

**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 in the 1st Floor, Columbia-Ellicott City Conference Room, George Howard Building, 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland, 21043 on June 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present:

- Suzanne Geckle
- Douglas Miller
- Ralph Frith
- Ginna Rodriguez-Panqueva
- Keith Ohlinger
- Nadine Bernard

Staff Members Present:

- **Angela Moore**, Deputy Director, Department of Finance, assigned to assist the Commission pursuant to Code Section 10.310 (h).
- **Brenna Punte-Pinos**, Chief – Bureau of Water/Sewer & Misc. Revenue, Department of Finance
- **Kristen Perry**, Deputy County Solicitor, Howard County Office of Law
- **Amanda Mihill**, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Howard County Office of Law
- **Rafiu Ighile**, Director, Department of Finance

Citizens Joining Open Meeting:

- Joel Hurewitz

As the Chair of the Commission, Ms. Geckle called the open meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

1. Administrative Items

- o Ms. Geckle announced that the Commission approved the December 6, 2022 meeting minutes previously via email.
- o Ms. Geckle confirmed that the date of the next meeting will be scheduled for October 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. to be held at the George Howard Building. A tentative meeting for December 6, 2023 has been scheduled to be held virtually.
- o Mr. Ohlinger made a motion to re-elect Ms. Suzanne Geckle as the Chairperson and Mr. Douglas Miller as the Vice Chairperson of the Commission. Ms. Bernard seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously to re-elect Ms. Geckle

and Mr. Miller as the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

2. Revision to Summary Guide & FAQ due to CPI adjustment & 2026 election dates

- Proposed changes to the Summary Guide and FAQs were previously distributed to the Commission for review. Additional updates and recommendations will be provided to the Commission by the Department of Finance for approval prior to the documents being published online.

3. Discussion of candidate's feedback from December 6, 2022 meeting

- During the December 6, 2022 meeting, candidates provided the following feedback to the Commission:
 - Delay in getting money.
 - Access funds earlier even if in a non-contested primary.
 - Retain a small amount of money in CEF account to cover website, email and storage fees.
 - The amounts received were different than what was expected.
 - Question about coordination with independent groups such as the Sierra Club, Apple Ballot, etc.
 - Coordination with State & County Central Committees.
 - How to redress issues.
 - Issues with the certification process using MDCRIS. – Montgomery County has a suggestion on a more user-friendly system for publicly financed campaigns.
 - Increasing the total amount of money, a candidate can receive.
 - Increase the time before money needs to be returned (currently December 31).
 - Candidates should be able to receive funds if there is another person who is saying that he/she is running even if they have not completed the paperwork to become a candidate.
- Commission members identified the items as state or local level changes. Additional research will be completed, and a work session will be held in October to discuss recommendations to the County Council.

4. Public Comment

- Mr. Joel Hurewitz expressed several concerns about the CEF Program. Mr. Hurewitz was asked to submit his concerns in writing to the Commission for further review.

5. Adjournment:

- Upon motion by Mr. Ohlinger and seconded by Mr. Frith, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at approximately 7:43 p.m.