

Reviewed by: _____

ELECTION BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2012

Those present at the Election Board Special Meeting held in Room 100 of the Courthouse Annex:

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| Commissioner Tim Brooks | Commissioner Vince Witherup |
| Commissioner Bonnie Summers | Denise Jones, Chief Clerk |
| Abby Flockerzi, Admin. Assistant | Rich Winkler, Solicitor |
| Geraldine McGuinness, Voter Registration | Kristen Miller, Clerk |
| Tim Johnson, Domestic Relations | Heather Mohnkern, Auditor |
| Craig Adams, Citizen | John P. Blanchard, Citizen |
| Sandra D. Blanchard, Citizen | |
| Charles E. Breene, Venango Co. Republican Committee | |
| Steve Eakin, Citizen | Diane Gramley, Citizen |
| Michael R. Hadley, Esq., Counsel for Rose Adams | |
| Keith Klingler, Citizen | |
| Michael Musone, Esq., Knox, McLaughlin, Gornall and Senntt, P.C. | |
| Jane Ritchey, Citizen | Scott Smail, Citizen |

Call to Order:

Commissioner Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Mr. Michael Hadley stated that since he is counsel for Rose Adams, he would request that he be able to be heard from during the agenda item time labeled 3a for Ms. Rose Adams. Commissioner Brooks assured Mr. Hadley that he could address the board at that time.

Mr. Michael Musone from Knox, McLaughlin, Gornall and Sennett, P.C. was at the meeting on behalf of the Leadership of Venango County Republican Party. He stated that he was not attending the meeting on behalf of one particular candidate or petitioner. Mr. Musone's client is objecting to the entire proceedings on the grounds that it was not timely and that it exceeds the scope of the Election Board's investigative powers.

Mr. Tim Johnson inquired as to who Mr. Musone's client was and was told it was the Leadership of Venango County.

Items for Review:

- a. **Ms. Rose Adams** – Ms. Adams' petition contained 10 signatures, 9 of which were valid and 1 of which was from a registered Democrat.

Mr. Hadley recapped that Ms. Adams' petition was filed in the Commissioners' Office on February 6, 2012 and there were no objections raised. The next communication Ms. Adams received from the Election Board was a letter dated February 21, 2012. This letter was due to a complaint filed by Diane Gramley.

According to Mr. Hadley, there are only two statutes that cover this – 2936 C and 2937 Title 25. Title 25, Section 2937 deals with a seven day window for citizens to file challenges in the Court of Common Pleas and that has not been done.

Mr. Hadley states that he believes the Election Board is proceeding under 2936. He doesn't see anything under 2936 where the Election Board has the authority to inquire into the party registration of anybody who signed a petition. He sees where the Board can question the genuineness of a signature. Nobody disputes the person who signed their name is that person. Ms. Adams has 10 genuine petition signatures.

Also, Mr. Hadley states that the laws compels that the petitions should be reviewed timely. Mr. Hadley contends the Election Board did not review the petitions timely as under these circumstances Ms. Adams would have had 8 days to correct and amend her petition.

Mr. Hadley strongly encourages the Election Board not to throw out Ms. Adams' petition – it's not timely, it's not proper and it's not within the Board's jurisdiction.

- b) **Ms. Sandra Blanchard** – Ms. Blanchard's Candidate's Affidavit portion of her petition was not notarized. Ms. Blanchard asked what she could do to fix her petition. Commissioner Brooks advised her that would be up to the Courts.
- c) **Ms. Martha Breene** – Ms. Breene did not circulate her own petition yet signed her own name in the Signature of Circulator portion of the Affidavit of Circulator portion of the petition and the notary's name was printed on the petition not signed.
- d) **Mr. Samuel Breene** – Mr. Breene did not circulate his own petition yet signed his own name in the Signature of Circulator portion of the Affidavit of Circulator portion of the petition and the notary's name was printed on the petition not signed.
- e) **Mr. Kenneth Bryan** – Mr. Bryan's petition contained 9 signatures from other parties and only 4 valid signatures.
- f) **Mr. Joseph M. Dougherty** – Mr. Dougherty's petition contained 1 signature from another precinct and only 9 valid signatures.
- g) **Mr. Trevor M. Hile** – Mr. Hile's Affidavit of Circulator and Candidate's Affidavit were not notarized.
- h) **Ms. Ava E. Hogue** – Ms. Hogue's petition contained 7 signatures from other parties and only 8 valid signatures.

- i) **Mr. Keith A. Klingler** - Mr. Klingler's Affidavit of Circulator and Candidate's Affidavit were not notarized. Mr. Klingler questioned whether the number of signatures he obtained on the petition was fine and Commissioner Brooks confirmed this.

Commissioner Brooks noted that the signatures on the other 45 petitions had been checked for the validity and also the petitions were checked for the presence of both notary stamps.

Petitions to be Accepted:

A motion was made by Commissioner Witherup to reject the above mentioned nine petitions and return them to the petitioners, seconded by Commissioner Summers, aye all.

A motion was made by Commissioner Summers to accept the remaining 45 petitions, seconded by Commissioner Witherup, aye all.

Public Comment:

Mr. Hadley asked the Board how they could make a statement as to Ms. Martha Breene and Mr. Samuel Breene not circulating their own petitions. Commissioner Brooks explained that the Board had received a notarized letter stating that another circulator other than Martha Breene or Samuel Breene personally appeared before them to sign these petitions.

Mr. Craig Adams explained that he had picked up a packet of information that contained a booklet with a date of February 21, 2012 as the last date to file objections. He asked the Board if this is the last date to file objections, how the Board can reject petitions when February 21 has past. It was explained to Mr. Adams that the date of February 21 applies to the general public.

Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

Commissioner Witherup made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:16 pm, seconded by Commissioner Summers, aye all.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby R. Flockerzi, Admin. Assist

