

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MEETING MINUTES

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046

Monday, February 25, 2019 – 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
Raymond M. Rankin	Democratic Substitute
Diane L. Butler	Republican Substitute
Michael S. Molinaro	Board Counsel

Staff: Guy C. Mickley	Director
Charlotte B. Davis	Deputy Director

Absent: Phyllis A. West	Board Secretary, (excused)
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Visitors: Jay Gerarden

CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board President Donna Thewes called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm with an established quorum present. The Pledge of Allegiance was then given.

WELCOME GUESTS

Visitor Jay Gerarden was invited to make a few remarks and he declined.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Draft copies of the minutes from the January 28, 2019, meeting were provided to Board members. President Thewes asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Patrick Mullinix made a motion to approve the minutes, and Ray Rankin seconded the motion.

Action: The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Board members made no additions or changes to the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Donna Thewes asked the Director if he had contacted the Howard County Department of Public Works who are responsible for enforcing signage in Howard County. He said he had and wondered if arranging for someone to come to a Board meeting would be agreeable. All Board Members indicated their approval of that arrangement.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Guy Mickley highlighted his report as follows:

Continuing Items:

1a. General Office Update: The staff is working on several things to close out the past election and gear up for the upcoming election.

aa. All of the office committees have met. The Website Committee is making immediate changes to the website and implementing weekly checks to ensure all information posted is correct and update.

bb. The Absentee and Judge Departments are finishing up cleanup and keeping up with pending legislation.

cc. Outreach was present at HCC and at the Black History Expo in February. Plans for Outreach include scheduling events at the libraries when the Farmers Markets are there. Outreach is pairing with the Office of Tourism for the Spring Fest in Ellicott City in April.

dd. The Budget has had no changes to date and a meeting with the County Executive will be scheduled for a date in March.

ee. The Warehouse is continuing with post-election maintenance of equipment and clean-up of both voted and unvoted ballots. The State Board has received a prototype of the new pollbook and stand from ES&S. MAEO has discussed this process and is sending a letter to the State Board requesting not to use new pollbooks for the upcoming election as there is insufficient time for implementation. Same Day Registration will be implemented on Election Day 2020. Too many new processes at one election, especially a Presidential, could be cause for multiple failures.

ff. The Manual Audit of ballots for Howard County was conducted on February 12, 2019, without problems.

2. Registration continues to be typical after a Gubernatorial General. There is a small uptick in voter correspondence in the new year, which will probably be a continuing trend through the primary election.

3. Candidate filing for 2020 – nothing to report on the local front. The candidate staff did attend refresher training at the State Board, so they will be prepared when candidates start to file.

4. Legislation has been filed in the General Assembly with over 90 bills pertaining to Elections. All Board Members have been given access to the spreadsheet listing the bills. The Director gave a brief synopsis of the following bills: HB71, HB79, HB119, HB172, HB174, HB237, SB32, SB154, SB449/HB286, SB333, SB782/HB578, SB934/HB423, SB919/HB706, SB651, HB590.

Board members and the Director then discussed the potential significant impacts of some of the proposed legislation, including financial and work processes.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Michael Molinaro, Board Counsel, reported that some states have adopted flexible ways for the return of absentee ballots. Guy Mickley discussed the use of a dropoff box for absentee ballots at Early Voting sites. Another option would be for the ballot being put in the Provisional Ballot bag. Problem - Judges are not considered Board of Election employees but rather are considered to be paid volunteers. Mr. Molinaro mentioned the likelihood of petitions being filed both on the state and local level in the Summer of 2020.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING

There being no new business, President Thewes asked for a motion to recess the Regular Open Board Meeting so that the Board of Canvassers could convene to approve two sets of Canvass Board minutes. Diane Butler made a motion to recess the meeting which was seconded by Ray Rankin.

Action: The Board voted to recess the Regular Open Meeting at 5:08 pm.

At the end of the Board of Canvassers Meeting, President Thewes reported that the Canvass Board had approved the amended minutes for the First Post Certification Canvass of December 19, 2018, and the Second Post Certification Canvass of January 28, 2019. No additional absentee ballots had been received to canvass.

President Thewes asked for a motion to adjourn the Board of Canvassers Meeting. Diane Butler made a motion to adjourn the Board of Canvassers and Ann Balcerzak seconded.

Action: The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Board of Canvassers Meeting at 5:16 pm and Donna Thewes reconvened the Regular Open Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Donna Thewes asked for a motion to adjourn the Open Board Meeting. Ray Rankin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Diane Butler seconded the motion.

Action: The Board Meeting was adjourned 5:18 pm. The next Regular Open Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 25, 2019, at 4:00 pm.

Sincerely,

Charlotte B. Davis
Deputy Director

Donna K. Thewes
President