

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
Conference Room 1
Easton, MD 21601
September 18, 2024

Present:

Board

Susan MacKinnon	(D)
Denise Lovelady	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Barbara H. Perry	(D)
Gugy Irving III	(R)

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Talbot County Election Director
Donna Hacker, Election Program Manager II

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Public Attending

Members of the public were in attendance

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held September 18, 2024, in the Conference Room indicated above. Ms. MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present. She welcomed guests and reminded all of Public Comment protocols.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. MacKinnon asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of August 21, 2024. There were none. Mr. Black moved to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Changes to Agenda

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none.

Approval of the Agenda

Ms. MacKinnon asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Perry moved to accept the agenda. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Mr. Stepp mentioned complaints he has received concerning the balance of Election Judges. In addition, if we are still interested, County Council can get official emails for our use at no cost.

Ms. Wilcoxon also stated that she had seen numerous emails complaining about the imbalance of Election Judges.

Ms. MacKinnon advised that Election Judge Staffing is on the agenda for this meeting.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Stafford provided the Board with a written Director's Report on activities since the last Board meeting. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Ms. Stafford provided updated information as follows: Meeting with law enforcement and Emergency Services rescheduled for October 1, 2024. A PIA request was just received September 17, 2024. Ballot Drop Boxes are now in place. Letters to both Central Committees will be sent on Friday, September 20, 2024 with the schedule of Canvass dates.

Board Attorney's Report

Ms. Ryan reported on the pre-election call for all board lawyers on September 10, 2024. There was discussion about complaints over party balance for election judges and concern over removal of trained and qualified judges just to obtain balance and there can be changes up to election day which affect party balance. Canvass starts October 15, 2024. Returning judges who took oath before the primary do not need to take it again. Only new judges need to take their oath.

Old Business

- A. Facility for Election Office** - Nothing to report on new facility. There was a voter inquiry about Drop Boxes being more accessible for handicap voters. The current locations have no steps and are under cover. If someone needs assistance, they can call the Board office and a staff member will come out to accept their ballot for the drop box. Can look in to an additional Drop Box for future elections.
- B. By-Laws** – Nothing to report.
- C. Public Comment and Letters Policy** - . This is being worked on to have it posted on website.
- D. Social Media Policy** – Ms. Stafford provided the Board with a draft policy that basically mirrored the State Board's policy. Mr. Black moved to approve the draft policy; motion was seconded. There was no questions or discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

A. Board Duties for General Election -

1. Board members serve as the Canvass Board. Each Board member received calendars for October and November Canvass dates. On October 17 and October 22, 2024, the canvass may not need to be all day.

2. The Board will need to decide who will visit and evaluate Early Voting and who will evaluate polling locations on election day. This will be decided at the October regular meeting.

3. Deadline to verify supplies for polling locations is October 9, 2024. Both Mr. Black and Mr. Irving agreed to do that and will decide on a date agreeable to both.

B. Election Judge Staffing – Background: Staffing began June of 2023 with returning judges from 2022. Then the director goes to a list of persons who have filled out an interest form and pull from there. Then look for balance between both parties and unaffiliated. Training started early in 2024. Use both online and required in person training. Training is ongoing through early October until the room used for training is converted for Ballot Canvassing starting October 15, 2024. Interest forms are taken all the time, even when training is not able to be done and lists are started for 2026. Ms. Lovelady said the State Board was telling Local Boards to break the law by not requiring total balance between both parties. Ms. Ryan said that 10-201 did state that but in practice, balance cannot always be obtained. There are always two chief judges at each of the 10 polling places with

there being one from each party. Current needs are at total of 123 with the numbers being 62 Democrats, 50 Republicans and 11 Unaffiliated. There are 106 trained judges who are returning from serving in the primary election. Ms. Stafford stated she has reached out numerous times since 2023 to the Republican Central Committee to try to get more Republican judges. Ms. MacKinnon stated that election judges has always been fluid with some people not wanting to travel and so on. Historically there has been an imbalance between the parties. Mr. Irving asked about paying mileage which would have to be approved by the County in a budget. Judges are already paid. A lengthy conversation continued on how to have balance, fully training people for standby lists which includes online and in person training, and how people drop out all the time. Ms. MacKinnon stated it is an ongoing effort to get and keep party balance of election judges and it is more than just one election. More details on personnel will be addressed during the closed session.

Disclosures - none

Confirmation of next meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Elections will be on Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting of Canvass Board – The Canvass Board met from 11:09 until 11:11 a.m. to consider untimely ballots.

Closed Session – Mr. Black moved the Board go into closed session at 11:12 a.m. to discuss personnel. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The Board met in closed session from 11:12 a.m. until 12:18 p.m. to discuss personnel matters regarding election judges.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 12:18 p.m. with a motion by Mr. Black that the Election Director should exhaust all efforts to add a minimum of two trained Republican judges to the Oxford polling location. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Adjournment

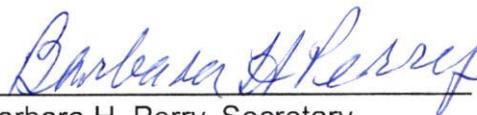
Ms. Black moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,



Susan MacKinnon, President



Barbara H. Perry, Secretary

TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 18, 2024

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members September 10, 2024.

The Agenda for the September meeting was posted on the Board of Elections web page the entrance to the office, and entrances of the building at 215 Bay Street September 10, 2024.

Personnel:

The county tech started September 3rd. The County Support Tech started September 16, 2024.

Meetings Attended:

I attended the first board meeting of the new MAEO board, August 27, 2024.

I met with local law enforcement and the Department of Emergency Services to prepare for the Presidential General Election.

Correspondence:

The office has not received any letters to the board for the month of August.

Voter Registration Activities:

Monthly Statistical Report- The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of September 4, 2024, there were 28, 549 active registered voters in Talbot County.

The close of registration is October 15, 2024.

Voting System Activities:

Ballot proofing has been completed, the ballots can be viewed on the Maryland State Board of Elections website.

Logics and Analytics testing has begun on the election equipment.

Candidate Filing:

Nothing to report.

Precinct and Polling Issues:

Election Judge Training is underway. We continue to be fully staffed.

Reminder letters have been sent out to all polling places.

Budget:

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY 2025 as of September 9, 2024 was included in the Board packets.

Other projects:

Ballot Drop boxes have been delivered.

Sample Ballots have been sent to the printer.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Maryland State Board of Elections board meeting is September 24, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

The public notice of canvass is posted and was included in the board packet. The first day of Canvass is October 15, 2024.