

Howard County Citizens' Election Fund Commission
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

A duly advertised public meeting of the Howard County Citizens' Election Fund Commission was held via Webex on March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Commission Members ("Commission") Present:

- Suzanne Geckle
- Nadine Bernard
- Ralph Frith
- Meagan Braganca
- Matt Dellinger

Staff Members Present:

- **Angela Moore**, Deputy Director, Department of Finance, designated to assist the Commission pursuant to Code Section 10.310 (h).
- **Brenna Punte-Pinos**, Assistant Director, Department of Finance
- **Rafiu Ighile**, Director, Department of Finance
- **Amanda Mihill**, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Howard County Office of Law

As the Chair of the Commission, Ms. Geckle called the open meeting to order at approximately 6:09 p.m.

1. Administrative Items

- o Mr. Frith motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting held December 2, 2025, Mr. Dellinger seconded the motion. There was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes.
- o Commission members agreed that their next meeting will be held on June 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. via Webex.

2. Qualified and active candidates

- o Ms. Geckle mentioned that five candidates for County Council and two candidates for County Executive are active and have qualified for public financing.
- o Ms. Moore mentioned that the County has disbursed \$728,638 from the Citizens' Election Fund to the seven candidates that have qualified so far for the current election cycle.

3. Citizens' Election Fund ("CEF") Balance

- o Ms. Moore provided the current CEF balance of \$2,230,755.
- o Ms. Moore explained that the FY26 budgeted appropriations had been exceeded and that the County needs to file legislation in order to appropriate the remaining fund balance to FY26.

- Ms. Moore explained that the Department of Finance is working with the Budget Office and legislative coordinator in the County Administration's Office to remedy the situation and that the County will likely file emergency legislation to get the funds appropriated and available for disbursement.
- The Commission discussed the issue and inquired about what needs to be done to ensure this is not an issue in the future.
- Ms. Moore will provide the Commission with an update and timeline on how the County plans to handle the situation as soon as it is determined.

4. Update of the State Board of Elections (SBE) website and CEF documents

- Ms. Moore explained that the County is not allowed to capture images from SBE's new campaign system due to limitations enforced by the vendor that created the system.
- Ms. Geckle stated that she would review and remove the images of the old campaign system from the Summary Guide, FAQs, training videos, etc. A link to SBE's website will replace the images where appropriate.
- Ms. Geckle inquired about the violations noted on some of the candidates records in the SBE's website. Ms. Moore will follow up with SBE for more information.

5. Adjournment:

Upon motion by Mr. Frith and seconded by Ms. Bernard, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at approximately 6:55 p.m.