



Cecil County Board of Elections

March 20, 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 20st day of March 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
	Eunice Grant	Board Member
	Holcombe Grier	Board Member (via phone)
	Gary Holmes	Director
	Karen Benecewicz	Deputy Director
	Sheri Woodruff	Election Supervisor (arrived late)
	Mary Nelson	Public
	Sean Brimm	Public

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order by President Jennifer Graham at 3:05 pm. Quorum was established with five (5) Board Members, four (4) in person.

AGENDA

Asked to add confidential voter review to New Business.

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

President Jennifer Graham is encouraging those Board Members and staff who have not yet taken election judge training to do so. She remarked that the new training signage was very visible, and the training location seems to be working out well.

She wanted to send well wishes to Holcombe as he is recovering from COVID and Stephen who has a knee injury. Lastly, she reminded the Board to begin use of their newly set up Gmail accounts for any correspondence related to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the February 21, 2024, Board meeting were provided to the Board a copy in each of their folders.

MOTION: Board Member Eunice Grant motioned to approve Minutes for February 21, 2024; Board Meeting as present.

SECOND: Steven Stiles, Vice President Cecil County Board of Elections

ACTION: Minutes approved and signed by Jennifer Graham, Board President and Krista Moretz, Board Secretary.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gary enclosed the Monthly Statistics report. In the last month, 27 Voter Registration Volunteers have been trained. We have 237 election judges currently assigned, 29 training classes have been held and 129 judges have been trained.

The State Board of Elections had sent ballots to be proofed. These include the mail in ballots, the ballots for the election and the specimen ballots. It was noted that the school board candidates would not appear on the ballot for the Primary as there were not enough candidates running. Additionally, the ballot will be standard county-wide based upon your party. The ballots on Ballot Marking Device were also proofed by Jasmine and Duane.

The CMOS batteries have all been installed, and equipment allocation has been approved.

The staff met with the transportation company that will be dropping off the drop boxes and delivering the voting equipment to both Early Voting and Election Day polling sites.

There was a meeting with representatives of Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) and some of the staff (Karen, Sheri and Jasmine). A meeting is arranged between Jasmine and Lyle (the individual responsible for drop box camera feed) for Monday, March 25. They will be scouting the location of the drop boxes to make sure there is an unobstructed view, and they will be placed in a convenient location for both the voters and the school. The drop boxes are being delivered to the schools on Wednesday, March 27. Jasmine will be escorting the transportation company to see that they are placed correctly.

The Logic and Accuracy testing (L&A) on the equipment is tentatively scheduled to begin on March 26. We are planning to organize and clean the warehouse on the weekend of April 6. We have arranged for ballot pickups to begin on April 1. (Jennifer restated that ballot pickup is to be done by bipartisan team.) Board members will be emailed a schedule of pick-up dates and times to sign up to be part of the bipartisan team.

We have been actively posting to our social media accounts. We have been asked to attend a community event on April 4 and are looking for Board Members to staff a booth. We were also invited by a group of Elkton High School students to a Rock the Vote event at a date to be determined.

Gary attended the MAEO meeting, and they covered some of the legislation that is moving across the house – HB 261 which states that your unemployment would not be affected if you serve as an election judge. HB 436 – lowers the age that you would be allowed to register to vote. There is a bill that would redefine what a returning election judge is regarding the \$100 return judge bonus. HB 557 would limit an individual to assisting no more than 3 non- family voters. HB 641 curb side voting. In addition to discussing the MAEO 2025 conference.

Lastly, Gary is waiting to hear back from the State Board of Elections on a voter's concern over literature that was provided inside Cecil County Public Schools that discussed candidates and voting.

COUNSEL'S REPORT

Bradley had attended the first of three meetings as board counsel, scheduled by the State Board of Elections. The meeting focused on the current pending litigation that other counties were involved in.

OLD BUSINESS

All Board Members have created their new Gmail accounts and will be used going forward. A updated contact list will be sent out with those new addresses.

OFFICE REPORT

We were notified by the State Board of Elections that the materials related to the 2022 election are now to be held. This is in addition to the hold on the 2020 election materials. Both holds are due to court cases. This may begin to create storage issues in the warehouse when it comes time to store the 2024 Primary documents.

The voting equipment is being charged on a set rotating schedule. Jasmine, with the assistance of Duane, has been working on prepping the equipment for election day and L&A, with the appropriate media in place. We currently have a temp RaShawn who will be assisting with warehouse duties and L&A. We are expecting 2 additional surge staffing each starting about 2 weeks apart.

Regarding emergencies / worst case scenarios; we have reached out to law enforcement to ask for extra patrols of the ballot boxes, Early Voting sites and polling sites on election day. We also asked about borrowing walkie talkies for election day as had been done in previous elections. The state as a grant for use of a text feature called textmygov which judge have the option to use to report emergencies.

The plan for election day is for Gary and Karen to be accessible to visit polling sites should a situation arise and for staff to handle any phone calls from election judges, voters, public and press.

NEW BUSINESS

Eunice Grant presented a request for a letter of support regarding the formation of an Elkton Chapter of a highly recognized sorority. Members of the sorority have attended Voter Registration Volunteer training in our office and would like to form a sort of partnership with the board of elections when comes to voter registration and other voter outreach. The letter would be presented to the National office of the sorority in support of a local chapter. Holcombe suggested that Eunice write the letter. Bradley stated that there was no legal issue with a letter of support. Krista supported the letter if there were no conflicts of interest involved. Eunice shared a sample letter with Gary and the other members of the Board. It was decided that the letter would be written by the close of business Thursday due to a Friday deadline of submitting the proposal. It was put to a vote by the Board, Holcombe Grier was the first to motion and it was seconded by Krista with the letter referring to how the Chapter will provide support in the community. Motion to pass with addition was given by Krista Moretz, Secretary and seconded by Stephen Stiles, Vice President.

For the April 4, Community outreach event that the office has been invited to attend, Krista stated she would be interested in staffing if there was someone else to accompany her.

Holcombe stated he would be away. Will have to consider sending a staff person if feasible.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DISCLOSURES

Jennifer Graham, Board President, announced that the board should clear the schedule for Election Day, as well as all the days of canvassing. On Election Day, the board will be checking on polling sites, performing evaluations and delivering supplies if needed. A route and

evaluation forms for members of the board will be put together by Karen prior to the next meeting. Board members seemed agreeable to go anywhere in the county.

The Confidential Voter was presented only as a member of the district court. Krista Moretz was the first to motion for approval and it was seconded by Stephen Stiles. The motion to add the voter as confidential was approved.

Stephen Stiles, Board Vice President mentioned that he had signs at the end of his driveway and there might be more added. Jennifer Graham, Board President, felt the need to remove a sticker from her vehicle due to harassment she was receiving.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Sean Brimm made mention of Maryland being one of the few states that still holds a closed primary. Maybe something that should be addressed in social media postings.

Concerns on a certain social media group disseminating false and or misleading information were discussed. Questioned as to whether there was any truth to the statements or individuals just trying to stir things up. The consensus was the latter. Be cautious with responses because of your positions. While we may want to correct any misinformation of things that are allegedly happening, they should not be addressed until asked directly.

Weekly social media posting should be educating voters on registration, ballots, and the voting process. It was suggested that we see if the state has any educational videos for social media available because they are more engaging.

Mary Nelson suggested that we make unaffiliated voters aware that there will not be a school board ballot for them to vote. This is something that can be added to social media and websites. She also addressed concerns as to how the state certified elections with numbers of ballots cast being different between state and county. Karen suggested that this is something that is addressed in the post-election audits. Mary also wanted to address the topic on blank ballots and believes that because the ballot will not be 2 pages- the instances of blank ballots should be less frequent. She made mention of the blank ballots being a fraud concern. During the L&A or public demonstration, it can be noted how scanner accepts an under voted ballot vs a blank ballot, a blank ballot could be considered under voted.

Board Folders:

March 20, 2024 – Board Meeting Agenda

- Directors Report
- MDVOTERS VR 13 Monthly Statics
- Flyer for Community Event on April 4, 2024
- Chain of Custody form for ballot boxes election night
- Photo of Voter Registration Volunteer training from last month's meeting

February 21, 2024 -Board Meeting Minutes

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Prior to the meeting the board will have the opportunity to view 'No Time to Fail'. The movie will begin at approximately 1:15 pm. The next meeting will be held on April 17, 2024, at 3:00 pm in the Rising Sun 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

Krista Moretz, Secretary moved to close the open meeting.
Seconded by Eunice Grant.
Meeting adjourned at 4:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Krista Moretz, Secretary



Jennifer Graham, President

Meetings, Trainings, and Important Dates:

March 21,2024 – Directors Meeting
March 27, 2024 – Ballot Drop Boxes delivered
April 1, 2024 – Ballot pickup from drop boxes begins
April 4, 2024 – Community Event
April 12, 2024- Last election judge training class
April 8-16, 2024 – L & A equipment
April 17, 2024 – Verification on carts
April 17, 2024 – Board Meeting
April 20, 2024 – Election Judge Open House
April 23, 2024 – Voter registration deadline (includes updates and changes)
April 26, 2024 – Public Viewing of L&A testing documents 10a-2p
April 30, 2024- Early Voting equipment delivered to sites
May 8, 2024 – Election day equipment delivered to sites
May 2-9, 2024, Early Voting
May 7, 2024- Last day to request mail in ballot by mail and have it delivered via mail 8 PM
Last day to request a mailed ballot by email and have it delivered via mail 11:59PM
May 10, 2024 – Last day to request a web delivered ballot via mail by 5PM
Last day to request a web delivered ballot via email 11:59PM
May 14, 2024- Election Day
Mail in Ballot must be requested in person and delivered in person by 8PM
May 16, 17,20, &22-24 – Canvass Dates 8 AM start time

