



Cecil County Board of Elections
January 17, 2024
MINUTES

PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Public notice of the Board meeting was provided by displaying the meeting information and agenda on the bulletin board (wall) outside of the Cecil County Board of Elections office located in Suite 1900 of the Cecil County Administration Building, and by posting on the Election agency website and Election agency social media platforms. A copy of the agenda was made available.

MINUTES of the Cecil County Board of Elections meeting held on the 17th day of January 2024 in the Northeast Room on the 1st Floor of the Cecil County Administration Building located at 200 Chesapeake Boulevard in Elkton, Maryland. Public viewing of this meeting was available in person. Board member attendance was in person, as noted below.

ATTENDEES: Jennifer Graham
President
Stephen Stiles Vice
President
Krista Moretz Secretary
Bradley Moore Board
Counsel (arrived late)
Holcombe Grier Board Member
Eunice Grant Board
Member
Gary Holmes Director
Karen Benecewicz Deputy
Director
Sheri Woodruff Election
Program Supervisor
Mary Nelson Public

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order by President Jennifer Graham at 3:10 pm. Quorum was established with five (5) Board Members present in person.

AGENDA

The Board reviewed the agenda and there were no additions or changes requested.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Jennifer Graham remarked on the weather (wind and snowstorm) and thanked everyone for braving them to be at the meeting. She also gave condolences to our board member Eunice, whose mother had passed away in December. She welcomed the newest staff member to the election office and swore her in at the end of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the December 20, 2023, Board meeting were provided to the Board a copy in each of their folders.

MOTION: Board Member Holcombe Grier motioned to approve Minutes for December 20, 2023 Board Meeting as presented.

SECONDED: Gary Holmes, Director Cecil County Board of Elections

ACTION: Favorable and unanimous, Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gary announced that he instituted a weekly staff meeting for Tuesdays at 9 AM. Another meeting with Steven Overbey was held to clarify and discuss the use of the Elk Room for Canvassing dates. As it stands there maybe a day or two (2) where canvassing may have to end early. There was also more discussion as to why EMS was not selected as a new office for the Election Office staff. It was reported that several of the staff had gone to Harford Co. Board of Elections to receive additional hands-on training (Gary, Ashira and Sheri). The office acquired a new time clock that is up and running. The Election Judge Manuals order has been placed as well as the pins for election judges.

Gary stated he had attended a directors' meeting a day prior virtually and would be meeting with both Erin Shin (former Regional) and Duane Powell (current Regional) the next day. The press release is going to be more about the role of the Board of Elections. Gary will be speaking with Matthew Hubbard from the Cecil Whig.

Gary heard from Josh in Cecil Co. IT Department

regarding email addresses for the board members. We need to see if there is justification and research reasoning for the request. The email address is on hold until Jennifer Graham, Board President can speak with Kelly, the former Board President.

The board was informed about the staff's interest in doing outreach type of events (i.e., schools, churches, fairs).

These events could serve as both voter registration drives and recruitment for election judges. The Board members suggested staffing the booth and arranging to take the VRV (voter registration volunteer) training.

COUNSEL'S REPORT

None at the time.

OLD BUSINESS

Pins that are given to election judges for their service on election day have been ordered. The election judge manuals have been ordered as well. It was suggested that the Board reach out to Lynn to schedule election judge training.

The status of our social media accounts: currently waiting on gray check for X and working with prior IT employees to regain access to Facebook. Once we can post, it is suggested we post things such as voting location, important dates, and training.

OFFICE REPORT

Update on recruitment and assignment of election judges. Voter Registration numbers were included in the packet.

NEW BUSINESS

Because the legislature is now in session, the Board has requested some information on bills pertaining to elections. (Karen provided the link via email.)

Karen brought logo samples for a possible shirt order.

Feels that with so many new staff members it would be good to have them for the upcoming elections.

The newest member of the office staff Sheri Woodruff, Election Program Supervisor, was introduced to the Board and sworn in by Jennifer Graham, Board President.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DISCLOSURES

Jennifer Graham, Board President disclosed that she had been in contact with two (2) members of the Democratic Central Committee.

Eunice Grant, Board Member disclosed that she had also been in contact with two (2) members of the Cecil County Democratic Club via text.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

The arrest of Carlos Ayala, Republican member of the Maryland State Board of Elections was brought to everyone's attention. While Ayala was arrested, for suspected involvement in the U.S. Capital riots on January 6, 2021, he is innocent until proven guilty. He has since resigned from the position.

Jennifer Graham, Board President suggested reaching out to the Superintendent of Cecil County Schools to see if students who serve as election judges could be given an excused absence if they served. The suggestion was also made to provide them with information on the Page Program and Voter Registration Volunteer training offered.

Mary Nelson came to discuss the blank ballot count and any reports we can provide that would account for the totals in her reports. Her concern was the increased numbers in blank ballots between 2020 and 2022 elections. She asked about seeing the actual ballots and was asked to come to the office the following day to discuss further. She also suggested that there should be a PSA (public service announcement) regarding what a closed primary means for those in the state of Maryland. Staff committed to investigate anything that the state provides or create our own for social media purposes.

Board Folders: Agenda, January 17, 2024 Board Meeting

Board Meeting Minutes, December 20, 2023
Office Work Report January 2024
VR- 13 Monthly Statistical Report
Notice of Board Action

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting will be held on February 21, 2024, at 3:00 pm in the Northeast Room on the 1st Floor of the Cecil County Administration Building located at 200 Chesapeake Boulevard in Elkton, Maryland. The meeting

will be available for public viewing in person.

ADJOURNMENT

Holcombe Grier, moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Krista Moretz, Secretary.

Meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,



Krista Moretz, Secretary



Jennifer Graham, President

Meetings, Trainings, and Important Dates:

January 31, 2024 - PIA training from SBE

February 6, 2024, - MAEO meeting

February 9, 2024 – Candidate Filing Deadline

February 12- 15, 2024 – Staff Training election equipment

February 15, 2024, Directors/ Deputy Meeting

February 26, 2024 – Election Judge training scheduled to begin.