

MINUTES

May 7, 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
Debbie Johnson, Member
Cecilia Pittman, Member
Diane Loibel, Election Administrator

ABSENT: Lisa Lyons, Member
Wendy Maddux, Deputy Director

PUBLIC: None

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

Mr. Stakem called the meeting to order at 9:17 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. Mrs. Pittman made a motion to approve the April board minutes. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None

CORRESPONDENCE

The Republican Party sent a letter making us aware that they intend to have people observing the canvassing processes. A copy of this letter was placed in your board folder.

ADDITIONS

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Supply Bag Pickup

A supply bag for each board member has been packed and ready to be picked up. Please keep the supply bag in your car on election day in case any of your polling places are in need of supplies.

Polling Place Evaluation Plan

Per SBE's guidelines, it is necessary to evaluate a minimum of 8 polling places for this election. The polling places selected should include polling places with new chief judges and those that are newly created polling places. The following 8 precincts have been selected using the new guidelines.

004-000 – Fort Hill High School	005-000 – Braddock Middle School
006-005 – Allegany High School	006-006 – All. Cty Multi-Purpose Bldg
007-002 – Bel Air Elementary School	009-000 – Barton Council Chamber
016-001 – Dept. of Emergency Services	021-000 – Baltimore Pike Volunteer Fire Department

Election Schedule

Please mark your calendars for all canvassing days. MIB1 Canvass will reconvene on Tuesday May 16, 2024 at 10:00 A.M. MIB1 must be completed by May 17th at noon. The Provisional Ballot Canvass will begin on Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at 10:00 A.M. The final MIB2 Canvass will be held on Friday, May 24, 2024 beginning at 10:00 A.M.

FY25 Budget

We have been advised by the county's Finance Department that our overtime for the FY25 Budget has been reduced by 50%. In addition, we have been asked to cut an additional 10% off of each of our budgets to help meet the shortfall that the county is experiencing. All capital expenditures have been cut as well. Mr. Stakem is concerned with cutting our overtime budget by 50%. Mrs. Loibel shares his concerns. Mrs. Loibel does not believe that we can realistically cut overtime by 50%. There is room to decrease the overtime usage but not by 50%. Mrs. Loibel will speak with the Finance Director regarding the overtime budget.

Municipal Election Schedule

A copy of the updated municipal election schedule was placed in the board's blue folders for review. One municipality is holding their election on May 14th while all other elections will be held during the end of May and early June.

2024 Inventory Audit

As of May 6, 2024, we are at 100% completion for our inventory audit.

Pollbook L&A

Pollbook L&A has been completed on all pollbooks. The bulk update should be available on Friday for pick up. This must be completed on all election day pollbooks before they can be deployed for the election.

Board Assignments

Updated board assignments were placed in the board's blue folders for their review. Please arrive at the County Office Complex on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 by 9:00 A.M. to begin the Early Voting and MIB1 tabulation.

Legislative Update

A review on all election related bills that passed during the 2024 General Assembly follows:

HB0014 (SB0271) - Election Law – Revisions

Synopsis: Altering the information that clerks of the circuit court for each county and administrative clerks for each District Court are required to report to the State Administrator of Elections to include the names of persons convicted of a felony and currently serving a court-ordered sentence of imprisonment; requiring a public official responsible for the use of a public building requested by a local board of elections for an early voting center to make the building available to the local board in accordance with a certain provision of law; etc.

HB0112 (SB0291) – Persons Doing Public Business – Disclosure Requirements

Synopsis: Requiring a person to file a registration statement with the State Board of Elections within a certain time period after the award of a contract that causes the person to be doing public business; requiring persons doing public business to update information on beneficial ownership included in the registration statement in accordance with regulations adopted by the State Board; altering the time at which a person doing public business is required to file a certain initial statement with the State Board; etc.

HB0261 – Unemployment Insurance - Benefits - Election Judges

Synopsis: Prohibiting a payment to an individual as compensation received for serving as an election judge for a local board of elections in the State from being included when computing the wages required to be subtracted from an eligible claimant's weekly benefit amount; and prohibiting an individual from being denied unemployment benefits for failure to meet certain requirements due to service as an election judge in the State.

HB0333 – Election Law - Election Disinformation on Large Social Media Platforms and Influence Related to Voting

Synopsis: Requiring each large social media platform of more than 1,000,000 monthly active users in the United States to make reasonable efforts to prevent, detect, and remove accounts and posts that communicate election disinformation in the State; requiring a large social media platform to report election disinformation by providing certain information to the State Board of Elections within 48 hours after the large social media platform becomes aware of an account or a post that communicates election disinformation; etc.

HB0371 (SB0115) - Election Law - Recounts – Procedures

Synopsis: Requiring a petitioner for a recount to select the method for conducting the recount; limiting the methods from which the selection must be made; and requiring a local board of elections to preserve and store certain voter-verifiable paper records in a certain manner and count duplicate ballots in a manual recount after a certain review.

HB0434 - Persons Providing Lobbyist Compensation – Statement of Political Contributions – Exemption for Nonprofits

Synopsis: Exempting nonprofit organizations qualified under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code from the requirement for a person providing lobbyist compensation to file a statement of political contributions with the State Board of Elections.

HB0459 (SB0417) - Election Administration – State Administrator, Local Boards, and Election Directors

Synopsis: Requiring the State Board of Elections to evaluate the performance of the State Administrator of Elections; requiring the State Administrator to provide a performance evaluation of the election director of each local board of elections to the local board; requiring each local board to confer with the State Administrator in appointing an election director, maintain a warehouse, and provide for early voting center expenses; requiring, rather than authorizing, election directors to take certain actions; etc.

HB0471 (SB0494) - Election Law - Postelection Procedures

Synopsis: Altering the records and documents that a board of canvassers is required to investigate under certain circumstances; altering the responsibilities of the State Board of Elections and the Board of State Canvassers regarding the certification of election results; authorizing the members of the Board of State Canvassers to appoint certain designees to serve on the Board of State Canvassers; and altering the responsibilities of the Governor regarding election results.

HB0585 (SB0480) - Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024

Synopsis: Prohibiting a person from knowingly and willfully making a threat to harm an election official or an immediate family member of an election official because of the election official's role in administering the election process; and establishing that a person who violates the Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or both.

HB0700 - Election Law - Election Judges - Revisions

Synopsis: Requiring that a county employee who serves as an election judge during hours that the employee is scheduled to work for the county receive certain administrative leave and certain election judge compensation; authorizing a public-school student in the State to both earn hours toward the service-learning graduation requirement and receive election judge compensation for service as an election judge; etc.

Authorizing the Governor to appoint individuals to the State Board of Elections and the Accountability and Implementation Board during the recess of the Senate under certain circumstances; requiring the Governor to submit a certain nomination to the Senate if the term of office will end during the next upcoming recess of the Senate; authorizing the Governor to submit a certain nomination to the Senate more than 40 days after the commencement of the regular legislative session and before Sine Die only if the Senate consents; etc.

HB0809 - Members of Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, or Workgroups – Removal or Suspension

Synopsis: Providing that a member of a board, committee, commission, task force, or workgroup created by State law may be removed or suspended for misconduct, incompetence, neglect of duties, or other good cause by the individual or entity that appointed the member under certain circumstances; authorizing the removal or suspension of an appointed member only after consultation with the chair of the board, committee, commission, task force, or workgroup and the member has been given an opportunity to be heard regarding the removal or suspension; etc.

HB1503 - Election Law - Campaign Finance Activities - State Treasurer

Synopsis: Prohibiting, during a regular session of the General Assembly, the State Treasurer and a person acting on behalf of the State Treasurer, as to a candidate for federal, State, or local office or certain campaign finance entities, from receiving a contribution, conducting a fund-raising event, soliciting a contribution, or depositing or using any contribution of money that was not deposited prior to the session.

SB0115 (HB0371) - Election Law - Recounts - Procedures

Synopsis: Requiring a petitioner for a recount to select the method for conducting the recount; limiting the methods from which the selection must be made; and requiring a local board of elections to preserve and store certain voter-verifiable paper records in a certain manner and count duplicate ballots in a manual recount after a certain review.

SB0271 (HB0014) - Election Law – Revisions

Synopsis: Altering the information that clerks of the circuit court for each county and administrative clerks for each District Court are required to report to the State Administrator of Elections to include the names of persons convicted of a felony and currently serving a court-ordered sentence of imprisonment; requiring a public official responsible for the use of a public building requested by a local board of elections for an early voting center to make the building available to the local board in accordance with a certain provision of law; etc.

SB0417 (HB0459) - Election Administration - State Administrator, Local Boards, and Election Directors

Synopsis: Requiring the State Board of Elections to evaluate the performance of the State Administrator of Elections; requiring the State Administrator to provide a performance evaluation of the election director of each local board of elections to the local board; requiring each local board to confer with the State Administrator in appointing an election director, maintain a warehouse, and provide for early voting center expenses; requiring, rather than authorizing, election directors to take certain actions; etc.

SB0480 (HB0585) - Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024

Synopsis: Prohibiting a person from knowingly and willfully making a threat to harm an election official or an immediate family member of an election official because of the election official's role in administering the election process; and establishing that a person who violates the Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or both.

SB0494 (HB0471) - Election Law - Postelection Procedures

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SB0818 - Information Technology - Artificial Intelligence - Policies and Procedures (Artificial Intelligence Governance Act of 2024)

Synopsis: Requiring each unit of State government to conduct certain inventories and a certain assessment; prohibiting the Department of Information Technology from making certain information publicly available under certain circumstances; prohibiting a unit of State government from deploying or using a system that employs artificial intelligence under certain circumstances;

establishing the Governor's Artificial Intelligence Subcabinet of the Governor's Executive Council; requiring the Subcabinet to develop a certain roadmap; etc.

SB0982 - Information Technology - Modernization of Information Technology Projects

Synopsis: Altering the duties of the Secretary of Information Technology related to modernization of information technology systems; altering the authority of the Board of Public Works over certain information technology projects; renaming the Major Information Technology Development Fund; requiring 20% of the amount appropriated to the Fund to be set aside for expedited projects each fiscal year; altering the name, duties, and membership of the Modernize Maryland Oversight Commission; and providing for the terms of certain Commission members.

SB1007 - State Government - Executive Appointments

Synopsis: Authorizing the Governor to appoint individuals to the State Board of Elections and the Accountability and Implementation Board during the recess of the Senate under certain circumstances; requiring the Governor to submit a certain nomination to the Senate if the term of office will end during the next upcoming recess of the Senate; authorizing the Governor to submit a certain nomination to the Senate more than 40 days after the commencement of the regular legislative session and before Sine Die only if the Senate consents; etc.

Computer Systems and Software Security Updates

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

Registration Statistics

Statistics as of April 30, 2024 were as follows: Total Active Registration is 43,563. 10,967 Democrat, 22,756 Republican, 3 No Labels MD, 265 Libertarian, 9,001 Unaffiliated, and 571 Others.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

Board Members Report:

Mr. DeVore reported that he attended the last Republican Central Committee meeting.

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions:

None

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be held on June 4, 2024 at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment:

Ms. Johnson made a motion for adjournment. Mrs. Pittman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Stakem adjourned the meeting at 11:29 A.M.