

5-B

MOTION:

**August 1, 2017
Regular Meeting
Res. No. 17-**

SECOND:

**RE: AUTHORIZE A PUBLIC HEARING TO CHANGE EXISTING
PRECINCT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISH NEW POLLING PLACES
AND NEW PRECINCT NAMES – BRENTSVILLE, COLES, AND
POTOMAC MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS**

ACTION:

WHEREAS, according to Virginia Code §24.2-307, the General Registrar must notify the governing body when the number of registered voters exceeds 5,000; and, the governing body shall proceed to revise the precinct boundaries and add additional precincts, as deemed necessary; and

WHEREAS, on April 6, 2017, the General Registrar notified the Board of County Supervisors of precincts exceeding 4,000 registered voters; and recommended, precincts which are over 4,300 registered voters be addressed first, preferably before the November, 2017 Gubernatorial Election; and

WHEREAS, as of July 1, 2017, Marstellar, Bristow Run, Yorkshire, and Potomac precincts are at 4,471, 4,829, 4,384, and 4,505, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Elections proposes the Marstellar precinct, in Brentsville Magisterial District, be split three ways; resulting in the Marstellar precinct, Manor precinct, and Dunbarton precinct; and

WHEREAS, the Bristow Run precinct, in Brentsville Magisterial District, be split in half and become a super precinct; containing two precincts at one polling place location; resulting in the Bristow Run precinct and Worthington precinct; and

WHEREAS, the Yorkshire precinct, in Coles Magisterial District, be split along the Senate District line of 29 and 39. Voters in Senate District 29 would continue to vote at Yorkshire precinct and voters in Senate District 39 would vote at Parkside precinct; and

WHEREAS, the Potomac precinct, in the Potomac Magisterial District, be split in half. One half of the voters will remain at the Potomac precinct and the other half will vote at Williams precinct; and

WHEREAS, in establishing the new polling places, Virginia Code §24.2-310 has been satisfied, requiring that the polling place for each precinct shall be located within the county or city and either within the precinct or within one mile of the precinct boundary; and

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WHEREAS, on May 19, 2017, the Prince William County Electoral Board voted to request the Board of County Supervisors to authorize a public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names in the Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts; and

WHEREAS, any changes to current polling places and precinct names or establishment of new sites must occur by County ordinance, preceded by a public hearing in accordance with §24.2-306 of the Virginia Code; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince William Board of County Supervisors does hereby authorize a public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names in the Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk to the Board shall properly advertise notice of the public hearing, once a week for two successive weeks prior to the public hearing, for the stated purpose in a newspaper of general circulation in Prince William County.

Votes:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent from Vote:

Absent from Meeting:

For Information:

Director of Elections

Elections Administrator

ATTEST: _____

Clerk to the Board



Christopher E. Martino
County Executive

COUNTY OF PRINCE WILLIAM
OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT
1 County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia 22192-9201
(703) 792-6600 Metro 631-1703 FAX: (703) 792-7484

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July 12, 2017

TO: Board of County Supervisors

FROM: Michele L. White, Director of Elections
Prince William County Electoral Board

THRU: Christopher Martino
County Executive

RE: Authorize a Public Hearing to Change Existing Precinct Boundaries and Establish New Polling Places and New Precinct Names – **Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts**

I. Background in chronological order is as follows:

- A. Virginia Code §24.2-307 – The General Registrar must notify the governing body when the number of registered voters exceeds 5,000; and furthermore, within six months of such notice the governing body shall proceed to revise the precinct boundaries and add additional precincts, as deemed necessary.
- B. Notification of Precincts Exceeding 4,000 Registered Voters – On April 6, 2017, the General Registrar notified the Board of County Supervisors of ten precincts that have surpassed 4,000 registered voters. The General Registrar and the Electoral Board further recommended that precincts which are already over 4,300 registered voters should be addressed first, preferably before the November 2017 Gubernatorial Election. The four precincts with over 4,300 registered voters are as follows:
 1. Marstellar Precinct – This precinct is in the Brentsville Magisterial District. As of July 1, 2017, it serves 4,471 registered voters. It contains a Senate District split of 13 and 29.
 2. Bristow Run Precinct – This precinct is in the Brentsville Magisterial District. As of July 1, 2017, it serves 4,829 registered voters.
 3. Yorkshire Precinct – This precinct is in the Coles Magisterial District. As of July 1, 2017, it serves 4,384 registered voters. It contains a Senate District split of 29 and 39.

4. Potomac Precinct – This precinct is in the Potomac Magisterial District. As of July 1, 2017, it serves 4,505 registered voters.
- C. Electoral Board Seeks Change – On May 19, 2017, The Prince William County Electoral Board voted to request the Board of County Supervisors to authorize a public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries, establish additional precincts and establish new polling places in the Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts.

II. Current Situation is as follows:

- A. Public Hearing – In order to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names, it is necessary to conduct a public hearing to accept public comments on the proposed changes, according to §24.2-306 of the *Code of Virginia*.
- B. Descriptions and Maps – Code of Virginia §24.2-306 states the published notice shall state where descriptions and maps of the proposed boundary and polling place changes may be inspected. Office of Elections will have these descriptions and maps available for public inspection at its Main Office in Manassas and on its website.
- C. Proposed Polling Place Changes – The Electoral Board proposes the following formal action at the public hearing:
 1. Marsteller Precinct – This precinct has a Senate District split of 13 and 29. The voters in this precinct will be split three ways. The school will become a super precinct; whereas, it contains two precincts within one polling place location. Approximately one-third of the remaining voters will go to a newly established polling place at a different location.
 - a. Marsteller Precinct – Marsteller Middle School will continue to serve the Marsteller precinct. The auxiliary gym will continue to be the voting location within the school. It will serve approximately 1,836 registered voters who are in Senate District 29.
 - b. Manor Precinct – Marsteller Middle School will also be the location for the new precinct, which will be called the Manor precinct. The auxiliary gym will be the voting location within the school. It will serve approximately 1,836 registered voters who are in Senate District 29.
 - c. Dunbarton Precinct – Dunbarton Club located at 9600 Craighill Drive, Bristow, VA 20136 will be the new polling place. It will become the Dunbarton precinct. Voters will use the Ballroom as their voting location within the Clubhouse. It will serve approximately 800 registered voters who are in the Senate District split of 13 and 29.

2. Bristow Run Precinct – The voters in this precinct will be split in half. The school will become a super precinct; whereas, it will contain two precincts within one polling place location.
 - a. Bristow Run Precinct – Bristow Run Elementary School will continue to serve the Bristow Run precinct. The cafeteria / gymnasium will continue to be the voting location within the school. This precinct will serve approximately 2,415 registered voters.
 - b. Worthington Precinct – Bristow Run Elementary School will also be the location for the new precinct, which will be called the Worthington precinct. The cafeteria / gymnasium will be the voting location within the school. This precinct will serve approximately 2,415 registered voters.
3. Yorkshire Precinct – The voters in this precinct will be split in half; along the Senate District split of 29 and 39. Voters who are in Senate District 29 will stay at Yorkshire and the voters who are in Senate District 39 will be moved to a new polling place. These changes will address the current split precinct.
 - a. Yorkshire Precinct – Yorkshire Elementary School will continue to be the polling place location for the Yorkshire precinct. Voters will continue to use the gymnasium as their voting location within the school. This precinct will now serve 3,196 registered voters who are in Senate District 29.
 - b. Parkside Precinct – Parkside Middle School located at 8602 Mathis Avenue, Manassas, VA 20110 will be the new polling place location. It will be called the Parkside precinct. The auxiliary gym will be the voting location within the school. It will serve approximately 1,188 registered voters who are in Senate District 39.
4. Potomac Precinct – The voters in this precinct will be split in half. One-half of the voters will remain at the Potomac precinct and the other half will be moved to a new polling place.
 - a. Potomac Precinct – Potomac High School will continue to be the polling place location for the Potomac precinct. Voters will continue to use the band room as their designated voting location within the school building. The precinct will now serve approximately 2,253 registered voters.
 - b. Williams Precinct – Mary Williams Elementary School located at 3100 Panther Pride Drive, Dumfries, VA 22026 will be the new polling place. It will be called the Williams precinct. The gymnasium will be the voting location within the school. It will serve approximately 2,253 registered voters.

- C. Requirements for Polling Places – Virginia Code §24.2-310 requires that the polling place for each precinct shall be located within the county or city and either within the precinct or within one mile of the precinct boundary. This requirement has been satisfied in the above proposed polling place changes.
- D. Super Precinct – A super precinct is where two (or more) precincts exist at one physical address. The voting location inside the building may be shared (in one room) or separated into different rooms. Each precinct has its own set of voting equipment and Election Officers. Voters vote at their respective precincts. Office of Elections currently has two super precincts. This report proposes the addition of two more for a total of four.
- E. Agreement with New Sites – Office of Elections has met with the Principals and their Staff of the Schools and Board Members of non-school facilities. With their consent, Office of Elections will use the designated voting location within the buildings.
- F. Increased Number of Precincts – This will increase the number of precincts in Prince William County from 92 to 97. This does not include the additional five in-person absentee vote centers.
- G. Board Action Requested – The Board of County Supervisors is requested to authorize a public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names in the Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts.

III. Issues in order of importance are as follows:

- A. Service Level / Policy Impacts – What service level or policy impacts are affected by the authorization of a public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names?
- B. Fiscal Impacts – What are the fiscal impacts of authorizing the public hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names?
- C. Timing Issues – When should the Board of County Supervisors act on authorizing the public hearing?
- D. Legal Issues – Does the Board have the authority to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names?

IV. Alternatives in order of feasibility are:

- A. Authorize a Public Hearing to change existing precinct boundaries and establish new polling places and new precinct names in the Brentsville, Coles, and Potomac Magisterial Districts.
 - 1. Service Level / Policy Impacts – There are no service level or policy impacts in authorizing a public hearing. Establishing new polling places and new precincts will improve voting services and provide a better voting

experience for voters for future elections. Office of Elections will update signs and maps to reflect the changes of the new polling places. Voter notifications must be mailed out to all affected voters in the given precinct areas, at least 15 days prior to the next general election; §24.2-306(B) *Code of Virginia*.

2. Fiscal Impacts – There are no fiscal impacts in the authorization of a public hearing. However, Office of Elections has estimated the cost for establishing the new polling places and the new precincts at approximately \$25,000 per new polling place. This entails Election Officer pay, voting supplies, updating maps, purchasing new voting equipment such as Hart Verity Scans and Hart Verity Touchwriters, electronic pollbooks, printers, tablets, scanners, and security cages used to house and deliver all the voting equipment. A transfer of \$125,000 will be required from the contingency budget to fund five new precincts for FY2018. A \$125,000 increase in Office of Elections base budget will be required for FY2019 and beyond. Virginia Code §24.2-111 requires localities to pay reasonable expenses for the conduct of elections.
3. Timing Issues – Approval for authorization of the public hearing at the August 1, 2017 Board Meeting would be ideal because §24.2-306 of the *Code of Virginia* prohibits any change in election precincts and polling locations within 60 days of a coming general election. Therefore, timely Board action is critical so that the Office of Elections will have sufficient time to adequately prepare for the November 7, 2017, General Election.
4. Legal Issues – §24.2-307 of the *Code of Virginia*, authorizes the governing body to establish as many precincts as it deems necessary and to establish one polling place for each precinct. It is standing policy that prior authorization for public hearing is required.

B. Take No Action

1. Service Level / Policy Impacts – If new polling places are not established, voters will continue to vote at their current precincts. Long lines will ensue and wait time for voters to cast their votes will increase. Thereby, Office of Elections will be unable to conduct elections at service levels that meet the expectations of the County's voters.
2. Fiscal Impacts – None.
3. Timing Issues – If a public hearing is not authorized, new polling places will not be established in time for the upcoming November General Election.
4. Legal Issues – If no action is taken, new polling places will not be established and the Board will not be in compliance of with Virginia Code §24.2-307, once precinct levels exceed 5,000 registered voters.

Establish New Polling Places

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V. **Recommendation** is that the Board of County Supervisors concurs with Alternative A and approves the attached Resolution.

Staff: Michele L. White x6472
Rizwana Ahmad x5975