may call the office and set up appointments for Tom Conroy and I to come to their home and bring the vote to them. We go to the hospitals and nursing homes and anyone that may need us". Ryan thanked Will for his information.

Karin stated in order to get the information out to our citizens she would like video coverage at the meetings, and to add information to our website ([www.switzerland-county.in.gov](http://www.switzerland-county.in.gov)) calendar as changes occur.

Karin stated to the group she had travel board and absentee ballot requests, as well as, voter registration if anyone would like some to take with them to pass out.

TJ Richards stated if you need volunteers, "You've got it!" TJ stated he would do what he could and get a few others to help out.

Will stated we needed to shrink the polling places but when this happens we need to advertise by email, websites, Facebook isn't working maybe the local paper. Glenn Scott stated he understood the Board is trying to do away with some mobile locations, but the word didn't reflect that. Glenn stated in the past the county highway men were used to move equipment to locations.

Karin read the proposed locations:

Early Voting -Switzerland Co Courthouse-basement - April 9-May 6, 2024

Saturday April 27, 2024 East Enterprise Fire Department 8am-12pm, Posey Fire Department 2pm-6pm and Switzerland County Tech Building 2am-6pm

Saturday, May 4, 2024 – Moorefield Fire Department 8am -12pm and Switzerland Co Technology Center 2pm-6pm

Election Day May 7, 2024 Switzerland Co Technology Center 6am-6pm

Ryan Marshall stood and said thank you to the Board and re-iterated that he appreciated the clarification of it not being voter suppression.

Karin stated the Election Board would vote on the opening of the Moorefield voting location. Will Johnson made the motion to use new time for the Moorefield location seconded by Tom Conroy and passing unanimously.

Will stated the Moorefield closing was discussed for money and logistics, NOT voter suppression.

Lisa Fisher stated that it is hard to locate anyone that can give up 10 days to travel with the locations because they work. This is why retirees are our picks.

With no further business, motion by Tom to adjourn and seconded by Will passing unanimously.