

MINUTES

February 6, 2024

MEETING OF THE ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS 701 Kelly Road, Room 230, Cumberland, Maryland

ATTENDEES: John Stakem, President
Armand Pannone, Board Attorney
Richard DeVore, Member
Lisa Lyons, Member
Debbie Johnson, Member
Cecilia Pittman, Member
Diane Loibel, Election Administrator (attended virtually)

ABSENT: Wendy Maddux, Deputy Director

PUBLIC: None

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

Mr. Stakem called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M., and stated that there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Stakem called for alterations, corrections, and/or approval of the minutes. Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the December board minutes. Mr. DeVore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Pannone wanted to remind staff to be vigilant regarding cyber security.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADDITIONS

None

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Attorney Meetings for Primary Election

Mrs. Loibel provided the virtual meeting schedule for the attorney's meetings prior to the Presidential Primary Election. Mr. Pannone will try to be available to participate on the scheduled days. Meeting dates include:

- Friday, March 15, 2024 @ 9:00am

- Tuesday, April 9, 2024 @ 9:00am
- Tuesday, April 23, 2024 @ 9:00am
- Tuesday, May 7, 2024 @9:00am

Mileage Reimbursement

The new IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2024 is now .67 per mile effective January 1, 2024.

Election Judge Recruitment

Election Judge Recruitment continues. As of January 5, 2024, 157 Democratic Judges, 176 Republican Judges and 17 Unaffiliated Judges have responded to our inquiry about working the 2024 Elections. We have approximately 2 vacancies at this time.

HB1200 Update

Election judges with qualifying jobs assigned are now flagged as returning judges. It is now our responsibility to maintain those flags and the qualifying jobs in the system.

New Party Petition

No Labels Maryland was successful in their petition effort to become a recognized political party. The party will be added to MDVOTERS within a few days. The online VRA and OLVR systems will be updated to include the party as well. VRAs will be updated in the next printing.

Appointment of Election Judges

Per Election Law §10-203(c), the deadline for the appointment of election judges for the 2024 Presidential Primary Election is February 13, 2024. A list of all names serving as election judges in 2024 was provided to all members for their review and approval. Mr. DeVore made a motion to approve the Appointment of Election Judges as presented. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Election Judge Manuals

The Election Judge Manual as well as the Same Day Registration Manual, and Address Change Manual are currently at the printer. A copy of each manual will be provided to each member once we receive them from the printer.

Election Judge Training Schedule

Election Judge Training is set to begin on February 26, 2024 at the Multi-Purpose Building at the fairgrounds. Most training classes are scheduled for 5:30 pm. Mrs. Loibel asked each board member to come to as many training classes as possible to help out, but at the very least, to attend one of each type of training. There will be two refresher trainings on April 20th and April 21st from 12:00 – 5:00 pm. This training will be held as an open house at the Allegany County Office Complex and will be open to all election judges who feel they may need further

instruction. The training is not mandatory. A copy of the election judge schedule has been placed in your blue board folder.

Mail-in Ballot Application Statistics

We have 3,388 mail-in voters for the 2024 Presidential Primary Election as of January 30, 2024.

Ballot Drop Boxes

The State Administrator approved our two drop boxes for the 2024 Presidential Election Cycle.

Review of Confidential Voters

Per COMAR 33.04.02.06, a review of confidential voters must be completed before each statewide primary election. All confidential voters have been reviewed and updated paperwork has been sent if they wish to continue with their confidential status. At this time, paperwork has been received by one voter. It has been decided that this person has met the requirements to continue with their confidential status. Ms. Lyons made a motion to approve the request for confidentiality. Mrs. Pittman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Election Notice for Municipalities

Notice has been sent to all municipalities requesting information on any election that will be held in 2024. A copy of the 2024 Municipal Election Schedule has been sent to each member for their review.

High School Registrations

Notice was sent to all high schools to conduct voter registration before the primary election. Statistics of the voter registration drive will be available at the next board meeting.

Nursing Homes/Activity Directors Training

A training class for activity directors for all nursing homes and assisted living facilities was conducted on January 24, 2024. All nursing homes and assisted living facilities sent representation for the training. The initial contact letter was provided at the end of the class along with a list of residents who are registered to vote at that nursing home. We have requested that all paperwork be returned to our office by March 4, 2024.

Financial Disclosures

Please complete your 2023 Financial Disclosure by April 30, 2024. You should have received an email from the Maryland Ethics Commission. This is a requirement for all board members. If you need assistance, please let Mrs. Loibel know.

Alternate Early Voting Center

Per COMAR 33.17.02.02I(4)(a), the deadline to submit to SBE a form for the Alternate Early Voting Center is February 14, 2024. Our current Alternate Early Voting Center is the Department of Emergency Services located at 11400 PPG Road SE, Cumberland. The recommendation is to continue with this location. It is a county-owned facility that is ADA compliant and equipped with a hard-wired generator on the premises. Mr. James Pyles will serve as the point of contact. Ms. Johnson made a motion to continue with the current Alternate Early Voting Center. Ms. Lyons seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Candidate Filing Deadline

Per Election Law § 5-303(a)(2), the deadline to file a Certificate of Candidacy is Friday, February 9, 2024 at 9:00 pm which is 95 days before the primary election. The deadline for a candidate to withdraw before the primary is Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Local Candidate Filings

Crystal Bender and Tammy Fraley filed for Board of Education in the month of January.

FY25 Budget

Mrs. Loibel reports that she is in the beginning phase of putting together the FY25 Budget. If members wish to include anything in the FY25 budget request, please contact Mrs. Loibel. SBE's estimate for our quarterly billing for FY25 is \$373,834.

2024 Inventory Audit

The 2024 Inventory Audit will run from February 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024. During this time, staff will be required to physically scan each piece of equipment barcoded with a state barcode in our office and warehouse.

CMOS Battery Replacement Project

The CMOS Battery Replacement Project for the pollbooks will be getting underway in February. The deadline to complete this process is March 29, 2024. Mrs. Loibel requested a refresher training to be performed by ES&S in the near future.

Important Election Dates

A document was sent to all members with important dates for the upcoming primary election. Please let Mrs. Loibel know if you have any issues with any of the dates as all members will need to be present for the dates listed.

CISA Report

On November 15, 2023, Allen Frenette from the Department of Homeland Security (CISA) was here to complete a Security Assessment at First Entry for our office and warehouse. The findings can be found in the confidential document provided in your board packet.

EFS Techs/Board Assignments

The schedule for the EFS techs along with board member assignments were sent in the board packet for review. EFS tech names have been sent to the staffing contract for the election.

Mock Canvass Training

Since our office staff has three new employees, two who have never participated in an election, a mock canvass training exercise was held. Staff made up scenarios of what might be seen during a regular canvass and explained the process to them. Mrs. Loibel believes that this exercise was well received and gave new staff an idea of what to expect in the future.

Disaster Recovery and Security Plan

The Relocation Plan for the Disaster Recovery and Security Plan has been updated. The final plan will be presented at the next regular board meeting.

Computer Systems and Software Security Updates

Office staff has successfully applied the Microsoft Security updates for the month of December and January on SBE workstations. We have also updated other third-party software applications to their latest versions on all workstations.

Registration Statistics

Statistics as of January 31, 2024 were as follows: Total Active Registration is 43,984. 11,367 Democrat, 22,907 Republican, 256 Libertarian, 8,886 Unaffiliated, and 568 Others.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

Board Members Report:

None

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions:

None

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be held on March 5, 2024 at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Pittman made a motion for adjournment. Ms. Lyons seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Stakem adjourned the meeting at 10:16 A.M.