



# Carroll County Board of Elections



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## Carroll County Board of Elections Board Minutes January 19, 2022

### **Present**

#### *Board*

Griffith Manahan, President, by virtual  
Samuel Foster, Vice-President, by virtual  
John Woodley, Secretary, by virtual  
Carol Coley, by virtual  
Harvey Tegeler, by virtual  
Jay Gullo, Attorney, by virtual

#### *Staff*

Katherine Berry, Election Director, by virtual  
Erin Perrone, Deputy Director, by virtual

#### *Public*

Jason Sidock, Chair, Carroll County Republican Central Committee, by virtual

### **Call to Order & Declaration of Quorum**

Mr. Manahan called the meeting to order at 10:04 am and declared that a quorum was present. The meeting was held virtually.

### **Welcome**

Mr. Manahan welcomed those in attendance.

### **Additions to the Agenda**

Mr. Manahan asked if any there were any additions to the agenda. No additions were added to the agenda.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The Board approved the minutes from the December 15, 2021 meeting on a motion from Mr. Foster, seconded by Ms. Coley. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Correspondence**

Ms. Berry stated that a letter was received from a Carroll County voter notifying the office that he was not a citizen and asked that he be removed from the voter registration roll. It was confirmed that he never voted in any election, and the letter was forwarded to the State Board of Elections.

Ms. Berry reported that a PIA request was received from a voter in which he is asking to look at where the ballots from the 2020 general election are stored. He is also requesting to randomly select boxes to be opened and ballots to be counted. The request poses serious security concerns, but the voter is being notified of the process that can be performed, comments and instructions to execute the request. The cost will be approximately \$3,200.00

### **Attorney Report**

Mr. Gullo stated that he has been working with Senator Ready's office on bill language regarding voters who vote in multiple states or jurisdictions. Mr. Tegeler stated that he will send the proposed bill to the members.

### **Election Director's Report**

#### *Important Meetings*

A list of meetings was included on the report.

#### *Voter Registration/Absentee*

Ms. Berry reported that the monthly statistical reports have been posted to the office's website. The reports can be found at <https://elections.carrollcountymd.gov/FactsAndFigures.aspx>.

#### *IT/Warehouse*

Ms. Berry reported that staff is completing the user acceptance testing on the new printers for the electronic pollbooks, testing batteries on the current electronic pollbooks and charging voting equipment as required on a quarterly basis. The software is being reloaded onto the current electronic pollbooks. The State Board of Elections will be presenting the new electronic pollbook solution to the Board of Public Works during a future meeting. Additional ballot marking devices will be delivered by the end of the week. These additional ballot marking devices will allow at least two devices at each polling place on election day.

#### *Mail-in Voting*

Ms. Berry stated that the mail-in ballot applications are scheduled to be mailed to voters who are registered as Democratic and Republican on February 1, 2022. The State Board of Elections pulled the voter data in December. Another group of voters and voters who are registered with one of the non-primary parties will receive an application after the candidate filing deadline of February 22, 2022. Applications will be mailed to voters who have not requested a mail-in ballot. Completed applications returned to the office will be processed by staff daily.

As of January 11, 2022, there are 236 total requests for a mail-in ballot for the primary election. Of those 236 requests, 258 are domestic voters and 5 are military/overseas voters.

Ms. Berry reported that the telephone lines into the office are being restructured. The phone tree is being eliminated so that voters do not have to press a series of numbers to talk to a person in the office. The goal is to eliminate frustration from voters who just want to speak to a person. The State's call center is set to begin soon, and the call center will handle basic election questions from voters. Voters calls will be transferred to the office if the voter needs additional information that the call center cannot provide.

In response to a question, Ms. Berry confirmed that a ballot will be available for voters who are not affiliated with one of the two major parties (Democratic and Republican) for the primary election. There will be confusion among voters who live in the same household as to why one voter received the mail-in ballot application (who is affiliated with either the Democratic or Republican party) and the other voter did not receive the mail-in ballot application (who is not affiliated with either the Democratic or Republican party). Staff will be prepared to answer those phone calls and emails.

In response to a question, Ms. Perrone stated that the instructions provided with the mail-in ballot application does include information about provisional voting and deadlines to return the application.

#### *Candidate Filings*

Ms. Berry reported that the deadline for candidates to file for any office for the 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Election is Tuesday, February 22, 2022. The office will be open until 9:00 pm as required by Election Law.

Commissioner candidates who file for office prior to the commissioner redistricting being completed will be assigned to their current district. Once the redistricting process is complete, their district will be updated. In order to complete the redistricting process, all three maps must be approved.

#### *Election Judges*

Ms. Berry stated that the State Board of Elections released the first three chapters of the *Election Judges' Manual*. Customization of the first three chapters has begun and will be submitted to the State Board of Elections for their review and approval.

Recruiting election judges is ongoing, and an update will be provided at the next meeting. Training can be virtual, but a hands-on portion of the training must still be provided.

#### *Redistricting*

Ms. Berry reported that the Congressional district map is in a lawsuit, so the new Congressional districts cannot be implemented until the lawsuit is settled. The Legislative district map is part of the 2022 General Assembly session. It has been approved in committee and will go back to the floor for another vote. The Commissioner district map has become law and the beginning stages of manually reviewing every address will begin.

*Polling Places/Election 2022*

Ms. Berry stated that the State Board of Elections has a contract being presented at the Board of Public Works at its January 26, 2022 meeting for a voter education campaign. The campaign will include all topics related to the 2022 elections.

Mr. Manahan stated the importance of making sure that rural communities are not disenfranchised when deciding where to locate potential new polling places. Ms. Berry reiterated that decisions on new polling places cannot be finalized until redistricting is complete. In addition, changes to voting locations must be provided via public notice and a special board meeting may be needed to approve new voting locations.

*Legislation*

Ms. Berry reported that the General Assembly convened on Wednesday, January 12, 2022. Below is a list of proposed bills that affect elections.

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Bill Title</b>
HB0152	Public Advocate Act of 2022
HB0240	Montgomery County – Board of Education – Membership MC 16–22
HB113	Elections - In-Person Voting -Proof of Identity
HB160	Election Law - Party & Elected Public Offices - Prohibition
HB169	Elections - Voter Registry - Notification and Removal of Deceased Individuals
HB17	Campaign Finance - Recurring Contributions and Donations - Requirements
HB201	Election Law - Voter Registration Drives - High Schools
HB235	Open Meetings Act - Definition - Administrative Function
HB246	Open Meetings Act - Notices, Closed Sessions, and Minutes - Retention Periods, Online Posting, and Public Inspection
HB30	Election Law - Polling Sites - Firearms Prohibitions
HB35	State Board of Elections - Contracts and Invoices - Requirements
HB42	Municipal Incorporation – County Commissioners or County Council – Required Consideration of Referendum Request
HB65	Election Law - Early Voting Centers - Bus Stops
HB99	Election Law - Absentee Ballots - Signature Requirements and Verification
HB289/SB270	Somerset County – Elections – County Commissioners Districts and Board of Education Candidate Filings
SB0073	General Assembly - Special Election to Fill a Vacancy in Office
SB0088	Constitutional Amendment - Election Law - Deadline for Selection of Lt. Governor
SB0101/HB291	Election Law - Contested Elections
SB0112	Election Law - False Ballot Drop Boxes

SB0158 (HB0035)	State Board of Elections - Contracts and Invoices - Requirements
SB15	Election Law Campaign Finance - Enforcement
SB163	Election Law - Ballots - Processing and Reporting Procedures
SB239	Election Law - Campaign Finance - Protection of Contributor
SB63	General Assembly- Residency Requirement - Enforcement - Factors
SB73	Constitutional Amendment - General Assembly - Special Election to Fill a Vacancy in office
SJ0002/HJ0002	Legislative Districting Plan of 2022
SJ0003/HJ0001	Maryland Citizens' Legislative Districting Plan of 2022

Ms. Berry highlighted several bills that affect how elections will be conducted. There are two different versions of SB163 and MAEO is working with the sponsors of the bill. HB201 will require local boards to hold a voter registration drive each year at high schools. HB235 and HB246 deal with open meetings. HB35 explains that contracts with the State Board of Elections will be a 50/50 split cost between the State and the local boards. There are also various candidacy bills that MAEO does not typically take any position.

#### *Personnel & Budget*

Ms. Berry stated that two high school interns will be helping at the office this semester. Joey and Olivia will begin their internship in February and will continue through May. Joey is a senior at South Carroll High School and Olivia is a senior at Liberty High School. They will be involved in many parts of the election process. They will also serve as election judges in June. Joey and Olivia are already busy with a voter engagement project. They have been tasked to determine how to engage voters of all ages, especially young voters, in the voting process.

Staff received the Governor's salary increases that were announced a few weeks ago. The State Board also approved a 6% salary increase for Election Directors and Deputy Directors during their December meeting.

There is no update on the FY23 budget, but a meeting has been scheduled with the budget analyst.

The county will not be recommending movement on a new building or renovation of the existing building where the office and warehouse is located.

The old website received a makeover, and the new website has been officially launched. Ms. Berry thanked Olivia for her hard work to make our website more user friendly.

#### *Next Board Meeting and Important Dates for Your Calendar*

Ms. Berry reviewed the dates of future Board meetings and tentative dates for next year's elections.

- February 16, 2022 – Board Meeting
- March 16, 2022 – Board Meeting
- April 20, 2022 – Board Meeting
- May 18, 2022 – Board Meeting
- June 15, 2022 – Board Meeting

*2022 Election Dates – \*TENTATIVE\**

- June 16-23, 2022 – Primary Early Voting
- June 28, 2022 – Primary Election Day
- June 30 and July 8, 2022 – Absentee Ballot Canvass
- July 6, 2022 – Provisional Ballot Canvass
- October 27 – November 3, 2022 – General Early Voting
- November 8, 2022 – General Election Day
- November 10 and 18, 2022 – Absentee Ballot Canvass
- November 16, 2022 – Provisional Ballot Canvass

In response to several questions, Ms. Berry stated the office will acquire a small space located under the gymnasium stage starting in FY23. The office does get visits for fire code violations. The Department of Homeland Security provided recommendations for improved security in the office, and the office is in regular communication with the Sheriff Department when we receive notification of any incidents that may interfere with the security of the office, warehouse, or staff.

**Public Comments**

One member of the public was in attendance. Mr. Sidock thanked everyone for their hard work.

**Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

**New Business**

Mr. Manahan suggested that a discussion be held at the February meeting to understand how voting locations will be impacted because of redistricting.

**Disclosure of Campaign Contributions**

Mr. Tegeler reported a campaign contribution of \$100.00 to Dan Cox for Governor. Ms. Coley reported a campaign contribution of \$50.00 to Jamie Raskin.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Woodley, seconded by Ms. Coley at 11:03 am. The motion passed unanimously.