

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS MEETING MINUTES

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046

Monday, November 30, 2020 – 4:00 pm

Note: *This meeting was held by Audio/Video Conference due to the current COVID-19 restrictions and the Governor's directives concerning limiting in-person gatherings & meetings.*

Regular Open Board Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Board Members:

Donna K. Thewes	Board President, Republican Member
Ann M. Balcerzak	Vice President, Democratic Member
Diane L. Butler	Republican Member
Timothy J. Mummert	Republican Member
Raymond M. Rankin	Democratic Member
Michael S. Molinaro	Board Counsel

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

Absent: None

Public: Eric Brousaides	Guest
Jay Gerarden	Guest

CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board President Donna Thewes called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm with an established quorum present.

Since Board members were in different locations without flags available, the President indicated the Pledge of Allegiance would not be given for this meeting.

WELCOME GUESTS

Donna Thewes welcomed both guests and asked if they had any questions. They had none.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Copies of the minutes for the September 21, 2020 Regular Open Board Meeting and the November 3, 2020 Special Open Board Meeting were provided to Board members by electronic mail for their review prior to the meeting. President Thewes asked for a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Ray Rankin motioned to approve the minutes for the September 21st and November 3rd Board Meetings and Tim Mummert seconded the motion.

Action: The minutes for both the September 21, 2020 Regular Open Board Meeting and the November 3, 2020 Special Open Board Meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Board members made no additions or changes to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Donna Thewes reported that she had sent thank you letters to the Howard County School Superintendent, the Police Chief and the Sheriff thanking them all for their outstanding support of the Howard County Board of Elections during the elections this year, and for providing their facilities and security services to help us conduct successful elections in 2020. Ann Balcerzak thanked Donna for writing these thank you letters, and Board members agreed these should be sent after each election.

President Thewes then asked members if they had any issues with the proposed 2021 Tentative Board of Elections Meeting Schedule that Phyllis West provided to everyone prior to the meeting. Members had none. She asked for a motion to approve the 2021 Tentative Board Meeting Schedule. Ray Rankin made a motion to approve the schedule and Tim Mummert seconded the motion.

Action: The 2021 Tentative Board of Elections Board Meeting schedule was unanimously approved.

Donna Thewes then mentioned that there would be an Executive Session at the end of the Regular January Board Meeting to handle staff reviews. Finally, she thanked all Board members and the Election Staff for their hard work this year and for working together to accomplish four successful elections.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. General Update:

- a. Director Guy Mickley reported that until further notice, all Board meetings would be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- b. There will be no office gathering for the holidays this year, and many of the staff will be taking their vacation time in the coming weeks.
- c. Guy Mickley personally thanked the Board and the staff for all of their hard work in 2020 on the four elections held throughout the year.
- d. He reported that the second Audit came back from Clear Audit, and everything was fine.
- e. The last election function, the Manual Audit, must be conducted within 120 days of the election, which we will do.
- f. Montgomery County is still conducting their canvass, which should be completed and certified today, November 30th. The State will then certify the election on December 4, 2020.
- g. MAEO will be discussing vote centers again in the future, as voters liked them. The Director expects there to be more mail in balloting as well.
- h. He expects Drop Boxes to stay as a part of the process in future elections. Donna Thewes said they were a hit with voters she spoke with, and the post office had problems.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Diane Butler said she would like to see a post-election review of best practices, what worked and what could be improved, and what information could be provided to SBE and legislators before they consider changes to future procedures or legislation. Ann Balcerzak suggested this be presented for discussion to MAEO to get their input.

Ann Balcerzak stated that she felt that Maryland did a tremendous job with Mail in Voting this election.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Board Counsel Mike Molinaro, Esq., stated he had nothing to report. He said that the SBE conference calls with local Board Counsel's had been very helpful this year.

BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING

President Donna Thewes asked for a motion to recess the Regular Open Board Meeting so that the Board of Canvassers for the Presidential Primary Election could convene for their 1st Post Certification Canvass Board Meeting. Ray Rankin moved to recess the meeting and Tim Mummert seconded the motion.

Action: The Board voted unanimously to recess the meeting at 4:26 pm to meet as the Board of Canvassers for the Presidential General Election.

The Regular Open Board Meeting reconvened at 4:37 pm. Donna Thewes reported that the Board of Canvassers for the Presidential General Election had approved the first ten sets of Canvass Board Meeting minutes from meetings held October 8th through November 8, 2020.

She noted that for Day 8 (October 24th) the minutes were approved with the understanding that one attachment listing canvass participants was to be attached when made available.

In addition, forty (40) Mail in Ballots were rejected as untimely.

Guy Mickley then mentioned that he had just seen information that Warren Miller, delegate from 9A, was resigning. He mentioned that this would not require a Special Election.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Donna Thewes asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Open Board Meeting. Ray Rankin made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Tim Mummert seconded the motion.

Action: Board members unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 4:42 pm.

The next meeting of the Howard County Board of Elections will be a rescheduled Regular Open Board Meeting on Monday December 21, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phyllis A. West, Board Secretary

Donna K. Thewes, Board President