

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MEETING MINUTES

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046

Monday, May 22, 2017 – 4:00 pm

Regular Open Board Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Board Members:

Donna K. Thewes	Board President, Republican Member
Ann M. Balcerzak	Vice President, Democratic Member
Patrick R. Mullinix	Republican Member
Raymond M. Rankin	Democratic Substitute
Diane L. Butler	Republican Substitute
Michael S. Molinaro	Board Counsel

Staff:

Guy C. Mickley	Director
Charlotte B. Davis	Deputy Director
Phyllis A. West	Board Secretary

Visitors: None

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board President Donna Thewes called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm with an established quorum present. The Pledge of Allegiance was then given.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Draft copies of the minutes from the April 24, 2017 meeting were provided to Board members by electronic mail prior to the meeting and a paper copy was made available to each member at the meeting. Members made no changes to the minutes. President Thewes asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Ray Rankin motioned to accept the minutes as presented and Patrick Mullinix seconded the motion.

Action: The April 24, 2017 minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Board members made no changes or additions to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

Director Guy Mickley stated correspondence would be covered in his report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Donna Thewes updated the Board on the current information she had regarding a potential meeting of Board Presidents from Maryland's largest counties and including Baltimore City. Although she has not been able to connect recently with the Montgomery County Board President, the last information she had was that three of the large counties would be attending the upcoming June MAEO Conference (Baltimore City, Montgomery County and Prince George's County) and plan to meet at the convention. She left a message for the Montgomery County President suggesting that since Howard and other county Boards would not be attending MAEO, perhaps the whole group could meet at another location at some other time. Ann Balcerzak suggested that Board Vice Presidents should be included to keep things bi-partisan and Donna Thewes agreed. Guy Mickley suggested that all Board members might wish to participate in such a meeting. Donna Thewes agreed it should be open to any Board member and stated that she would keep the Board informed. Currently, a meeting for all large Maryland county Boards has not been scheduled.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. **Candidacy Filings** – Mr. Mickley reported that one person has filed for candidacy in the office since the last Board Meeting. This individual is a Republican candidate for County Council District 5.
2. **MAEO** – The MAEO Conference is June 6-9 in Ocean City and full-time staff will be attending. The temporary staff will be running the office and the office will be full service.
3. **Registration** – The Director stated that registration numbers continue to rise slowly, which will continue to be the trend until we get into Universal Registration with registrations coming from many agencies' websites as well as the MVA and the State Board.
4. **Budget** – Director Mickley reported that he had his work session with the Howard County Council on May 9th. He gave a 5-minute presentation on the budget and proposed changes and had no questions from the County Council. Our budget remains untouched through this last process. He stated the three full-time positions requested were approved and the hiring process will begin in July with the new budget year. President Thewes asked if the old list of candidates could be used. The Director stated that since the list is over one year old, a new list must be used. He hopes to be able to hire candidates in September.
5. **Warehouse Move** – The county continues discussions on moving the warehouse. Staff met with the space planner and the county liaison for rental properties over the past two weeks, and there are no results yet. The County space planner also visited Anne Arundel County's newer warehouse facility to get a sense of what facilities other

counties have and what we could use here. Although Anne Arundel's space is larger than we need in Howard County, it is well laid out and a well outfitted space. There are no updates at this point, but we have been told that we are still slated to move before the end of the calendar year. Director Mickley stated that he would keep the Board updated.

6. **Summer Interns** – The League of Korean Americans will be providing us with up to 16 summer interns to help us in the office this summer. They will be assisting with office tasks that include preparing the needed supplies for the primary election and upgrading the poll books, as they did last year. They may also be asked to assist at the warehouse with additional projects. Charlotte Davis will be handling the group and their assignments. Mike Molinaro asked how many weeks the students would be working. Ms. Davis indicated there would be two groups of eight, each would work for two weeks, one group after the other, and their hours will be 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This will meet their community service requirements for school.
7. **State Audit** – Director Mickley reported that we have received our audit from the State for the 2016 election cycle and a copy had been attached for reference. Also included in the handouts is our response to the State Board on the findings and what our actions will be to resolve any issues. There were three specific audit topics reviewed: The Voting System, Polling Place Operations and finally, Canvassing and Post-Election Reconciliation and Audits. The State Board checks specific areas under these categories.

The Director responded to three areas of action noted in the audit. The first was a more careful proofing of final numbers, as that accounted for a minor discrepancy. Second was that we believe there was a system error related to 22 absentee ballots which were entered and audited as rejected, then later appeared in the system as accepted. He has asked SBE to review this to determine what could have happened. Finally, Guy Mickley stated that he will have the Canvass Board members review the laws for rejecting absentee and provisional ballots to ensure the process is being done correctly and that all numbers in MDVoters match numbers in the canvassing minutes. Patrick Mullinix stated that this issue has come up before and COMAR indicates one thing while the laws state another when it comes to accepting and rejecting absentee and provisional ballots. Ann Balcerzak suggested that perhaps a letter can be sent to SBE to address this issue. Guy Mickley finished his report stating that generally we did very well in this audit. He and President Thewes will sign the audit response which will be sent to SBE Administrator Linda Lamone.

8. **Public Information Act (PIA) Request** – Director Mickley reported that we have received a PIA request from the Public Interest Legal Foundation (along with the 10 largest Maryland counties) to extract the record of any voter who has asked for removal from the rolls due to being a non-citizen. The State is taking the lead on this in conjunction with the Attorney General's office and will give us guidance on how to proceed. A copy of this request is attached for your reference (without enclosures). Board members asked several questions, including where the request came from (Indianapolis, Indiana) and how far back the request asks us to go (2009), along with several other questions which will be answered once the necessary research is completed. Director Mickley

indicated he will participate in a conference call with the State Board and the Maryland Attorney General's Office soon. The State Board will provide us with the criteria we will use to answer the request. As he gets more information he will keep President Thewes informed so that she can keep Board members advised.

9. **Fourth Early Voting Center** – Director Mickley stated that our fourth early voting center request will be on the agenda for the June State Board of Elections Meeting. Donna Thewes said she was glad that the State Board is looking at the 80% coverage of voters within five miles of an Early Voting Center from a whole county perspective.
10. **Polling Place Changes/Consolidations** – Guy Mickley reported that we have finished our study on moving and consolidating Polling Places and have provided several handouts that outline which polling places we recommend moving and/or consolidating. (A copy of the planning chart is attached to these minutes.) He is asking for the Board's approval to make these changes. Director Mickley reviewed the sites where the recommended moves and changes would be made and the reasons for each change. These include one site that does not want to be used as a polling place any longer, a polling place that was temporarily relocated due to renovations and is being returned to the original site, one that is being moved to fall within District/Precinct lines, and improvements such as better air conditioning by consolidating some locations in school cafeterias, since not all gymnasiums have sufficient air conditioning during the summer Primary Election season.

Ray Rankin indicated he had concerns about moving the Long Reach High School gym polling place to the cafeteria due to parking. The gym/auditorium side has extensive parking marked for cars, and the cafeteria side of the school has a smaller parking lot painted for busses and no ADA parking, which could cause significant problems for voters. Director Mickley stated that the gym there gets very hot and he has had complaints from judges and voters about this issue. Patrick Mullinix indicated there was parking next to the day care center there. Donna Thewes said the only complaints she gets are related to lack of heat or air conditioning in the gyms during the elections. However, she is concerned about this move since this consolidation would mean the polling place could have over 5,000 voters, and she also sees parking as an issue there. She felt the polling place should remain in the gym but with a contingency plan such as fans or, as Director Mickley suggested, shifting the site to the cafeteria and posting signs to redirect voters if there is no air conditioning and the temperatures go over a certain point on Election Day.

Donna Thewes then asked if there was enough parking at Howard High School. The Director indicated there was plenty of parking there and Diane Butler concurred.

Ann Balcerzak thanked Guy Mickley for all the important work that was done to put this plan together. Diane Butler asked how many polling places would be eliminated. Director Mickley indicated 15 would be consolidated. He asked for the Board to accept the proposed moves and consolidations except for the Polling Place in the Long Reach High School gymnasium (D/P 06-29), which will remain in the gym.

President Thewes asked for a motion to accept all proposed changes except for moving the Polling Place at the Long Reach High School gymnasium. Patrick Mullinix so moved, and Ray Rankin seconded the motion.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to accept all polling place changes and consolidations except for moving the polling place out of the Long Reach High School gymnasium. A contingency plan will be put in place in the event of limited or no air conditioning.

Donna Thewes stated she appreciated all the tedious and detailed work the staff had done to make the office and polling places more efficient. Director Mickley thanked the staff members who were involved in putting this plan together. They include Tony Neafsey, Jeff White, Bill West, Jim and Jon Holton.

Ann Balcerzak asked how this would impact the number of judges at the new locations. Donna Thewes mentioned election judges were hard to recruit. Guy Mickley stated that with this consolidation we would only be eliminating some chief judge positions and other judges will be shifted to the new locations. He will discuss judge issues at a future meeting once he has time to assess our needs. Donna Thewes mentioned that some of this would depend on the new laws, the number of machines at polling places, etc. Mike Molinaro then asked what the pay grades of the potential new judge types would be and Mr. Mickley said that would also be addressed at a future meeting.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Mr. Molinaro had no report but he observed that a recent Howard County Times and Flyer article reviewed the history of Howard County resident Mary Stewart, who in 1972 wanted to use her maiden name to register to vote and was not allowed to do so. She filed a lawsuit and the Appeals Court overturned the lower court ruling and found in her favor, permanently changing the voter registration process for women in our county.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Board members briefly discussed their availability for the June meeting and whether it should be held, cancelled or rescheduled. Although the Director and a few members indicated they would not be able to attend, President Thewes indicated she would leave the meeting on the schedule for now and a decision would be made closer to the meeting date depending upon what issues might need to be addressed.

Donna Thewes stated that she is participating at nine schools this year as part of the Simulated Congressional Hearings Program, and has already been to two schools.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Donna Thewes asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Open Board meeting. Patrick Mullinix offered the motion, which was seconded by Ray Rankin.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:01 pm

The next regular open meeting of the Howard County Board of Elections is scheduled for Monday, June 26, 2017 at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phyllis A. West, Board Secretary

Donna K. Thewes, Board President

Polling Place Planning Chart

EXISTING POLLING PLACES

D/P	Polling Place	Poll Location	ActiveVot	CombVot	Combo D/Ps
01-01	ST AUGUSTINE SCHOOL	GYM	2344	2218	
01-02	ELKRIDGE LANDING MIDDLE SCH	GYM	566	1539	01-16, 01-18
01-10	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	AUDITORIUM LOBBY	1503	1499	
01-16	ELKRIDGE LANDING MIDDLE SCH	GYM	664	0	
01-18	ELKRIDGE LANDING MIDDLE SCH	GYM	380	0	
01-21	DUCKETT'S LANE ELEMENTARY SCH	CAFETERIA	1666	1407	
02-04	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	GYM	1774	1707	
02-10	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	1396	1365	02-22
02-17	BURLEIGH MANOR MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	538	2579	02-26, 03-04
02-22	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	55	0	
02-26	BURLEIGH MANOR MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	1741	0	
03-04	BURLEIGH MANOR MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	310	0	
04-01	LISBON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT	HALL	1486	1461	
04-05	ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	GYM	1656	1612	
05-02	HARPER'S CHOICE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	857	1765	05-14
05-04	WILDE LAKE HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	2593	2432	
05-09	HARPER'S CHOICE MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	1985	1909	
05-10	CLARKSVILLE MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	3009	2935	
05-14	HARPER'S CHOICE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	903	0	
05-18	WILDE LAKE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	1308	1306	
05-22	CLARKSVILLE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	3386	3372	
05-23	RIVER HILL HIGH SCHOOL	CAFETERIA	1555	1524	
06-10	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	CAFETERIA	1697	1694	
06-21	LONG REACH HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	1265	1235	
06-29	LONG REACH HIGH SCH	MAIN GYM	3992	3895	

PROPOSED POLLING PLACE CHANGES

D/P	Polling Place	Poll Location	ActiveVot	CombVot	Notes
01-01	ELKRIDGE LANDING MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	2348	2909	Moved from St. Aug to 01-02 also now Combo with 01-02
01-02	ELKRIDGE LANDING MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	561	0	Moved From Gym to Café
01-10	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	MAIN GYM	1479	4890	Moved From Auditorium to Gym. Combo 02-04, 06-10
01-16	DUCKETTS LANE ELEMENTARY SCH	CAFETERIA	659	2742	Moved From 01-02 to Ducketts lane. Combo 01-18, 01-21
01-18	DUCKETTS LANE ELEMENTARY SCH	CAFETERIA	378	0	Moved from 01-02 to 01-16
01-21	DUCKETTS LANE ELEMENTARY SCH	CAFETERIA	1705	0	Combo with 01-16
02-04	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	MAIN GYM	1732	0	Now Combo with 01-10
02-10	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	1402	4032	Combo with 02-17, 02-22, 02-26, 03-04
02-17	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	534	0	Moved from Burleigh Manor to Centennial High
02-22	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	56	0	Combo with 02-10
02-26	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	1732	0	Moved from Burleigh Manor to Centennial High
03-04	CENTENNIAL HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	308	0	Moved from Burleigh Manor to Centennial High
04-01	ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	GYM	1474	3103	Moved From Lisbon Vol FD to St. Michaels Combo 04-05
04-05	ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	GYM	1629	0	Combo with 04-01
05-02	LONGFELLOW ELEM SCH	CAFETERIA	856	1757	Moved from Harper's Choice to Longfellow Combo 05-14
05-04	WILDE LAKE HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	2579	3891	Combo with 05-18
05-09	HARPER'S CHOICE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	1980	3535	Moved From Café to Gym Combo with 05-23
05-10	RIVER HILL HIGH SCHOOL	CAFETERIA	2993	2993	Moved From Clarksville Middle Café inside District Prec Line
05-14	LONGFELLOW ELEM SCH	CAFETERIA	901	0	Moved from Harper's Choice to Longfellow
05-18	WILDE LAKE HIGH SCH	CAFETERIA	1312	0	Moved from Wilde Lake MS to Wilde Lake HS Combo 05-04
05-22	CLARKSVILLE MIDDLE SCH	CAFETERIA	3363	0	Moved From the Gym to the Café at Clarksville MS
05-23	HARPER'S CHOICE MIDDLE SCH	GYM	1555	0	Moved From River Hill HS to Harper's Choice. Combo 05-09
06-10	HOWARD HIGH SCHOOL	MAIN GYM	1679	0	Moved from the Café to the Gym Combo with 01-10
06-21	LONG REACH HIGH SCH	GYM	1261	5234	Moved from café to Gym Combo with 06-29
06-29	LONG REACH HIGH SCH	GYM	3973	0	Combo with 06-21
Grand Total of Voters Affected				35086	