

**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 virtually via WebEx on October 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

**Commission Members Present:**

- Suzanne Geckle
- Wendy Slaughter
- Douglas Miller
- David Loeffler
- Ginna Rodriguez-Panqueva
- Jennifer Bevan-Dangel

**Staff Members Present:**

- **Diane Zagorski**, Chief – Bureau of Tax & Specialty Services, 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, Attorney for Finance
- **Amanda Mihill**, Assistant County Solicitor, Howard County Office of Law
- **Brook Mamo**, Fiscal Manager, Office of Budget
- **Andrew Galarza**, Fiscal Specialist, Office of Budget
- **Rafiu Ighile**, Director of Finance
- **Kim Boyd-Washington**, Deputy Director of Finance
- **Justin Prister**, Administrative Manager of Revenue

Special Guest:

- **Jared DeMarinis**, Director – Division of Candidacy & Campaign Finance, Maryland State Board of Elections

As the Chair of the Commission, Ms. Geckle called the open meeting to order at approximately 6:03 p.m.

1. Public Meeting

- The Commission held a public hearing to revise section Rules of Procedure.
- A revision was made to Section V, subsection “b” to specify that only future amendments to the Rules of Procedure will require a public hearing under the APA process. In the previous version, the Rules of Procedure implied that subsequent changes to the Rules of Procedure, FAQs, and Summary Guide required a public hearing.
- No speakers provided comment.

## 2. Administrative Items

- Ms. Bevan-Dangel motioned to approve the minutes from June 10, 2021 Meeting. Ms. Slaughter seconded the motion. There was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes.
- Ms. Geckle confirmed date of the next meeting will be scheduled for January 10th, 2022 at 6:00p.m.

## 3. Budget Estimate for FY23

- Commission agreed to request \$750,000 for FY23. This is an increase from the original anticipated request of \$650,000 for FY23.
- This amount was determined by assuming the following candidates would max out during the current election cycle: 2 County Executive candidates & 7 County Council Candidates.

## 4. Complaint Process

- The group decided it would be best to adopt a standardized complaint form to ensure all applicable information is collected in a timely manner.
- Ms. Zagorski provided a copy of the complaint form used by the Howard County Ethics Commission to the Citizens' Election Fund Commission members.
- Ms. Geckle asked Ms. Bevan-Dangel to review the form and brainstorm what revisions should be made. The rest of the commission members were encouraged to review the form for discussion at the next meeting.

## 5. Rules of Procedure

- Ms. Geckle asked the group if there were any questions or concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure. No questions or concerns were shared.
- Mr. Miller motioned to adopt the proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure and was seconded by Ms. Bevan-Dangel, the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the Rules.
- Ms. Geckle to send a letter to the County Executive and County Council certifying the Rules have been adopted by the Commission within 30 days.
- Ms. Zagorski to update website with the adopted Rules of Procedure.

## 6. FAQ & Summary Guide Revisions

- Revisions were made to the Summary Guide and FAQs to match language in recently created CEF Training presentation. These revisions were on hold due to the revision needed to the previous version of the Rules of Procedure.
- Additional language was added to question #17 on page #6 of the FAQs related to contributions received by a participating candidate prior to filing their notice of intent.
- Ms. Zagorski to work with Ms. Mihill on the language for section XII of the

Summary Guide. Proposed revisions will be sent to the Commission by Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. The Commission was advised to review the revisions and send comments and/or approval by Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Ms. Bevan-Dangel motioned to approve the revisions to the FAQs and Summary Guide pending revisions discussed to section XII of the Summary Guide.
- Mr. Miller seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the revisions.
- Ms. Zagorski to publish the revised version of the FAQs and Summary Guide after completing the remaining steps of the APA process.

7. Possible Amendment to Section 10.306.3.i

- Ms. Geckle to submit a letter to the County Council requesting emergency legislation to clarify the language in the Code §10.306.3.i that states: “For purposes of this paragraph, whether an election is contested shall be determined on the first Tuesday in August preceding the election.”

8. Donations by Commission Members to Participating Candidates

- Ms. Geckle to attend Ethics Commission Meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> to determine if CEF Commission members are permitted to contribute to participating candidates.
- In the interim, Commission Members were advised not to make donations until clarification is received.

9. Adjournment:

- Upon motion by Mr. Loeffler and seconded by Mr. Miller, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at approximately 7:53pm.

Notice of Meeting Posted:

- Howard County Times, Thursday, September 9th
- Howard Sun, Sunday, September 5th

**Howard County Citizen’s Election Fund Commission:** The Howard County Citizens’ Election Fund Commission will consider amendments to its Rules of Procedure at its October 12, 2021 public meeting. The Commission will consider amendment to change the process to amend the Frequently Asked Questions and Summary Guide. The proposed amendments will be available on the Commission’s website 30 days before its October 12th meeting when they may be proposed for adoption. The meeting will be conducted as a virtual web meeting/conference call. Instructions for attending are on the Commission’s webpage. <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Finance/Citizens-Election-Fund>