

MINUTES
Anne Arundel County Board of Elections
6740 Baymeadow Drive
Glen Burnie MD 21060
February 13, 2025 9:00 AM

Attendance

Board Member	In-Person	Online	Absent
Trudy McFall, Board President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Robert Atkins, Board Vice President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tryphena Ellis-Johnson, Board Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edward Evans, Board Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jason Rheinstein, Board Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
James Praley, Board Attorney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Garreis, Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Siejack, Deputy Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public Attendance

Board of Canvassers Meeting - Convened 9:00 AM

1. Quorum was declared by Robert Atkins.

2. Untimely ballots- 4 untimely ballots were presented by Bianca Morgan, Vote By Mail Supervisor. Ms. Ellis-Johnson moved to reject the ballots. Mr. Atkins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. Confidential Voter request – Ms. Morgan presented 1 confidential voter request. Mr. Rheinstein asked if our Board has a standard for approval other than the regulations on the application. The board discussed that they approve on a case-by-case basis according to what is presented with the application. Ms. Ellis-Johnson moved to approve the request. Mr. Atkins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. The board would like our staff to verify what information is not being made public as a confidential voter.

Regular Board Meeting

1. Approval of Minutes – Ms. Ellis Johnson moved to approve the minutes with a correction to the FY26 Fiscal budget report statement on leasing the cameras to state “part of this process is asking the county if they will approve this as part of the Capital budget” instead of the Operating budget. Mr. Atkins seconded the motion as requested. The motion was passed unanimously.

2. Election Director's Report-

I. BUSINESS OPERATIONS-

A. Personnel: Mid-term Performance Evaluation and Planning (PEP) has been completed for the entire staff. The remaining vacant position in our Business Operations Department has been sent to the Department of Budget and Management.

B. Important Meetings: Maryland Association of Elected Officials (MAEO) Legislative Meeting was 2/12. We will discuss that further later in the meeting. Our 2nd Quarter and FY26 Budget reviews took place with our county budget officer. Our meeting with State Board of Elections Administrator, Jared DeMarinis was on 2/10. He was very positive and complimentary about our local board operations.

C. Election Workers: Working with the Election Judges to confirm payments and resolve any issues as they occur.

II. VOTER SERVICES-

A. Petition- Completed a New Party Petition. The Working Class Party. It was a very small amount to process for our county with 9 batches. We will have to see what they do statewide before knowing if they were successful.

B. Voter Registration- Our backlog from when registration closed during the election has been completed. Kudos to Bob Brady, our Voter Registration Supervisor, his department and the entire staff for helping to complete over 30,000 transactions in the last two months.

Current Voter Registration by party: Democratic - 173,341 Republican – 130,999 Green – 450 Unaffiliated – 105,829 Others – 7,002 Total – 417,621.

III. ELECTION OPERATIONS-

A. Manual Audit: Will be performing today directly following our Board meeting. The audit will be livestreamed to the public and we sent invitations to the Central Committee's as well as the 3rd party candidates who ran for Senator. SBE assigned to us approximately 500 ballots for the US. Senate race. We will take the results from Election Day, Early Voting and Vote by Mail and count those selected ballots by hand to tally and see if they match.

B. Voting Equipment: Post-Election Maintenance (PEM) is underway. Electronic Pollbooks have been completed. The Voting System deadline is April 18th. Now that our backlog in Voter Registration is done, most of our team will be helping to complete this process.

3. Board Attorney's Report – Mr. Praley had nothing to report. He had a question where we are with the City of Annapolis's MOU. Mr. Garreis stated there is a House Bill 322 that is being discussed which will allow SBE to enter into an MOU with municipalities. Mr. Praley suggested that we attach the existing MOU and say this is the current one from the State with existing prices to lock them in. Mr. Siejack asked if we could also indicate the MOU is subject to HB 322 that is emergency legislation. Mr. Praley said we could put qualifying language that states subject to change.

4. Old Business –

A. FY26 Budget Submission:

- 1) Election Judge payroll has been set at \$1,079,650. This will give us more flexibility. There is a Legislative Bill which will make it easier for us to adjust or reconfigure the polling places. We are trying to cut down on the number, especially the ones that are not county public buildings.
- 2) SBE State bill is \$2.8 million. This is up considerably from previous years as they are including funding for three new IT projects. New Electronic Poll books and Voting systems are set to be implemented in 2028. New Voter Registration system to be implemented in 2030.
- 3) Reduction roughly in half of seasonal temporary staff for the 2026 elections. We do not think we will need as much staff for the Gubernatorial elections. We will bring seasonal staff in a little later as the Primary Election will not be held until summer which has produced lower voter turnout in the past.
- 4) Budget office's final meeting is on 2/29. County Executive meeting is on 3/10. Mr. Garreis said Ms. McFall was planning on joining that meeting at the Arundel Center on Calvert Street at 11:30am.

B. Annapolis Election: We have received finalized Ward boundary changes from the City of Annapolis that will be made effective for the 2025 Municipal Election. The changes affect approximately 1,200 voters in Wards 1-7. Ward 8 is unaffected. We would like to reconfigure the existing boundaries between the City of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County to eliminate instances when precinct boundaries cross the border between the City and the County. All City precinct boundaries would be entirely within the City and all County precincts would be outside the city. The Wards would have the same boundaries as the Precincts. Proposed changes to be presented at the March Board Meeting and posted publicly for 30 days for comment. Notice will be given to the County Executive, County Council members and State Legislators impacted. Board approval at the April Board Meeting. Notice will be sent to the impacted voters after the changes have been completed.

C. Board Bylaws Approval: Amended Board Bylaws were posted online. No public comments were received. Mr. Atkins moved to accept the amended bylaws. Ms. Ellis-Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. New Business –

A. Legislation:

- 1) The Board discussed Senate Bill 259 and how this may affect reducing the number of polling places. Mr. Rheinstein is not seeing any material change in the criteria. Mr.

Garreis pointed out we are not trying to disenfranchise any voters, but to make the elections and process more efficient. Mr. Rheinstein asked if the legislation had any impact on networking the polling places so they would be more like voting centers and there would be less need for provisional voting. Mr. Garreis said that procedure would be part of our internal election plan approved through SBE.

- 2) Mr. Evans addressed House Bill 412 which requires canvass streaming. He has no problem in general having the canvassing operation streamed live. However, the bill needs to have some cautionary language concerning the positioning and angles of the cameras to be in a space where you would not be able to zoom in and see names and votes on ballots. The integrity of the election should be the first priority over the open meetings act. Another issue would be that someone watching the streamline would not be signing a non-disclosure agreement like we have everyone sign when entering the canvass room. Mr. Evans will be testifying on 2/26 in Annapolis.
- 3) House Bill 317 concerning curbside voting. This would require some big changes on election day where we would need at least one polling place made available for curbside voting. Some States who have this procedure implemented requires voters to make an appointment and not just drive up. Mr. Garreis said the wording of the bill states that we would have to go to the voter with our poll book. Not the same way we do now with the voter signing up for a mail-in ballot and staff bringing it to their vehicle.
- 4) House Bill 426 concerning Postelection Tabulation Audits – Risk-Limiting Audits. Mr. Garreis explained if passed, this will take the place of the manual audits. This would move the function that we are doing after 120 days closer to the election before the State certification.
- 5) Senate Bill 308 would ease the requirements for using an Unaffiliated voter as a Chief Election Judge. We support this.
- 6) House Bill 945 moves the Primary Election to June 23rd from June 30th.

B. MAEO Bi-Annual Conference: Held May 5th to 9th at The Grand in Ocean City, Maryland. Board members who cannot attend will need to submit a written excuse to SBE.

6. Disclosures – Ms. Ellis Johnson conducted voter registration at a Delta event. Mr. Evans attended the Open House at the Senate Building, no donation.

7. Confirmation of Next Meeting – The next Board Meeting is scheduled on March 13th, 2025 at 9:00 AM at Anne Arundel County Board of Elections. 6740 Baymeadow Drive, Glen Burnie, MD 21060.

8. Closed Session – no closed session.

9. Adjournment – Ms. Ellis-Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Rheinstein seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Durrant, Recording Secretary

Approved:

Trudy McFall, Board President

Robert Atkins, Board Vice President

cc: State Board of Elections
Board Members
County Executive
County Council Members
County State Delegation
Budget Office