

MINUTES

October 7, 2025

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

ATTENDEES: John Stakem, President
Richard DeVore, Member
Debbie Johnson, Member
Cecilia Pittman, Member
Lisa Lyons, Member
Diane Loibel, Election Administrator
Wendy Maddux, Deputy Director
Sarah Loar, Election Registrar

ABSENT: Armand Pannone, Board Attorney

PUBLIC: Jamie Winters

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. Mr. DeVore made a motion to approve the September 2, 2025 Open Meeting board minutes. Mrs. Pittman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None

CORRESPONDENCE – Town of Westernport

We received correspondence and will discuss it under Old Business.

ADDITIONS

None

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Personnel

The deadline to submit an application for the Registrar position was Friday, September 5, 2025. Interviews were conducted on Tuesday, September 16, 2025. The pre-employment exam was administered and we are waiting for the results from the background check from Human Resources.

Candidate Filings

We had 2 candidate filings for the month of September. Dawne Lindsay filed for Clerk of the Circuit Court. Mary Beth Pirolozzi filed for Registrar of Wills.

National Voter Registration Day

A National Voter Registration event was held at Frostburg State University on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. We would like to thank Ms. Lyons and Mrs. Pittman for attending this event on behalf of the Allegany County Board of Elections.

Constitution Day

Constitution Day was observed on September 17, 2025. Voter registration drives were held at the local high schools the week of September 15th through September 19th. The staff visited 6 local high schools. The total number of high school seniors was 637. We had 51 Voter Registration Applications.

Mock Election

The mock election is scheduled to begin Wednesday, October 1st.

Pollbook Battery Testing

Pollbook Main Battery test will be sent out in early October. LBEs will have the normal six weeks to complete the test to gather data on how the batteries will hold up next year.

Mailing Address Data Hygiene Exercise

Starting in 2022, SBE has been working with Taylor, our MIV vendor, in off election years to find and correct mailing addresses in advance of mailing out ballots. This helps LBEs avoid mailing problems during the height of election seasons. SBE and Taylor will do this process in September 2025 and again in early 2026.

Surge Staffing and Supply Surveys

Local boards have been polled to gather surge staffing needs, and election supply requests for the 2026 election cycle, including items such as voting equipment paper, tamper tape, NVRAs, brochures, and other election related supply items.

Risk Limiting Audits

We are in the process of developing Risk Limiting Audits for the upcoming 2026 election cycle in congruence with SB 313 (2025). We are working closely with Voting Works and a workgroup of SBE and local board staff to ensure a smooth transition from our traditional manual audit to a risk limiting audit.

Warehouse Update

Work is expected to begin in December on our warehouse space. Other departments in the county that have boxes stored in the area have begun to clear out of the space in preparation.

Meetings Attended

- Election Judge Manual Workgroup – 09/03/2025
- Election Judge Application Revamp, MAEO meeting – 09/04/2025
- Risk Limiting Audits – 09/05/2025
- Election Judge Manual Workgroup – 09/10/2025
- Election Plan Forum – 09/11/2025
- MAEO meeting - Virtual – 09/16/2025
- Election Judge Manual Workgroup – 09/17/2025
- Election Director and Deputy Directors – 09/18/2025
- The Election Group – Election Resilience in Action: Emergency Preparedness Matters – 09/18/2025
- Election Judge Manual Workgroup – 09/24/2025

Election Judge Manual

The Election Judge Manual Workgroup continues to meet. The workgroup has been reviewing the forms, the polling place evaluation form, Election Judge Training Curriculum and the Step by Step Guides. Everything is expected to be available for the local boards to begin making edits by October 1st.

Election Judge Update

As of 09/15/2025, we have 95 Democratic judge responses, 97 Republican judge responses, and 8 Unaffiliated judge responses. We have received 2 nominations for our Pollcat VIP Award. Second notices have been sent to election judges that we have not heard from yet. We are planning to have a Meet and Greet Session to attract new judges and interact with the people that have returned an interest application. The date is to be determined.

MDVoters Disaster Recovery Failover Test

MDVOTERS failover exercise occurred Monday, September 8th through Friday, September 12th.

Computer Systems and Software Security Updates

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

Registration Statistics

Statistics for the month of September were as follows: Total Active Registration 44,801, Democrat 10,829, Republican 23,762, Green 57, Working Class Party 64, Unaffiliated 9,326, and Others 763.

OLD BUSINESS

The Town of Westernport correspondence – we received an email concerning the polling place at Westernport Elementary School. The town was concerned about losing the polling place due to the flooding in May. During the October board meeting, we recommended moving to a location outside the town limits temporarily if renovations were not complete. The Town Council had concerns with this location.

a. 2026 Election Plan

1. Polling Places – It is the staff's recommendation to use the same polling places for the 2026 elections. Polling Place Agreement Letters were sent to the polling places and the Board of Education on June 2, 2025. At this time, 27 out of 28 facilities have agreed to continue use as a polling place. We intended to recommend Harmony Baptist Church as an alternate location. We spoke to the Board of Education and they stated that the renovations would be complete by the end of March. It is our recommendation to continue to use Westernport Elementary School as a polling place at this time. We will use Harmony Baptist Church if the renovations are not complete. No action was taken at this time.
2. Early Voting Center – We have received the signed MOU from the County Commissioners to use Room 100 in the Allegany County Complex Building for Early Voting. No action was taken at this time.
3. Ballot Drop Boxes – It is the staff's recommendation to use the same ballot drop box locations for the 2026 elections. No action was taken at this time.
4. Alternate Early Voting Center – It is the staff's recommendation to use the same early voting center for the 2026 elections. The location is the Allegany County Department of Emergency Services, 1140 PPG Road, SE, Cumberland. A copy of the MOU has been provided for review. No action was taken at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

None

Board Members Report:

None

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions:

Mr. Devore reported that he attended the Republican Women's Reagan Day Dinner.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment:

Ms. Lyons made a motion for adjournment. Mr. Devore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Stakem adjourned the open meeting at 9:50 A.M.