

## MINUTES

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

### Attendance

Board Member	In-Person	Online	Absent
Trudy McFall, Board President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jason Rheinstein, Board Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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

Anne White

### Board of Canvassers Meeting - Convened 9:00 AM

**1. Quorum** was declared by Trudy McFall.

**2. Untimely ballots-** 63 untimely ballots were presented by Bianca Morgan, Vote By Mail Supervisor. Mr. Atkins asked for us to keep the statistic of how many are untimely due to the voter versus the post office. Mr. Atkins moved to reject the ballots. Mr. Rheinstein seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

**3. Confidential Voter request** – Ms. Morgan presented 3 confidential voter requests. Ms. McFall asked how being a confidential voter effects their registration. Mr. Garreis explained it protects their address from the public while still being able to ascertain that they are a registered voter. Mr. Rheinstein asked who the law allows to be approved as a confidential voter. Mr. Praley read the application categories which state; 1. Person Being Threatened. 2. Nondisclosure of personal information for personal safety. 3. Victim of or witness to felony. 4. Law enforcement personnel. 5. Member of State of Federal Judiciary. 6. Immediate family member of those listed above. All categories must have supporting documentation. Confidential status must be requested and approved annually. Mr. Rheinstein moved to approve the request. Ms. Ellis-Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

**4. Approval of Canvass Minutes** – Mr. Evans moved to approve the 2024 Presidential General Canvass Minutes for 10/15/24, 10/17/24, 10/18/24, 10/22/24, 10/25/24, 10/28/24, 10/30/24, 11/7/24, 11/8/24, 11/12/24, 11/13/24, 11/15/24, and 11/19/24. Mr. Atkins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **Regular Board Meeting**

### **1. Election Director's Report-**

#### **I. BUSINESS OPERATIONS-**

**A. Budget:** FY26 Budget is due to the county by January 18<sup>th</sup>. Will discuss further later in meeting.

**B. Personnel:** Reduction if Force (RIF) for seasonal staff has been completed. We will be welcoming Kim Slacum as a new State employee as an Election Program Specialist I in the Voter Services Department. We have one remaining vacant State position to fill in the Business Operations Department. Once all of our permanent positions are filled we will have 27 full-time staff.

**C. Election Workers:** Election Worker Payroll for the 2024 Presidential General Election Judges and Canvassers have been submitted to the county.

#### **II. VOTER SERVICES-**

**A. Voter Registration:** Completing processing of Voter Registrations that were held before the General Election deadline. The Libertarian Party and No Labels Party have lost their official status in Maryland due to not meeting the participation criteria in the last General Election. Anne Arundel County current voter registrations are as follows: Democratic 173,089; Republican 130,263; Green 465; Unaffiliated 104,811; Other 6,898; Total 415,526.

**B. Mail-In Voting:** Working on the Mail Processing Warehouse floorplans.

#### **III. ELECTION OPERATIONS-**

**A. Manual Audit:** We will run our manual audit on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 following the February Board Meeting. The audit will be livestreamed to the public and we will send invitations to the Central Committee's as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:** Most of the voting equipment has been released from the election and our Post-Election Maintenance (PEM) is underway.

**2. Board Attorney's Report** – The Tracy lawsuit which was filed in Federal Court several years ago is still pending. It was on hold at one point because the plaintiff was incarcerated.

**3. Old Business** – Ms. McFall asked if there looks like anything that would affect our

Department with the upcoming Federal Administration? Mr. Garreis said he does not think there is anything that would affect the local level. We are focused on the next Legislative Session in Maryland.

**A. FY26 Budget:** Our FY25 Approved budget was \$6,953,100. The County target FY26 budget is \$6,556,400. Our Agency request for FY26 budget is \$8,382,977. A difference of \$1,826,577.

Our budget review with the largest increases:

- i. State Payroll increase \$538,790. This biggest increase is because we have filled our 10 permanent State employee vacancies and have one more to fill by the end of FY25. We are also considering the cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and re-classes of all current staff.
- ii. Voting Systems increase \$460,565. This is a bill received from the Maryland State Board of Elections. They tell us what they are going to charge us. This will cover the launch of the two big IT projects; the Voter Registration system and the Voting System.
- iii. Election Workers increase \$104,000 without bonuses.
- iv. Security Cameras increase \$110,164. We want to purchase and finance security cameras to be used for our drop-boxes. Mr. Rheinstein questioned purchasing over leasing because of maintenance, breaking down and with time newer/better equipment being available. Mr. Garreis said it will be better for us to not have a vendor as a middle man each election as we would have more control and be able to move them as needed. Also, the county would be able to utilize them in our off seasons. Mr. Rheinstein asked if we could find a way for the county to fund it outside of our budget as we would only be using them for a short period of time every 2 years. He then questioned why the cameras are not part of the Capital Budget instead of the Operating Budget since they are a purchase that will last up to ten years. Mr. Garreis said part of this process is asking the county if they will approve the cameras as part of the Capital Budget.
- v. Canvasses increase \$51,933.

**B. 81 Polling Place Budget Plan Submission:** With the current 152 polling places, we are looking at spending around \$2,000,000 in Election payroll which includes the bonuses and pay raises that the State has legislated. To reign in our payroll costs we are advising a plan to reconfigure our polling places and merging some of them together to produce a more efficient breakdown. Our previous experience in 2020 has shown that we can operate with 32 voting centers. We did an even breakdown across the county with an average of 5,300 voters per site with a predicted turnout of 2,700 (65% estimated turnout in person). Each of the 81 polling places would use an average of 2 DS200 scanners, 3 Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs), 4 Electronic Pollbooks, 15 Voting Booths, and 14 Election Judges. This would cost approximately \$4,750 per site for payroll.

Ms. McFall wants to be able to keep the polling place locations stable from Primary to General. The voters are confused when they are moved. Mr. Garreis pointed out that this could help alleviate these issues by using the larger locations like High Schools. We are trying to eliminate use of the smaller and public buildings. Mr. Rheinstein again suggests having the polling places

set up the same way Early Voting sites and previously Voting Centers are so that voters can vote their correct ballot at any location. This would greatly reduce the need for provisional ballots. As far as Early Voting, the use of schools cannot be used unless it is in the summer with no students in the buildings. On Election Day we can use the schools because they close the schools to students. Mr. Rheinstein stated that current law is if you are going to reduce the number of polling locations you will need approval. What will happen if we do not get the approval? Mr. Garreis stated Howard County has been able to reduce their numbers and we are trying to follow their model. We do not need legislative changes for this approval. Mr. Praley suggested bringing two budget proposals with both the 152 and the 81 polling places so they can see the cost savings.

A motion was made by Mr. Atkins to approve the FY26 proposed budget which includes the Election Judge payroll for 152 polling places and the preferred reduction to 81 polling places. Ms. Ellis-Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

#### **4. New Business –**

##### **A. City of Annapolis 2025 Municipal Elections:**

i. Anne Arundel County Board of Elections cost estimate to help facilitate the City of Annapolis Election is- Approximately 30 business days of activity or 240 hours of election tasks with an average staff hourly cost of \$33 per hour. Allocating 100 hours of service for 23 staff will be \$75,900 per election. The total labor cost for the Primary and General would be \$151,800. We are waiting for the State Board of Elections to give us our material cost breakdown. In the past the County Executive has kept these costs in our budget. It is his determination whether we will pay for this or bill the City of Annapolis. Most of the cost of this election is paid directly by the City. They have requested 4 drop-boxes. The Primary Election is September 16, 2025. The General Election is November 4, 2025.

ii. Milestones- A Candidate Petition was certified on January 8<sup>th</sup> by the City of Annapolis with the support of Robert Brady, our Voter Registration Supervisor. We will be implementing and updating the City of Annapolis redistricting to our voter registration street files. Mr. Rheinstein proposed that we adjust the Precincts to correspond with the Annapolis Ward boundaries. Mr. Garreis said we will look into this.

**B. Bylaws Amendment:** Mr. Evans proposed some additions to Anne Arundel County Board of Elections bylaws under Article 3- Meetings Section 3.1- Time and location. The amended sections state:

C. Notice. Except as provided in {E} and {F} below, public notice of regular meetings shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting.

F. When, during an election canvassing event, the canvassing scheduling is altered which adversely affects a previously scheduled Board Meeting, the Board President (or Board Vice President in the Presidents' absence) may, with a bi-partisan approval from the remaining majority of the Board, reschedule the affected Board Meeting giving less than the one week public notice in "C" above, but in no event less than 48 hours notice of the need to reschedule.

Ms. McFall inquired about the language of the additions and thought they might have more of an approval process than what the current bylaws state. Mr. Evans explained that the reason he felt the new wording is needed is because of the rescheduling board meeting conflict at the last canvass. Because they were not scheduling a special meeting, but rescheduling a regular board meeting, we had to give 7 days' notice. A special meeting cannot take the place of a regular board meeting. The wording is not to over complicate things, but to cover all that is needed in order to be sure things are done correctly and that it will be approved by the State Board of Elections. Further discussion was had by the board to clarify why we would need this amendment. An example of a special meeting would be a week before an election a polling location has burned down or is no longer available to us.

Mr. Atkins proposes to post the Bylaw Amendment for public comment before approval at the February Board Meeting. Mr. Evans seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

**5. Disclosures** – Mr. Rheinstein contributed \$70 to the Maryland Republican Party. Mr. Atkins also contributed or purchased a ticket for an event held by the Maryland Republican Party. Ms. Ellis-Johnson is having a Voter Registration table set up on Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup> with her Delta Sigma Theta sorority chapter. Elected officials will be there speaking at the event. Ms. McFall asked to clarify the purpose of disclosures at our board meetings. Is the intent to help each other or the public understand? Mr. Praley explained it is to alert fellow board members of each other's specific political participation so that if at some point in the future there may be a reason to recuse oneself.

**6. Confirmation of Next Meeting** – The next Board Meeting is scheduled on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 9:00 AM at the Anne Arundel County Board of Elections, 6740 Baymeadow Drive, Glen Burnie, MD 21060.

**7. Closed Session** – no closed session.

**8. Adjournment** – Ms. Ellis-Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Atkins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:23 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kim Durrant, Recording Secretary

Approved:

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Trudy McFall, Board President

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Robert Atkins, Board Vice President

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