

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street, Suite 7
Easton, MD 21601
January 17, 2024

Present:

Board

Denise Lovelady (R)
Barbara H. Perry (D)
Gugy Irving (R)

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Talbot County Election Director

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Public Attending

Members of the public were in attendance

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held January 17, 2024, in the meeting room at the rear entrance of Suite 7 at the Board office indicated above. Ms. Lovelady called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

Ms. Stafford indicated she had an email from Mr. Black about his absence from the meeting.

Ms. Lovelady welcomed Mr. Irving and asked him to introduce himself.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Lovelady asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of December 13, copy of which board members had. There were no changes and Ms. Perry moved to accept the minutes. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Additions/Changes to Agenda

Ms. Lovelady asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Ms. Stafford added item C, Training Compensation for Judges to New Business Ms. Perry moved to accept the change to the agenda. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Lovelady asked for a motion to approve the agenda as changed. Ms. Perry so moved. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Comments

A question was asked about moving Public Comment from the beginning of the meeting. Ms. Lovelady said that would need to be an agenda item at the next meeting when the full Board is present.

Mr. Bernard read a handout concerning requests for various audit logs and provided the Board with a copy of the handout. Ms. Ryan and Ms. Stafford have responded in writing to a previous request directing those concerned to links where this information can be obtained and also offered to have a meeting to clarify what the group wants and if they want to pay to have the Talbot County Board of Elections staff print off this information. No meeting has been requested. Ms. Lovelady asked how Public Information Requests are handled. Ms. Stafford and Ms. Ryan explained how public information act requests are handled.

It was stated that no Maryland county has produced the information requested in this handout. Ms. Lovelady said that the full board will need to discuss getting answers to these requests.

A question was asked about the origin and cost of the letter they received asking if they wanted to apply for a mail-in ballot. Ms. Stafford responded that this mailing was required by law and was paid for and mailed by the State Board of Elections.

A final question was about voter list maintenance. It was pointed out that some addresses on a list that the group had did not match USPS addresses. Ms. Stafford stated that information is received from USPS, MVA, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene on a monthly basis.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Stafford provided the Board with a written Director's Report on activities since the last Board meeting. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Ms. Stafford provided updated information on Election Judge numbers, upcoming meetings and the Budget.

Board Attorney's Report

Nothing to report.

Old Business

- A. Facility for Election Office** - Ms. Stafford believes the topic of a new, permanent location began around 2019. Talks in 2023 got the office and equipment moved to our temporary location. The Cadmus location is a shared space with another agency but is still viable. To have early voting located along with the office would need to meet the Polling Place Plan of voter density. Currently using the Easton Fire Hall, we have a 90% density within a 10-mile radius and the Cadmus location would be 89%. The Board needs to reiterate the need for 11,000 sq. feet (we now have about 4,700 sq. feet) and should readdress this with the County Council. Mr. Stepp asked if the Easton Fire Hall could still be used even if the Board of Election is at the Cadmus location and Ms. Stafford said it could.
- B. FY25 Preliminary budget** - Board members were provided with a copy of the FY25 Preliminary budget. More discussion of the location for a new facility along with the

budget should be done with the full Board present but needs to be done soon in order to submit the request and Budget to the County Council in early February.

Ms. Perry suggested a special meeting to address the office space and the FY 2025 budget. Ms. Stafford added that the meeting would also need the Board to appoint the Election Judges which must be done 13 weeks before the primary. Ms. Perry moved for a special meeting, it was seconded and passed unanimously.

New Business

A. Appointment of Election Judges – This will be addressed at the Special Meeting.

B. Disclosure of contributions – Both Ms. Lovelady and Ms. Perry provided written declarations of political contributions as required by the Board's By-Laws.

C. Training Compensation for Judges – A law was passed in 2023 that Election Judges would be paid \$50 for the training day, regardless of whether they worked an election. Talbot County already pays \$100 for the training day. Ms. Perry moved that Election Judges be paid \$50 for the training day and the additional \$50 that is authorized by Talbot County only be paid if they work an election. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Other payments are: \$350 per day for Chief/Provisional Ballot Judge, \$250 per day for all other judges and all returning judges get \$100 per day extra.

Confirmation of next meeting

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Board of Elections will be on February 21, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

Adjournment

Ms. Perry moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Lovelady, Vice President



Barbara H. Perry, Secretary

TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

January 17, 2024

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members January 10, 2024.

A tentative meeting agenda was posted to the webpage January 3, 2024. The Agenda for the January meeting was posted on the Board of Elections office door and in the entrance of the building January 9, 2024.

Personnel: Performance evaluations were completed in December.

I have sent a request to Human Resources to add the position of Election Program Manager to our office. This position was requested by the board and is funded in the FY2024 Budget. If approved, the position will be filled by early February.

Meetings Attended:

Election Director's Meeting January 11, 2024

MAEO Director/Deputy Mentor meeting December 16, 2023.

Correspondence:

The office received a letter from Mr. Mark Harrison requesting certain changes to the format of the board meeting and asking about audits.

Voter Registration Activities:

Monthly Statistical Report- The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of December 31, 2023 there were 28,755 active registered voters in Talbot County and 1,533 Inactive voters, for a total voter count of 30, 288.

Voting System Activities:

Nothing to report at this time.

Candidate Filing:

Candidate filing is open. The deadline to file for candidacy is February 9, 2024 at 9 p.m. The local offices on the ballot are Board of Education Districts 2, 5, 6. No one has filed at this time.

Precinct and Polling Issues:

Polling Place Plans- The State Board of Elections approved the Polling Place Plans for Talbot County at their December 14, 2023 meeting.

Ballot Drop Boxes-The State Administrator approved the drop box locations for Talbot County January 5, 2024.

Election Judge Recruitment- Election Judge numbers as of are 150 committed. Of those committed, there are 83 Democratic; 55 Republican; and 12 Unaffiliated/Other. We have 87 returning Judges from the 2022 General Election and 63 new judges. We continue to take applications.

Budget:

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY 2024 as of January 9, 2024 were included in the Board's packets.

Other projects:

On January 10, the office held a signing event for election judges. During the event new and returning judges filled out the judges' packets. Staff was able to meet with the judges and answer questions. We had 79 new and returning judges attend the event.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Meeting with Emergency Management Services- January 24, 2024
MAEO meeting – February 6, 2024

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