

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MEETING MINUTES

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046

Monday, June 26th, 2017 – 4:00 pm

Regular Open Board Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Board Members:

Donna K. Thewes	Board President, Republican Member
Ann M. Balcerzak	Vice President, Democratic Member
Patrick R. Mullinix	Republican Member
Diane L. Butler	Republican Substitute (by telephone)

Michael S. Molinaro	Board Counsel
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Staff:

Charlotte B. Davis	Deputy Director
Phyllis A. West	Board Secretary

Visitors: None

Absent: Raymond M. Rankin Democratic Substitute (Excused)

CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board President Donna Thewes called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm with an established quorum present. The Pledge of Allegiance was then given.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Draft copies of the minutes from the May 22, 2017 meeting were provided to Board members by electronic mail prior to the meeting and a paper copy was made available to each member at the meeting. Members made no changes to the minutes. President Thewes asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Patrick Mullinix motioned to accept the minutes as presented and Ann Balcerzak seconded the motion.

Action: The May 22, 2017 minutes were unanimously approved by those present.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Board members made no changes or additions to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to discuss.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Donna Thewes stated that three LBE Board Presidents from larger counties and Baltimore City apparently met while attending the MAEO Conference in June. She had no information on the meeting but should be receiving a call from Montgomery County's Board President. If there is another meeting of this type between LBE Boards, Ann Balcerzak has recommended that any Board member interested be able to participate. Board members agreed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Deputy Director Charlotte Davis presented the Director's Report in the absence of Director Guy Mickley.

1. **Fourth Early Voting Center Status** – The State Board of Elections will not hold a June Board Meeting, so our Early Voting Center will be on their agenda in July for approval.
2. **Candidates** – Ms. Davis reported that three people have filed for candidacy in the office since the last meeting, for a total of twelve to date. Those filing this month for candidacy include: one for County Council District 3 as a Democrat, one for County Council District 4 as a Democrat and one for County Council District 5 as a Republican. A list has been provided of all people who have filed for office in districts that have anything to do with Howard County.
3. **MAEO Conference** – The MAEO conference was held June 6-9 in Ocean City, Maryland. There were some items taken away from the conference that will be implemented by the Director. The conference was not geared towards elections for the most part, but the staff participated in teambuilding and networking activities, which are vital to what we do here in the office. Ann Balcerzak asked how many staff attended the MAEO Conference. Ms. Davis indicated that there were 12 reservations for staff attendance, primarily full-time staff with a few contingent employees. Ms. Davis briefly reviewed what she knew of the MAEO Agenda (since she did not attend the Conference), including the presentation by a local Eastern Shore Sheriff on how to deal with an Active Shooter situation. Patrick Mullinix indicated that his business had just held a similar presentation. Donna Thewes stated she could help arrange such a presentation here with the Howard County Police or Sheriff's Office if there is an interest.
4. **Registration** – Registration numbers continue to rise slowly, which will continue until we get into Universal Registration with registrations coming from many agencies' websites as well as the MVA and the State Board. Ms. Davis noted that the League of Women Voters has registration drives at high schools throughout the year now, rather than only at graduation time, and more young people are registering to vote.

5. **Polling Place Changes Update** – Charlotte Davis reported that all polling place changes approved by the Board last month have been completed and all Voter Notification Cards have been mailed to any affected voters. She noted that we have only had a few calls from voters as to why they were moved, but there have been no major issues. Donna Thewes stated this provides voters with plenty of notice prior to the election.
6. **Warehouse** – The warehouse continues to be on schedule for the pollbook upgrade that will occur later this summer. Last week the warehouse staff helped the State conduct an audit and reconciliation of all the State equipment at the warehouse. Staff continues to charge all equipment per the State-mandated charging schedule. The warehouse is also in the process of re-assigning equipment and carts to accommodate the polling place changes that the Board approved last month. Ms. Davis mentioned that the State also audited equipment at the office.
7. **Summer Interns** – The League of Korean Americans has provided us with 14 summer interns to help in the office over the summer. The first eight interns started today, with some working at the warehouse to help them with equipment assignment activities due to the polling place changes. Others are working in the office on supplies for the 2018 election.
8. **NVRA/Public Information Act (PIA) Request** – Guy Mickley finished the NVRA/PIA request for the State and submitted five names and corresponding paperwork to the State. Only five of almost 200 names that were inspected met the criteria that was given in the document to be given to the organization. Ann Balcerzak said she thought the State was handling this. Phyllis West stated they are handling this -- we are simply providing our information to them as requested.
9. **Judge Training Videos** -- The staff has done all the prep work for the judge videos and filming will begin next week. We expect draft products to be available for viewing by management before the next Board meeting. Donna Thewes was supportive of this idea and believes it will be a great resource for the judges.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Board Counsel Michael Molinaro, Esq., indicated he had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Donna Thewes asked if there had been any problems with the hacking issue of the Howard County website. Phyllis West indicated there was not. There was some discussion by Board members regarding the incident.

Donna Thewes also mentioned she would like some changes made to the front page of our website. She will table the issue until Director Mickley returns.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Secretary Phyllis West provided several handouts to Board members concerning upcoming changes to Maryland's Open Meetings Act due to newly passed legislation. She discussed the impact on the Board's activities. One issue of note involves mandatory training which is now required for at least one regular Board member, not just staff members. Training taken after October 1, 2013 (which several Board and staff members took a few years ago) will be counted as current. Ms. West provided information concerning the on-line training available through the *University of Maryland's Virtual Learning Center @ Institute for Governmental Service & Research*. She stated that our office and SBE must now keep records of who has taken the training class.

Donna Thewes and Ann Balcerzak indicated they appreciated receiving the handouts. Ms. Thewes encouraged everyone to take the training class.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

President Thewes asked for a motion to recess the Regular Open Board meeting so that the Board could meet in Executive Session according to the Open Meetings Act General Provisions. This was to consult with Board Counsel concerning potential litigation. Patrick Mullinix offered the motion, which was seconded by Ann Balcerzak.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to recess the meeting at 4:48 pm so that the Board could convene in Executive Session #1.

After this session, President Thewes reconvened the Regular Open Board Meeting at 5:32 pm. She reported that during the Executive Session the Board had been briefed by Board Counsel on a claim of discrimination based on disability filed with SBE.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

After a short discussion, President Thewes asked for a motion to recess the Regular Open Board meeting so that the Board could meet in Executive Session according to the Open Meetings Act General Provisions. This was to discuss a personnel matter. Patrick Mullinix offered the motion, which was seconded by Ann Balcerzak.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to recess the meeting at 5:34 pm so that the Board could convene in Executive Session #2.

At the conclusion of Executive Session #2, Donna Thewes reconvened the Regular Open Board Meeting at 5:35 pm. She reported that during the Executive Session the Board had briefly discussed planning for the Director's performance evaluation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Donna Thewes asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Open Board meeting. Patrick Mullinix offered the motion, which was seconded by Ann Balcerzak.

Action: The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 pm.

The next regular open meeting of the Howard County Board of Elections is scheduled for Monday, September 25, 2017 at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phyllis A. West, Board Secretary

Donna K. Thewes, Board President