

Scott County Board of Supervisors
March 10, 2020 8:00 a.m.

The Board of Supervisors met pursuant to adjournment with Beck, Knobbe, Croken, Kinzer and Maxwell present.

This special meeting was called for the purpose of canvassing the votes cast at the March 3, 2020 City of Eldridge and North Scott School District Special Elections.

Roxanna Moritz, County Auditor, said 78 percent of the votes cast were in favor of the public measures. She said the high percentage was due to early voting.

Moved by Croken, seconded by Beck a motion to certify the results of the March 3, 2020 City of Eldridge and North Scott School District Special Elections. Roll Call: All Ayes.

Supervisor Knobbe asked how many of the total votes cast were early votes.

Moritz said about 1,500 were cast early. She said that after a discussion with officials from the City of Eldridge and the North Scott School District and she assigned election poll workers that were not from that area to insure impartiality.

Moritz said she spoke with Mahesh Sharma, County Administrator, in regards to the corona virus. She said she knows it is not now at serious levels in Scott County, but in two months Iowa will have a primary election. She said as President of ISACA, she is having talks with the Secretary of State about a vote by mail only primary. She said there were various legal impediments to conducting an all-mail election. She said her fallback would be to send to every voter an absentee ballot request form and a letter encouraging them to vote by mail. She said she may not have enough poll workers but may still legally have to open all of the poll sites, and wants to limit exposure of the public and poll workers to corona virus.

Knobbe said there is a lot of unknowns about this virus and that he and Sharma attended a meeting with heads of the hospitals, heads of the health departments from both Scott and Rock Island Counties and Dr. Katz. He said that he learned that the disease took off and spread very rapidly, but came down equally rapidly.

Moritz said her poll workers, who tend to be elderly, are being told to not go out to avoid exposure to the virus, she is right in the middle calling of poll workers for training. She said she would like the Board to give her the finances to mail the letter and absentee request forms.

Supervisor Kinzer said many venues are being cancelled and that because Moritz has conducted elections for a long time he agrees with her about being proactive.

Moritz said she thinks this is an opportunity that is important enough to mail the requests.

Supervisor Croken said there is no treatment, there is no vaccine, and the only way the cases are coming down is by social distancing. He asked if a motion to authorize the funding could be added to the Tuesday, March 15th agenda.

Mary Thee, Assistant County Administrator, said she is assuming the request will be for more than \$15,000 dollars.

Moritz said yes, and that she wants this to be a partnership, her and the Board protecting the public by taking a proactive stance.

Kinzer said a unified stance is important because if Scott County did nothing the disease could get worse.

Supervisor Beck asked if the Board approves the request and the Governor issues an executive order to send a mailing, would that order change the County's cost.

Moritz answered no.

Beck also asked about the people registered no party.

Moritz said she would send an absentee form to every registered voter and the letter would instruct voters to specify which party ballot they want.

She said she would issue news releases and outreach to the news media to encourage people to mail back the request forms. She said it could result in an increased turn out.

Knobbe asked about consultation with the Secretary of State and when the Secretary might make a decision.

Moritz said within a week. She said the imperatives to order ballots and to start training poll workers in the larger counties means a decision needs to be made sooner than later. She said workers may not want to attend training.

Knobbe said that he was thinking about timing.

Moritz said that the key is giving her the authority to spend money for the mailing and then waiting to see what happens in the next month. She said that would give some assurance about the future, especially if poll workers start saying they do not want to work.

Kinzer said that the issue needs to be discussed at the next committee of the whole meeting.

Moritz said that she is exploring other options for recruiting poll workers, such as teachers, St. Ambrose University and organized labor.

Moved by Beck, seconded by Maxwell at 8:23 a.m. a motion to adjourn the special meeting. All Ayes.

Tony Knobbe, Chair of the Board
Scott County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: Roxanna Moritz
Scott County Auditor