

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street, Suite 7
Easton, MD 21601
December 13, 2023

Present:

Board

Susan MacKinnon, President	(D)
Barbara H. Perry	(D)
Walter Black	(D)
Denise Lovelady	(R)

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Talbot County Election Director

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Public Attending

Gary Judy
Mark Harrison
Terrance Bernard
Bill Belding
Shari Wilcoxon

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held December 13, 2023, in the meeting room at the rear entrance of Suite 7 at the Board office indicated above. Ms. MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. MacKinnon asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of November 15, copy of which board members had. There were three changes. Ms. Lovelady moved that the minutes be approved with these changes. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

Additions/Changes to Agenda

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any changes to the agenda and there were none. Ms. Perry moved to approve the agenda. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Comments

None

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 answered several questions from the Board, including questions about Voter Registration, Election Judges and the Budget. Ms. Stafford stated that Mr. Gugy Irving has been appointed to fill the vacancy on the Board.

Board Attorney's Report

Ms. Ryan discussed the MOU between the State BOE and the office of the state prosecutor that clarifies actions to be taken over a voter's intention. If a local board suspects any wrongdoing, that board submits the information to the State BOE which has 1 year to determine if it will prosecute. Ms. Stafford stated that local boards are identifying any possible illegal voting activity but the formal MOU is additional action that can be taken by the state BOE.

Old Business

A. Facility for Election Office - Ms. Stafford stated that the Board may want to consider sending another letter to the County Council as to what we are looking for in a permanent facility. Ms. Lovelady asked how long has this process been going on but no one was certain however Ms. MacKinnon said it was brought up when the BOE office was on Harrison St. The letter needs to reiterate the need for 11,000 sq. feet (we now have only 4,000 sq. feet) with flex space for early voting and must meet the guidelines for an early voting space. Ms. MacKinnon asked as to the timeframe for submitting this letter. Ms. Stafford indicated it might be a good idea to send a letter during the FY25 budget cycle. The budget is submitted in mid-January, but she will clarify the dates.

B. By-Laws and Accompanying Documents— Ms. Stafford provided board members with copies of the Bylaws that are in the revised format to meet SBE requirements. Board members reviewed and discussed suggested changes to the bylaws and Assignment of Local Board of Elections' Duties to Members of the Local Board, Election Director, and Staff.

Ms. Lovelady moved to approve the attachment to the bylaws with changes. Motion seconded and passed unanimously. Changes will be made on the attachment and then added to the bylaws.

Ms. Perry moved to approve the bylaws. Motion seconded and passed unanimously. All Board Members then signed the Bylaws.

Both the signed Bylaws along with the corrected copy of the attachment need to be sent to the SBE by the end of December.

New Business

Ms. Lovelady asked about mail that is received by our LBE that needs to be sent to the SBE to provide an answer to the person making the inquiry. Do we ever hear back from the SBE on how it was answered or resolved? Ms. Stafford said that when she receives any, she will report it in her Election Director's Report.

Confirmation of next meeting

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Elections will be on January 17, 024 at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Lovelady moved to go into closed session. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Closed Session – The Board entered closed session at 10:47 a.m. to discuss a personnel matter.

The Board met in closed session from 10:47 – 11:39 a.m. to conduct a performance evaluation.

Adjournment

Ms. Black moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,


Susan MacKinnon, President


Barbara H. Perry, Secretary



TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

December 13, 2023

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members December 5, 2023.

The Agenda for the December meeting was posted on the Board of Elections office door and in the entrance of the building, as well as, to the website December 5, 2023.

Personnel: Performance evaluations will be conducted in December.

Our office will be closed December 25th and January 1st.

Staff participated in a webinar hosted by the FBI and US Postal Inspector Service in regards to mail handling and suspicious packages. This training was held in response to recent incidences where letters containing fentanyl and other powders were sent to election offices in California, Georgia, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington states.

Meetings Attended:

MAEO Director/Deputy Mentor meeting November 28.

Correspondence:

Nothing to report at this time.

Voter Registration Activities:

Monthly Statistical Report- The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of November 30, 2023 there were 28, 707 active registered voters in Talbot County and 1,545 Inactive voters, for a total voter count of 30, 252.

Voting System Activities:

We participated in statewide testing of the new pollbooks. The purpose was to test the functionality of the pollbooks. We will be using the existing pollbooks for the 2024 election.

Candidate Filing:

Candidate filing is open. The deadline to file for candidacy is February 9, 2024 at 9 p.m. The local offices on the ballot are Board of Education Districts 2, 5, 6. No one has filed at this time.

Precinct and Polling Issues:

Early Voting Sites- The State Board of Elections approved the early voting site for Talbot County at their November 30, 2023 meeting.

Polling Place Plans- We are awaiting approval of our polling place plans.

Election Judge Recruitment- Election Judge numbers as of December 4, 2023 are 140 committed. Of those committed, there are 76 Democratic; 52 Republican; and 12 Unaffiliated/Other.

We have 84 returning Judges from the 2022 General Election and 56 new judges. We will continue to take applications even after our goal is met.

Budget:

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY 2024 as of December 5, 2023 were included in the Board's packets.

Other projects:

A copy of the Election Connection Newsletter was included in your packets.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Nothing to report at this time.