

## Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street, Suite 7  
Easton, MD 21601  
*February 21, 2024*

Present:

### **Board**

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

### **Staff**

Tammy Stafford, Talbot County Election Director

### **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 February 21, 2024, in the meeting room 1 at the Board office indicated above. Ms. MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:31 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 January 17 and minutes of the Special Meeting on January 25, copies of which board members had. There were no changes and Mr. Black moved to accept both of the minutes. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **Additions/Changes to Agenda**

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Ms. MacKinnon then added item A, Written Statement on Public Comment to New Business which moved Board Meeting Format to item B and Disclosure of Contributions to item C.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Ms. MacKinnon asked for a motion to approve the agenda as changed. Ms. Lovelady moved to accept the agenda as changed. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

## **Public Comments**

Ms. MacKinnon made a statement that the Board is guided by the oath we take and our approved by-laws concerning the conduct of Public Comments during a meeting. Comments are just that. They are not a debate, a question and answer, or a conversation. A Board member can ask for clarification of a comment. Questions and requests for information should be made prior to or after a meeting directly to the office. Anyone who wishes to make a comment should state your name and then your comment.

Mr. Judy and Ms. Wilcoxon commented that the public needs prior notification of special meeting dates.

Ms. Wilcoxon commented that she knows that Ms. Stafford is very busy but she is waiting for responses to emails sent to the office. She also commented that cameras should be monitoring ballot drop boxes. Ms. Wilcoxon stated that Ms. Stafford clarified that there are policies and procedures to protect ballot drop boxes in her email.

Mr. Bernard commented that he would like for board minutes to be posted as soon as possible after they have been approved.

Mr. Osborne asked for clarification under Roberts Rules of Order when Ms. MacKinnon interjected that it is the Board that operates under Roberts Rules of Order and not the public. Call or email the office with any questions.

## **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 on MAEO Legislative Committee meeting by providing the Board with copies of notable bills that were discussed. Explanation was provided concerning the Monthly Statistical Report as to how a voter becomes inactive and removed from that status.

## **Board Attorney's Report**

Ms. Ryan stated that in the past she has provided updates to the Board on legislation before the General Assembly that pertains to elections and offered to continue that practice. Ms. Ryan gave short summaries on five bills; HB192 (considered an emergency bill), HB585, HB257, HB641 and HB40. She will update the Board in future meetings but stated that the Board and the public can follow all bills at [www.mgaleg.maryland.gov](http://www.mgaleg.maryland.gov). In the Search block enter the bill number to check on its progress.

Mr. Black asked if the Board can support or oppose a bill. Ms. Stafford and Ms. Ryan said that is not usually done unless a local board could not meet the requirements of a bill due to cost, access, personnel or equipment. Ms. Stafford stated that most of these bills, if they became law, would require more equipment, personnel and additional funding.

## **Old Business**

**A. Facility for Election Office** - Nothing to report.

**B. FY25 Proposed budget** - Budget sent to County on February 5. Ms. Stafford will present in person once she is notified of the date and she will let the Board know.

**C. Election Judge Appointments** – Ms. Stafford stated that she is fully staffed and very close to party balance. Ms. Stafford will keep taking applications in order to cover unforeseen loss of any judges. Training of Judges begins February 27. Board members were provided the schedule and may attend to observe, just let Ms. Stafford know.

### **New Business**

**A. Written Statement on Public Comment** – As discussed at the January 25 meeting, Ms. MacKinnon drafted a statement about Public Comment (copy attached) to be put at the bottom of each meeting agenda. Ms. MacKinnon provided copies to each Board member. Mr. Black asked if this needed a motion and then moved to put this statement on each Agenda. Mr. Black, Ms. Perry and Ms. MacKinnon voted aye, Ms. Lovelady voted no and Mr. Irving abstained. The motion was adopted.

**B. Board Meeting Format** - All future meetings will be in Meeting Room 1 due to the poor acoustics in the larger room. At some point, the County will be adding Zoom capabilities to Meeting Room 1. There was a discussion about our doing Zoom meetings or a combination of Zoom and in person, like other local boards do. This will be put on a future agenda for further discussion once the room is Zoom ready.

**C. Disclosure of contributions** – Ms. MacKinnon provided written declaration of a political contribution as required by the Board's By-Laws. The By-Laws do not state a timeframe for reporting only that a Board Member needs to disclose in writing to the Board.

### **Confirmation of next meeting**

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Elections will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

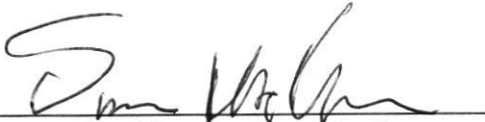
**No Closed Session was needed.**

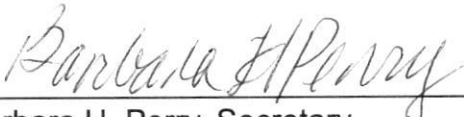
### **Adjournment**

Ms. Black moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,

  
Susan MacKinnon, President

  
Barbara H. Perry, Secretary

The BOE is guided in its actions by our Oath of Office to support the Constitution and the laws of the land.

In addition, The BOE has adopted in each term of office Bylaws and accompanying Division of Responsibilities, based on law and practice, for the Board, Director and staff. These Bylaws include rules of conduct during meetings which encompass agenda items to be included in our meetings. The Bylaws also include the acknowledgement that the Board shall be further guided by Robert's Rules of Order in its deliberations.

One of the items that is included in our agenda is PUBLIC COMMENT which affords an opportunity for the public to have a voice and further gives the BOE an opportunity to listen to those voices.

Public comment is not a Debate.

It is not a question and answer session.

It is not a discussion.

It is not a conversation.

If, after a public comment, a member of the BOE wishes to clarify by question, that is possible.

With that in mind, the BOE thanks the public for your interest, welcomes the public to speak and requests that anyone who would like to speak please state your name for the record.

Thank you.

**TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
**ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

February 21, 2024

**Notice and Distribution of Materials**

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members February 13, 2024.

A tentative meeting agenda was posted to the webpage February 13, 2024. The Agenda for the February meeting was posted on the Board of Elections office door and in the entrance of the building February 13, 2024.

**Personnel:** Nothing to report at this time.

**Meetings Attended:**

I attended the monthly meeting with SBE and other local boards.

MAEO Legislative Committee meeting- Copies of notable bills for the 2024 Legislative Session were included in the board packet.

Maryland State Board of Elections Administrator Jared DeMarinis visited our office February 2.

**Correspondence:**

The office received a PIA request for certain documents related to the 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024 election.

**Voter Registration Activities:**

**Monthly Statistical Report-** The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of January 31, 2024 there were 28,778 active registered voters in Talbot County and 1,533 Inactive voters, for a total voter count of 30, 311.

**Voting System Activities:**

Staff is working on setting up the pollbooks for election judge training and replacing CMOS batteries in the pollbooks.

**Candidate Filing:**

Candidate filing closed February 9, 2024 at 9 p.m. The list of candidates for the 2024 Presidential Election cycle can be found on [www.elections.maryland.gov](http://www.elections.maryland.gov).

**Precinct and Polling Issues:**

**Election Judges-** Staff is working on finalizing election judge assignments. Election judge training will begin the week of February 26, 2024.

**Budget:**

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY 2024 as of February 13, 2024 was included in the Board's packets.

**Other projects:**

Nothing to report at this time.

**Upcoming Meetings/Events:**

I will be meeting with our Emergency Services and Law Enforcement partners in March to prepare for the 2024 Primary Election.

Town of Trappe will be holding a Special Election on March 19.

Town of St. Michaels is holding their election May 6, 2024.