

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street, Easton, MD 21601
Board of Elections Meeting Room

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Present:

Board

Susan J. MacKinnon, President
Gugy Irving, III, Secretary
Barbara H. Perry, Member
Walter W. Black, Member

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Election Director
Donna Kegley-Hacker, Election Program Manager II
Fred Gleockler, Election Program IT Specialist II

Members of the Public

Kathi Dulin Duvall, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Christian Christoffers, Self
Shari Wilcoxon, Citizen
Mark Harrison, Citizen
Larry Schuyler, Citizen
Macayla Cook, The Star Democrat
Jason Bell, Citizen

Absent/Excused:

Denise Lovelady, Vice President

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gleockler and Ms. Stafford confirmed that the live streaming was working.

Ms. MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

With four of the five Board members in attendance, Ms. MacKinnon declared that a quorum was present.

CLOSED MEETING SUMMARY

There was no Closed meeting held on 04/15/2026.

APPROVAL OF OPEN MINUTES- 04/15/2026 Open Board Meeting

Minutes from the Open Board Meeting held on 04/15/26 were mailed in Board packets to members and were posted on the LBE website, allowing for review prior to this meeting. Ms. MacKinnon called for any corrections to the minutes.

With no requested corrections, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Black and seconded by Ms. Perry. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The agenda was posted. Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Ms. Perry requested a discussion on Mail-in Ballots. Hearing no objection, Ms. MacKinnon stated that this topic would be added to the agenda under 12. New Business.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Irving motioned to approve the agenda with the addition. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

SWEARING IN OF CANVASS BOARD

Ms. MacKinnon welcomed Ms. Duvall, Clerk of the Circuit Court. Ms. Duvall administered the oath to the Board of Canvassers (four in attendance) and the Board Attorney. The Board of Canvassers then signed the book to attest.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that one Board member was absent from today's meeting. Ms. Duvall stated that the Board member can contact her to arrange to take the oath.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Copies of the Board's Public Comment Protocols and Procedures were attached to the copies of the agenda available at today's meeting.

Ms. MacKinnon opened the floor for public comments. Four members of the public spoke.

1. Mr. Harrison stated that 500,000 Republican voting ballots were sent out to Democratic voters; the claim that it was due to third party error. He added that the claim was also

that if those ballots are returned, they will not be counted. Mr. Harrison asked, “How will you identify them and not count them?”

Mr. Harrison added that many voters lack trust in our election system and mistakes like these seem to be to the benefits of Democrats. He stressed the need to pass a Voter ID law to establish trust in the system and asked why the Democrats that are in charge are against voter id when 71% of Democrats are in favor of voters identifying themselves.

He concluded that the Board is supposed to represent the people. He thanked the Board for listening to his comments and added that he hoped someone was listening at the State level.

2. Ms. Wilcoxon began by stating that “we” have recruited about fifteen (15) more Republican Election judges and hoped that there would be parity though according to statements in prior meetings there are enough Republicans to have parity. She added that she hopes that there is parity so that we can have more trust in our elections. She stated that in the Primary there should just be Republicans and Democrats, with no need for any other parties (as Election Judges).

Ms. Wilcoxon spoke on the “debacle” with the ballots. She stated that it’s a shame, especially with so much distrust in our election system. Ms. Wilcoxon suggested her own cure for this debacle, which included demanding that all previous sent ballots be destroyed and not counted; using a new set of color coded ballots that are requested by voters with no mass mailing; and if you already voted, you must request a new color coded ballot to vote.

3. Mr. Schuyler asked that since Ms. Stafford stepped out (and now has returned) Ms. Wilcoxon get the opportunity to speak again. Ms. MacKinnon said that if she’d like to, she was certainly invited to do so.

Ms. Wilcoxon stated that she did not know exactly when Ms. Stafford stepped out and returned but that she spoke on parity reports and a cure for the ballot debacle. She briefly summarized what she had previously stated.

4. Ms. Christoffers expressed concern about the process at the MVA when someone applies for a driver’s license and they are automatically registered to vote. She added that she is curious how the State or local board is involved in this process and if there is any oversight to ensure that anyone applying is a U.S. citizen.

ELECTION DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. Stafford's written report which was mailed in the Board packets for review prior to the meeting is attached to these minutes.

Ms. Stafford highlighted all key areas of the report.

Ms. Stafford added that under Notice and Distribution of Materials that the documents were posted to the Maryland State Board of Elections website with a link to the LBE website on Saturday, May 16th.

Under Meetings Attended Ms. Stafford added that she is waiting for additional information and registration details for the one-day MAEO meeting and conference scheduled for August 12, 2026.

Under Voting Systems Activities Ms. Stafford and Fred Gleockler stated that Logic & Accuracy testing has been completed on the equipment; the backroom is next.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any questions for Ms. Stafford. Ms. Perry noted a correction under Notice and Distribution of Materials- second paragraph, should say May meeting (instead of February). Ms. MacKinnon noted a correction under Precinct and Polling Issues- second paragraph, should say May 20, 2026 (instead of May 21, 2026).

BOARD ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Ms. Ryan provided a written report of the 2026 Legislative Review. The document included for each piece of legislation the effective date, a summary, and local effects.

Ms. MacKinnon asked about SB100/HB 263- pertaining to bus stops. Ms. Ryan stated that it does not become effective until 01/01/2027 so it will not affect the 2026 Elections.

Ms. Stafford stated that the two pieces of legislation, probably with the most impact on the LBE are HB 1001 Election Law- Authority at the Polling Place- Revisions and SB 949/ HB 1069 Election Law- Absentee Ballots- State and Federal Requirements. Ms. Ryan summarized both of these.

Ms. Ryan then reminded the Board of the Board By-laws regarding political activity; they must abide by Election Law §2-301 but also eight (8) additional provisions within your bylaws, Section 4.2. Ms. Ryan stated she would email copies to the Board.

Ms. Stafford added that the Assistant Attorney General's Report from the last SBE meeting was also included in the Board packet.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if the Board would like Ms. Ryan to go over all of the legislation included in her report. Mr. Black replied that he thought that would help.

Ms. Ryan provided a verbal summary of the following:

- SB 858/ HB 1369
- SB 91/ HB 265
- SB 100/ HB 263
- SB 241/ HB 115
- HB 357
- HB 855/ SB 758
- SB 443/ HB 621
- SB 11/ HB 260 (with an effective date correction of June 1, 2026)
- HB 1001 (saved until later in the agenda 12. New Business)
- SB 848/ HB 1448
- SB 8/ HB 184
- HB 182/ SB 237
- SB 141/ HB 145
- SB 29/ HB 44
- SB 225/ HB 350
- SB 949/ HB 1069

Mr. Black thanked Ms. Ryan for her summary.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. FY 2027 Budget Update- Ms. Stafford announced that the County had two public budget hearings in May. The County requested an adjustment to the LBE’s Voting & Equipment Lease State billing line item due to the State purchasing new voting equipment for 2028 with some of the cost going into the FY 27 budget. Ms. Stafford worked with County Finance staff on this.

Ms. Perry asked if the budget in the packet was the FY 26 budget; Ms. Stafford replied that it was.

- B. Election Judge Parity Report- Ms. Stafford began with some background information, stating that in January 2026, the Maryland State Board of Elections created a policy that requires LBEs to provide the Board with a monthly parity report on Election Judges. Ms. Stafford felt it was important to clarify that this is a policy; not a law, as has been implied in some print materials by others.

Ms. Stafford stated that a template for the Parity Report was provided in February 2026 and has been updated each month. She added that it is a fluid process and as training occurs, adjustments often have to be made for those who committed but now can no longer serve. She reminded everyone that until judges report on Election Day parity is fluid.

Ms. Stafford noted that there are a few vacancies that the staff is working to fill but is confident that the vacancies can be filled. Ms. Stafford stands by the email communications notifying applicants of their status in the process, which may indicate that they may be asked to serve as a Standby Judge or be held until the next Election. The intent is to keep applicants informed as to the assignment process and assess their continued interest and ability to serve throughout the County. Training is required by law. Ms. Stafford added that multiple emails have been sent to those who have expressed interest. Standby judges need to be willing to serve throughout the County; not everyone is willing to do this.

Ms. Stafford highlighted that the majority of training for Election Judges serving this cycle was held in April. Assignments were reevaluated, applicants were notified from the Standby Judges list twice to fill vacancies as they occurred, and additional training was held in May with eleven participants who had responded to the email. Emails were sent in March to those who had expressed interest, 95 Democratic, 63 Republican, and 41 Others. In April another email was sent to 65 Republicans. Ms. Stafford emphasized that efforts would continue to be made with recruitment.

Ms. Stafford reminded the Board that due to space and staff limitations, it becomes increasingly difficult to conduct additional training sessions as the Election gets closer. She added that she is confident that the polls will be staffed appropriately so that things run smoothly and there aren't lines and the Election process is secure.

At this time there are Chief vacancies at New St. Johns that Ms. Stafford is working to fill. She also highlighted the current parity at the Talbot County Community Center, Royal Oak, and Oxford, stating that there may be some movement in assignments.

Ms. Stafford added that the Early Voting schedule was also provided.

Mr. Black expressed his appreciation for the multiple factors that had to be considered to achieve parity. He asked Ms. Stafford for her professional opinion as to whether there will be parity at the polls on Election Day.

Ms. Stafford replied that it is difficult to say, stating that the timing of the Primary is impacted by vacation plans of many. She added it is her hope that everyone assigned

will report on Election Day and the numbers will be balanced; however, it is possible that a judge can call out on Election Day. She stressed that best efforts will be made.

Staff member Ms. Kegley-Hacker asked that, for the public record, Ms. Stafford define parity and review Election Law or COMAR as it pertains to polling places staffed with six or more Election Judges. Ms. Stafford explained that Election law requires Chief Judges to be of opposite parties and the two major parties are balanced. Ms. Stafford added Election Law specifies that in polling places staffed with six or more Election Judges, Unaffiliated voters and voters aged 16 years may serve as Election Judges. Ms. Stafford stated that the Talbot election judge assignments are a mixture of the two major political parties, adding Unaffiliated voters to create a balance at the polling place. Ms. Stafford also added that polling places are not always staffed with an even number of election judges, making parity impossible unless Unaffiliated voters are used.

Staff member Ms. Kegley-Hacker requested, for the public record, that Ms. Stafford highlight the assignment of Chief Judges when the Election is within forty-five days. Ms. Stafford responded that Election Law allows for the use of an Unaffiliated Election Judge as a Chief Judge if there is an unfilled Chief vacancy (of one of the two major parties).

Mr. Black asked that regardless of where Election Judges are assigned, the breakdown by party. He then simplified the question, asking if there are more Democratic or Republicans. While reviewing her report, Ms. Stafford replied that at that moment there are more Democratic Election Judges, by one or two.

Ms. MacKinnon asked about a question mark beside a Chief Judge slot for St. Michaels. Ms. Stafford stated that she had someone in mind but didn't have an answer yet. Ms. Stafford added that that person is now going to work at Tilghman.

Ms. MacKinnon acknowledged that the pool of applicants for Election Judges has expanded due to the efforts of many and she is encouraged by that. She asked if the Standby pool will be enough to cover needs.

Ms. Stafford replied that the Standby pool for the Primary is not as large as the 2024 pool; it has been exhausted twice already to fill vacancies. Ms. Stafford stated that the staffing plans are ample, with minimum and maximum staffing goals, to allow for Election judge breaks and manageable lines at the polls.

Ms. Stafford reminded the Board as well as the public that regardless of staffing the Election must occur. It cannot be cancelled nor can a polling place be closed. The polling plans were submitted and approved by SBE. Ms. Stafford acknowledged the importance of parity but again emphasized that the polling places must be opened regardless.

Ms. MacKinnon recognized the importance of Chief Judges and asked if there are people who can fill in in the event of a vacancy. Ms. Stafford replied there are a few candidates from the judges that we have trained. She added that recruitment is ongoing and she will be speaking with the Public Information Officer about the possibility of using their system to send out Election Judge recruitment information. Efforts will be made to fill any vacancies to the extent practicable.

- C. Board Election Calendar- Ms. Stafford highlighted one change from the calendar distributed last month. Because of the holiday, July 3, 2026, will not be a Canvass date. Ms. Perry asked if another date would be added. Ms. Stafford replied that at this time an additional Canvass date should not be needed.

Ms. Stafford verified for the members that July 1 and July 6 are Canvass dates.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any questions about the calendar. Ms. Perry asked about the process in case one could not attend a Canvass date. Ms. Ryan replied that they needed to know as early as possible so that they can ensure that a quorum is present and there is party balance. Ms. MacKinnon added that parity was necessary and to notify the Board Attorney, Chair, and Director if you are not able to attend a scheduled Canvass date. Ms. Stafford clarified that a quorum is three members present, with one of those members from the minority principal party. Ms. Ryan added that the absence of a Canvass member impacts the scheduling of additional teams.

Ms. MacKinnon asked about another calendar item, Precinct Selection at 8 pm on Election Day. Ms. MacKinnon asked if all Board members needed to attend. Ms. Stafford answered yes; according to Election Law, after 8 pm on Election Day, the Board selects the precincts for verification.

Ms. Stafford added that also on June 23rd the Board meets to witness the printing of the results from pre-Election Early MIB Canvass and Early Voting at 2 pm. After brief discussion, Ms. MacKinnon summarized that the Board would meet on June 23 at 2 pm for pre-Election Early MIB Canvass results and 8 pm for Precinct Selection for post-election verification and audits.

Ms. Stafford referred the Board to their copy of the Notice to Public dated May 7, 2026, for all dates to attend. The one exception is May 22, 2026; the Board is invited but not required to attend the Logic & Accuracy Testing public inspection of documentation.

Ms. Perry said we do not have to attend May 22; the rest of the dates listed we do. Ms. Stafford confirmed.

- D. Election Supply Verification- Ms. MacKinnon reminded those in attendance that the Election Supply verification would occur today, following the Board meeting. The two Board members conducting this, Ms. Perry and Mr. Irving, were selected at a previous meeting.

Ms. Stafford presented a bag with the polling places listed on individual slips of paper to Ms. MacKinnon. Ms. MacKinnon pulled two slips, passing each to Mr. Irving, who passed each to Ms. Stafford. Ms. Stafford announced that supply verification would be done on Early Voting (required), Easton Fire House (01001/ 01003) and Cordova Fire House (04001). Ms. Stafford clarified that Ms. MacKinnon pulled 01003 from the bag. This is part of a consolidated polling place so both 01001 and 01003 will be done.

Ms. MacKinnon summarized the supply verification will be Early Voting, which is Easton Fire House, and the Election Day polling places 01001/ 01003 Easton Fire House and 04001 Cordova Fire House. Ms. Perry added that this is three and Ms. Stafford concurred.

- E. Polling Place Evaluations- Ms. MacKinnon announced that the Board usually voluntarily divides the polling places, but she is not sure that Ms. Lovelady will be able to participate. Ms. MacKinnon asked Ms. Stafford if it is a requirement to evaluate all of the polling places. Ms. Stafford replied it is not required that all polling places are evaluated in the Primary; the Board could choose to do half during the Primary and the remaining during the General. Ms. Stafford clarified that Early Voting and half of the polls on Election Day should be evaluated.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if Board members present would be comfortable selecting a polling place to evaluate. Selections were:

- Ms. MacKinnon- Early Voting and Easton High School
- Ms. Perry Cordova and Trappe (if needed)
- Mr. Black- New St. John's United Methodist Church
- Mr. Irving- Oxford Fire House

Ms. MacKinnon asked when the evaluation forms would be available. Ms. Stafford replied that she had them to pass out today. Ms. Stafford also reminded the Board to complete the form in its entirety and to feel free to ask the Chief Judge's if you need assistance in finding anything. Ms. Perry stated that you may not be able to observe everything. Ms. Stafford asked that this be indicated on the form or in the Comments section.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Challengers and Watchers- Ms. Stafford and Ms. Ryan read the fiscal and policy notes on HB 1001, which was also highlight in the Board Attorney's legislative summary. The Challenger and Watcher forms and related documents are in the process of being updated; anyone needing these should visit SBE's website regularly.

Ms. Perry asked if two signatures are now required on the form. Ms. Ryan said no, just one from an authorized signer. Ms. Perry asked if a candidate can still be an authorized signer; Ms. Stafford read from the documents that a candidate can for any location where the candidate is on the ballot. Ms. Ryan added the signers are the same as previous; but adding a political committee can now sign.

Mr. Irving asked if a challenged voter normally becomes a Provisional voter. Ms. Stafford stated that the challenged voter would be asked for acceptable proof of identification and if provided would vote a standard ballot.

Ms. Perry stated that a voter can only be challenged based on identity; Ms. Stafford confirmed that this is correct.

Ms. Stafford stated that the signed Challenger and Watcher forms must be delivered to the LBE office before the Challenger & Watcher is admitted to the polling place. There was a brief discussion about whether a due date could or should be set; it was decided not to set a deadline. It would be helpful if the Central Committees informed Ms. Stafford of who was an authorized signer and provided a list of certified Challengers and Watchers in advance so that information could be relayed timely to the Chief Judges.

- B. ADDED AGENDA ITEM- Mail-in Ballots- Ms. Perry stated that she had a few people talk to her about the same issues brought up by the public (earlier in this meeting). Ms. Perry said that Jared (Jared DeMarinis, State Board of Elections Administrator) was on WBAL and showed the postcard going to voters and the replacement ballot materials. Ms. Perry asked what was going to happen to the first ballots if voters voted and returned them.

Ms. Stafford stated that SBE has a press release on its website and all questions pertaining to this should be directed to SBE.

Ms. Perry asked if Ms. Stafford had been given guidance or if she had contacted SBE for guidance.

Ms. Stafford stated that the LBE will follow any guidance provided by SBE.

Ms. Perry stated that the newspaper article in The Star Democrat was confusing. Mr. Irving asked if the mail-in ballot issue was statewide and Ms. Perry asked if the mix-up was just with the Republican ballots.

Ms. Stafford again referred everyone to SBE and stated that she would provide copies of the press release to the Board.

Mr. Black asked if replacement ballots were going to all voters. Ms. Stafford replied that the press release addresses this but yes, replacement ballots will be sent to all whose ballot was mailed out prior to the discovery of the vendor error.

Mr. Black asked whom voters are being referred if they have questions. Ms. Stafford replied that specific questions are to be directed to SBE. General mail-in ballot questions or requests should still be directed to the LBE.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that this situation is unclear and that she is unsure how to respond to the public. She stressed the importance of SBE to provide comprehensive explanations to the LBEs for the public. Ms. MacKinnon added that she felt that the Board should request Ms. Stafford to inform SBE of the need for clear information to give to the public. She added that SBE continually stresses that the SBE and LBE are the trusted sources of Election information for voters; clear information is needed.

Ms. Stafford said she can provide any updates received to the Board. Mr. Gleockler added that SBE has a website dedicated to the replacement ballots.

DISCLOSURES

Ms. MacKinnon asked if any Board members had disclosures. There were none.

BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. MacKinnon stated that she downloaded the GoVoteMaryland app and it gives extensive information as another tool for the public of valid information.

Ms. MacKinnon also announced that copies of the Voter Registration List Maintenance handout were available at the sign-in table.

CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in the LBE meeting room. Ms. Stafford reminded the Board that Early Voting was also going on that day at the Easton Fire House.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that there would be a Closed Session on June 17, 2026.

CLOSED SESSION


No Closed Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Black motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Irving seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.

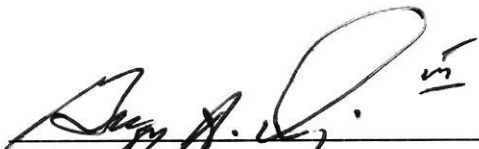
Minutes prepared by: Donna Kegley-Hacker

Attested,



Susan J. MacKinnon, President

Reviewed and submitted,



Gagy Irving III, Secretary



TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS **ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

May 20, 2026

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members, May 12, 2026.

The agenda and meeting materials for the February meeting were also posted on the Board of Elections web page and the entrances to the office and building at 215 Bay Street, Easton, MD, May 12, 2026.

Personnel

Interviews were conducted for the Election Program Trainee position. I am working on filling the position from the candidates that interviewed.

Meetings Attended:

I attended the monthly MAEO meeting and the meeting with SBE. MAEO will hold a one day annual meeting and conference at the BWI Airport Marriot on Wednesday, August 12, 2026.

Met with Brian LeCates and Geneva Schaffle from the Department of Emergency Services to update them on election preparations.

Correspondence:

The public notice for election activities was included in your packets. It is also posted on the webpage, and letters were sent to the Central Committees.

Voter Registration Activities:

Monthly Statistical Report- The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of May 1, 2026, there were 28, 940 active registered voters in Talbot County.

Voting System Activities:

Pollbook printer battery charging is complete.

Drop boxes are in place and daily pickups have started.

County Tech reported April 27, 2026. County Support Tech reported May 11, 2026.

Logic and Accuracy testing is completed.

Public Demonstration will be held Friday, May 22, 2026.

Candidate Filing:

A list of candidates can be found on the Maryland State Board of Elections website.

Precinct and Polling Issues:

The Election Judge parity report was included in the board packet for your review. Election Judge Open House was held May 19, 2026. Staff were available to answer questions and talk to election judges during the event. Election judges also participated in the NARCAN and Stop the Bleed training.

Election supply verification will be conducted May 21, 2026, after the board meeting. We will pick the precincts to be audited later in the agenda.

Budget:

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY2026 was included in your board packet.

The printing and mailing of the specimen/practice ballots will be included in next month's budget update.

Other projects:

Talbot County Public Information Officer, Sarah Kilmon, contacted me about the use of the GovDelivery system to recruit election judges. The system is used to send mass emails. I will be working with her to learn more about the system.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Close of Registration is June 2, 2026.

Early voting is June 11 through June 18, 2026, at Easton Fire House, 315 Leonard Rieck Drive, Easton, MD 21601. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Election Day is June 23, 2026. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Town of Oxford Election is Monday, June 16, 2026.