



Carroll County Board of Elections



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Carroll County Board of Elections Board Minutes April 21, 2021

Present

Board

Griffith Manahan, President

John Woodley, Secretary

Laura O'Callaghan, Vice President, by telephone

Samuel Foster

Harvey Tegeler, by telephone

Staff

Katherine Berry, Election Director

Erin Perrone, Election Program Manager

Jay Gullo, Attorney

Call to Order & Welcome

Mr. Manahan, President, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

The Board approved the minutes from the February 17, 2021 and March 29, 2021 meetings on motions from Mr. Woodley, seconded by Mr. Foster. The motions carried unanimously.

Attorney Report

Mr. Gullo reported that a letter was sent to the respondent regarding the ongoing personnel matter. A returned response has not yet been received. He will keep the Board updated on this matter.

He agreed to give a presentation at the MAEO Conference in August about conducting effective open meetings.

Staff Report

Ms. Berry welcomed Ms. Perrone to the meeting as she will be the contact person for writing and distributing the meeting minutes.

Announcements & Important Meetings:

Ms. Berry highlighted some of the meetings she has attended. She reported that she will be speaking at the Manchester Lions Club in the evening today. She met with Risk Management because of a fire code violation. It was noted that the boxes in the hallway had to be relocated from a maintenance closet. As a result of the fire code violation, she met with County Space evaluators to discuss the need of more office and warehouse space.

Voter Registration:

Voter registration training was held for 13 people on March 10th and 15th because of the upcoming municipal elections. The deadline to register for all the municipals has occurred and their elections will be held in May. Ms. Berry and Ms. Troxell will be available if there are any questions about voter registration. Ms. Berry reiterated that the role of the office during a municipal election is to provide a precinct register. She stated that the City of Westminster and the Town of Sykesville are using the ballot drop off boxes.

ERIC reports were processed in March to continue performing routine list maintenance on voter registration records. The Monthly Statistical Report has been posted to the office's website.

IT/Warehouse:

Ms. Berry reported that all post-election maintenance and inventory has been completed. Preparations for ballot carts and an increase in the number of ballots continue. Ms. Berry, Ms. Jones, and Mr. DeLima continue to plan for increasing the amount of space needed for new electronic pollbooks. In response to a question, Ms. Berry stated that no specifications for new electronic pollbooks have been distributed, and the State Board of Elections is planning to present the new electronic pollbooks to the Board of Public Works in June.

Polling Places/Election Judges:

Ms. Berry stated that staff will begin visiting polling places and considering alternate options to polling places and early voting centers. The Board can expect to see proposed changes at the June or August meeting. In response to a question, Ms. Berry stated that legislation detailing the usage of vote centers as opposed to polling places for the 2022 elections did not pass during the session of the 2021 General Assembly. Using vote centers may be readdressed in the session of the 2022 General Assembly but may not take effect until after the 2022 elections.

Candidate Filings:

There have been no new candidate filings since the last meeting.

Legislation:

Ms. Berry provided a brief explanation of the bills that were passed by the session of the 2021 General Assembly. She reminded everyone that many bills did not pass during the session, and those bills will probably resurface during the session of the 2022 General Assembly. One of the bills that did not pass included permission for local boards to open and count absentee ballots prior to election day.

- Various PIA and cybersecurity bills may impact the office. SBE will be distributing information soon.
- HB156/SB283 – Student & Military Empowerment Act – This bill requires the local board to have a contact at high schools, places of higher education, retirement communities, and military bases to encourage voter registration.
- HB206/SB596 – Election Law – Early Voting Center – Hours of Operation – This bill requires early voting centers to operate from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm for each of the eight days. The bill does not increase the number of early voting days.
- HB222/SB224 – Value My Vote – This bill requires voting services to voters being held in a detention center. The sheriff's office must be a contact between the local board and the detention centers. In response to several questions, Ms. Berry stated the coordinator at the detention center will be responsible for notifying a local board of who is eligible to vote. MDVOTERS will alert a user if a voter is not eligible to vote because of a convicted felon.
- HB738 – Election Law – Certificates of Candidacy & Ballot Questions – Revisions – This bill affects certain law changes that pertain to the State Board of Elections.
- HB745 – Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Number Required – This bill changes the number of early voting centers based on voter registration population. Ms. Berry stated that Carroll County will now have three early voting centers. The new law will require three early voting centers if there are at least 100,000 registered voters. Carroll County has approximately 130,000 registered voters.
- HB1048/SB683 – Election Law – Permanent Absentee Ballot List – This bill requires a change to the absentee ballot application to allow a voter to choose to be on a permanent absentee ballot list, absentee ballot applications be mailed to every registered voter prior to an election, absentee ballot curing process, and adding ballot drop boxes. It also requires an email, postcard, or text be sent to a voter prior to an election to make sure the voter still wants to get an absentee ballot. Ms. Berry stated that the State Board of Elections is discussing the easiest and most efficient way to handle the new processes put into place by this bill.

Redistricting:

Ms. Berry stated that the Commissioners have not yet assigned the redistricting committee. Staff has begun the process of reviewing and comparing addresses and zip codes from GIS to addresses and zip codes in MDVOTERS. Keeping data current is an important process to make sure redistricting is completed correctly and efficiently.

Personnel & Budget:

Ms. Berry reported the overtime statistics from the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections as requested at a previous Board meeting. Staff continues to be cross-trained and office procedures are being updated. The MAEO Conference is scheduled to be from August 24th to August 26th. The Biennial Meeting is scheduled for August 25th.

Ms. Berry stated that the FY22 budget was approved and includes two new permanent positions. The budget also includes two contractual employees and two high school interns. In response to a question, Ms. Berry confirmed that the office will have ten permanent staff members in the new fiscal year.

Next Board Meeting and Important Dates for Your Calendar:

Ms. Berry proposed that no meeting be held in May and reviewed the dates of future Board meetings and the MAEO/Biennial Conference.

- June 16 – Board Meeting
- August 18 – Board Meeting
- August 23 through 27 – MAEO/Biennial Conference – Ocean City – Ms. Berry stated that the agenda for the conference is very similar to the agenda from the 2020 conference.
- September 15 – Board Meeting
- October 20 – Board Meeting
- November 17 – Board Meeting
- December 15 – Board Meeting

New Business:

None

Board Members Political Activities:

None

Date of Next Meeting:

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Foster; seconded by Mr. Woodley to adjourn the meeting at 10:49 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.