

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MEETING MINUTES

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046

Monday, October 22, 2018 – 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

Absent: None

Visitors: David Zinner

CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board President Donna Thewes called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm with an established quorum present. The Pledge of Allegiance was then given.

WELCOME GUESTS

Donna Thewes welcomed David Zinner to the meeting and provided a few minutes for him to make remarks or ask questions. Mr. Zinner asked several questions including last minute information updates for judges, polling place signage and Halloween costumes in the polling place (which was not recommended for judges). President Thewes thanked him for his input.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Draft copies of the minutes from the September 24, 2018 meeting were provided to Board members by electronic mail prior to the meeting and a paper copy was distributed at the meeting. Three corrections including spelling of two names were identified. President Thewes

asked for a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Patrick Mullinix motioned to accept the minutes as corrected and Ray Rankin seconded the motion.

Action: The September 24, 2018 minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Board members made no additions or changes to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

Donna Thewes indicated this would be covered by Mike Molinaro in his report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Donna Thewes stated that Board Secretary Phyllis West had sent the members the District/Precinct Assignment List for Election Day and said members should have their Rover & Closer materials from the last election. She thanked the staff for all their hard work in preparation for the upcoming election.

Phyllis West then stated she had provided Board members with an updated schedule of Board meetings from October through December as well as Early Voting, Election Day and Canvass Meeting times and dates. The regular November meeting has been cancelled, and there will be a required Special Open Meeting on Election night, November 6, 2018.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Continuing Items

- a. **General Office Update:** Director Guy Mickley reported that the staff has accomplished and will be working on several things here in the office as we gear up for the general election. They are broken down as follows:
 - aa. Warehouse** – All Logic and Accuracy testing is finished, and all carts and supplies are packed and ready for the election. Public L&A was held on October 12, 2018 and no one from the public attended except for Diane Butler's husband. We will be conducting Pollbook L&A today, tomorrow and Wednesday morning, and trucks will then be loaded on Wednesday afternoon to get the Early Voting Centers ready for action since Early Voting starts at 10:00 AM on Thursday.
 - bb. Absentee** – The Absentee staff has entered almost 6800 records for the Primary Election as of this date. This number is on par for the time frame for a Gubernatorial General Election. Guy Mickley indicated that we seldom get more than 50-60% of these ballots returned to the office.
 - cc. Voter Outreach** -- Mr. Mickley reported that voter outreach is complete. The staff attended many functions over the past month, with the last being the 50+ Expo last Friday. We were able to garner some registrations and many judges in our endeavors in the field.

dd. Sample Ballots -- The sample ballots have all been mailed and we have heard that voters are receiving them. The last were mailed out from the Post Office in Columbia this morning. These were to the people that registered or changed their address in the period from October 2 through October 16. Donna Thewes asked if the MVA Issues had been resolved. Mr. Mickley stated that they had been resolved.

ee. Rovers – The Director stated that rover districts are completed, changed and printed for both the Rovers and the judges out in the field.

ff. Write-In Candidates – Guy Mickley reported that there are four write-in candidates which are listed in the handouts. They will be posted on the wall inside each polling place rather than in the voting booths.

gg. Manual Audit of Ballots – Mr. Mickley stated we will be conducting a manual audit of ballots after this election as per the passed legislation from the last General Assembly Session. This will require us to close out and report on one scanning unit at one early voting center for the first day of early voting and have a manual audit of the canvasses and possibly a polling place if we are selected. The staff is responsible for this function. It is very similar to a recount in the way that it works, so we should be fine after our vast experiences from the Primary Election. Mr. Molinaro said it must be done within 120 days of the election. Ann Balcerzak asked how long this would take, and the Director said he didn't think it would take too long.

2. **Registration** – The Director stated that registration is now closed. Only eight individuals came to register between 4:30 PM and 9:00 PM on the last day of registration and overall the registration numbers were low. This cycle was very much on par with other Gubernatorial Election cycles. Board members said voters can now go to Early Voting and on-line requests.

3. **Budget** – We are doing well in the new budget year, as we still have not bought anything of significance or spent much money at this point. That will change when we pay the judges for the election.

Judges – The Director stated that the judge department has worked very hard to fill the vacancies that we had for the General Election. He said all positions are filled as of the time and have alternate judges available and trained to fill any vacancies that we may encounter before Election Day. All training of all judges is complete. He also stated that he has added 2-3 judges at each Early Voting Center on the last day. Mr. Mickley discussed the judge demographics and stated that he is impressed with the young people coming in to serve as judges. They are knowledgeable when they leave training class and do well in the polling place.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Michael Molinaro, Esq., stated he had sent a letter to The Honorable William V. Tucker, Judge of the Circuit Court for Howard County (Judge Gelfman has retired). He explained this is the usual letter he prepares prior to each election to inform the judge of the Election Day schedule and contingency planning, and explain our potential needs that day.

He then reported that he participated in the attorney conference calls with SBE staff on October 3rd and 17th and plans to do so on October 31, 2018. Nikki Charlson informed the

group of the audit changes and manual counting that would be done this election. He also reported that Andrea Trento, Assistant Attorney General, said that members of the Board of Canvassers must be physically present at each canvass. If a Board of Canvassers' member or substitute can't attend, the member must resign, and the Governor must quickly be informed of the vacancy. The Central Committees should be able to recommend a replacement member. He then stated that everyone should stay in touch.

Mr. Molinaro then reported from his SBE calls that candidates and their campaigns appreciated the sharing of data from SBE during the Primary Election. Ann Balcerzak asked whether this was available previously. Ray Rankin indicated this information formerly was made available after certification of the election. Guy Mickley stated that SBE does outreach, provides phone numbers and shares information on processes. Ann Balcerzak asked what we were sharing, and Guy Mickley reported it was the findings from the Clear Ballot Audit. Donna Thewes said we should be transparent in the process and thanked Mr. Molinaro.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING

Donna Thewes asked for a motion to recess the Regular Open Board Meeting so that the Board of Canvassers meeting could be convened to approve the last set of Canvass Board minutes. Diane Butler made a motion to recess the meeting, which was seconded by Ray Rankin.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to recess the Regular Open Board Meeting at 4:55 pm.

At the end of the Board of Canvassers Meeting, President Thewes reconvened the Regular Open Board Meeting at 5:02 pm and reported that the Last Canvass Board Meeting minutes had been approved, no ballots were presented, and that the Board of Canvassers for the Primary Election had officially been adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Action: Board members unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 pm.

The November Regular Open Board Meeting of the Howard County Board of Elections has been cancelled. The required Special Open Board Meeting is scheduled for Election Day on Tuesday, November 6, 2018 at approximately 9:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phyllis A. West, Board Secretary

Donna K. Thewes, Board President