

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
January 25, 2024

Present:

Board

Susan MacKinnon, President	(D)
Denise Lovelady	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Barbara H. Perry	(D)
Gugy Irving	(R)

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Talbot County Election Director

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Public Attending

Sara Kilmon, Public Information Officer for Talbot County

A special meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on January 25, 2024, in the meeting room at the back of building 215 Bay Street. President MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and noted that all were present and a quorum was present.

The purpose of the meeting was to handle several time sensitive items that had to be completed before the next regular meeting.

Permanent Facility for office and warehouse – A discussion was held on the needs for a facility equal to 11,000 square feet. The Cadmus location should still be considered along with possible other locations such as the old Safeway building, expanding the current location, Port Street location or a capital project. Goal is a solution that is cost effective and meets our needs. Ms. Stafford works with Clay Stamp on possible locations. The Board gave Ms. Stafford the go ahead to do a letter now to the County Council stating our needs and desired locations for consideration by the Council.

FY25 Budget – Ms. Stafford is awaiting input from the State Board of Elections regarding salaries and budget items. We are a state agency but funded by the County. Ms. Stafford will submit the budget to County Council on February 5, 2024. Mr. Irving moved to approve the interim budget. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

Appointment of Election Judges – Ms. Stafford asked for approval for 123 judges and 10 standby judges to handle early voting and election day.

Mr. Black asked what formula was used to place the judges. Ms. Stafford said she compared numbers from 2018 and 2022 and also took experience, proximity to home precinct, and trying to be as party balanced as possible into consideration.

Board members asked Ms. Stafford about the election judge training schedule and date of appointment of election judges. Ms. Stafford stated that the appointment of election judges is February 13. Ms. MacKinnon asked Ms. Stafford for the training schedules to be given to us at our next meeting.

Ms. Lovelady moved to do the actual appointment of judges in closed session at the end of the meeting so the Board can review the names and assignment locations of election judges. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Ms. Lovelady asked about the Board's duties during elections. It was explained by Ms. Stafford and Ms. Ryan that as we get closer to the primary election date the Board will be given more information about board duties during the election. Ms. Ryan stated that this can be done during a work session with no public comment, as needed.

Public Comment and Meeting Etiquette Discussion – Ms. MacKinnon began by defining Public Comment as just comments as defined in our by-laws. This agenda item is not a debate, a conversation, or a question-and-answer session. If anyone from the public wishes to have a lengthier conversation about a topic they can submit a written request to the Board. The Board President along with the Election Director will review the request and determine if it is to be put on a meeting agenda.

Ms. Lovelady suggested that putting an opening statement about Public Comment at the beginning of the agenda so that everyone will know what is acceptable. Ms. MacKinnon said she would draft something for this.

Ms. Stafford asked where the Board wanted the Public Comments to be on the agenda. Ms. Lovelady stated that those who have been attending had asked for it to be at the end of the meeting. There was some discussion about both keeping it at the beginning or moving it to the end. Ms. Lovelady moved to put Public Comments at the end of the agenda. There was no second. Motion failed.

Board and Director Responsibilities – Ms. Stafford discussed the Responsibilities of the Board and Director with the board. During the discussion, she stated that the Director must follow certain policies and procedures when requesting the use or purchase of equipment from the County.

The board discussed a request from members of the public for an amplification sound system in the board meeting space to hear the discussion of the board better. As this is

a temporary location, there has been no budgeting for a sound system. A discussion followed on how best to address the acoustics in Board meetings. Ms. MacKinnon suggested that sound system options be put on the agenda for the Board to discuss and for the proper steps to be taken.

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. Ms. Perry moved to go into closed session. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Closed Session – The Board entered closed session at 12:07 p.m. to discuss Election Judges. The Board met in closed session from 12:07 – 12:14 p.m. to review and appoint the Election Judges. Ms. Perry moved to return to open session. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Mr. Black moved to approve the Election Judge list. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Adjournment

Mr. Black moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Attested,



Susan MacKinnon, President

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara H. Perry, Secretary

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. **Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: 1/25/24 Time: 12:07 Location: 215 Bay St, Suite 7
Motion to close meeting made by: Perry Seconded by Lovelady;
Members in favor: Unanimous; Opposed: 0;
Abstaining: 0; Absent: 0.

2. **Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(1) "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2) "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3) "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4) "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5) "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6) "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7) "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8) "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9) "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10) "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11) "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12) "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13) "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14) "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." (15) "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	election judges	discuss proposed judges prior to appointment
§3-305(b) <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. This statement is made by Susan MacKinnon, Presiding Officer.
 Susan MacKinnon

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

➤ For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:

Time of closed session: 12:07 - 12:14
 Place: 215 Bay St, Suite 7
 Purpose(s): discuss proposed election judges
 Members who voted to meet in closed session: MacKinnon, Black, Perry, Lovelady, Irving
 Persons attending closed session: MacKinnon, Perry, Black, Lovelady, Irving, Stafford, Ryan
 Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: (b)(1)
 Topics actually discussed: proposed election judges
 Actions taken: _____
 Each recorded vote: _____

➤ For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104): Time: _____
 Place: _____
 Persons present: _____
 Subjects discussed: _____