

MINUTES

July 8, 2020

MEETING OF THE ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
701 Kelly Road, Room 230, Cumberland, Maryland

ATTENDEES: John Stakem, President
Armand Pannone, Board Attorney
JoAnn Spiker, Member
Timothy Donaldson, Member
Debbie Johnson, Member
Diane Loibel, Election Administrator

ABSENT: John Fetchero, Member

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

Mr. Stakem called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M., and stated that there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Stakem called for alterations, corrections, and/or approval of the minutes. Mrs. Spiker made a motion to approve the May 8, 2020 minutes. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADDITIONS

There were no additions to the agenda.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Pannone did not have anything to report.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Loibel presented the following letters for the board to review:

- The Senate of Maryland
- Maryland Senate Republican Caucus
- The Maryland House of Delegates
- MAEO – 06/30/2020
- Report on June 2 Election & Recommendations for November 3 Election
- MAEO – 07/06/20

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

OLD BUSINESS:

FY21 BUDGET

The FY21 Budget was approved without any amendments or cuts.

FY20 INVENTORY

The FY20 Inventory has been complete. We stand at 100% complete.

MAEO CONFERENCE

A survey request was forwarded to all members from MAEO regarding participation for the MAEO Conference. All of the staff would prefer not to participate in person at this time. Nothing further has been decided at this point. I will keep you updated as I know more information.

WAREHOUSE UPGRADES

The new air conditioning/humidity control/heating unit has been delivered and installation will be taking place in the next few weeks.

NEW BUSINESS:

Primary Election Review

- **Turnout**

Overall turnout appears to be on average when comparing to other like elections.

Turnout Comparisons for Presidential Primary Elections:

2020	2016	2012	2008	2004
34.46%	45.91%	28.39%	31.47%	32.76%

- **Vote by Mail Ballots vs Absentee Ballots**

The difference between a vote by mail ballot and an absentee ballot is based on the fact that voters request absentee ballots and are mailed to an address provided by the voter. Vote by mail ballots are sent to registered voters at the mailing address on file. It appears that absentee voters received their ballots much later than the vote by mail voters did, even though they specifically requested their ballots. Voters who had been issued absentee ballots and not returned their applications were changed to vote by mail by SBE and received their ballots much later than everyone else.

- **Election Day**

Overall, Election Day ran smoothly. Yes, people had to wait in line, but I don't believe anyone waited more than 15 minutes. We had a huge increase in voters wanting to use the ballot marking device on Election Day. Of the 504 voters at the vote center, 195 of them used the ballot marking device. The increase may reflect the new statement that was read at the ballot issue table. In addition, we may need to think about how

we direct voters to additional parking options for the general election if early voting is held at the County Office Complex. With people voting and dropping off ballots in the same area, parking was filled up most of the day. We posted additional parking signs to direct voters to the employee parking lot as well as parking in the County Office Complex.

- **Ballot Drop Boxes**

The ballot drop-boxes seemed to be widely popular among voters. I have provided the Ballot Drop-Box Acceptance Log spreadsheet for your review. We actually had more ballots in the drop box than we did in-person voting at the vote center on Election Day. We had a total of 696 ballots in the drop box on June 2nd and 504 in person votes at the vote center. For the November election, I think we need to have a discussion on where to place the ballot drop-box. For the primary election, the drop-box was at the front door. Voters had to park their car and exit in order to drop off the ballot. Voters dropping off ballots were competing against voters who were coming in to vote in person for a parking spot. If we move the drop-box, we still need to have a surveillance camera 24/7 and we would want to keep the drop-box out of the weather.

- **Undeliverable Ballots**

We had 1,801 ballots returned as undeliverable. These voters appeared in the pollbook as having “voted”. When these people showed up at the polling place to vote, they had to vote a provisional ballot. It is my understanding, that in the future, SBE will not code these voters as “already voted” so if they show up to vote in person, they can cast a ballot if they are otherwise eligible to cast a regular ballot.

- **Canvassing**

As you know, many changes were implemented for the primary election. Instead of using bi-partisan teams during the opening/scanning of the ballots, we used one individual in order to adhere to the social distancing guidelines. Keep in mind that this change was enacted for the primary election only. Livestreaming of the canvass was also a requirement. 3 Mevo cameras were purchased and Vimeo was the streaming platform that we used for the livestreaming. Once we hardwired our equipment, the buffering issue was corrected and the rest of the streaming proceeded without issue. The biggest challenge was with the scheduling for each canvass day. Without knowing how many ballots would come in each day, it was difficult to know when and how many should be scheduled for each canvass.

POST-ELECTION MAINTENANCE

Post-Election Maintenance will begin on the voting equipment that was used during the 2020 Presidential Primary Election once the voting equipment has been released.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

SBE requested that our PPE request be completed by June 30, 2020. The problem with this request is that we do not know how we will be conducting the general election. The order was based on a traditional election. With that said, 8,000 face masks, 3,000 pairs of gloves, 90 bottles of sanitizer, 80 packs of disinfectant wipes, 130 face shields, 125 plexiglass shields, 60 cleaning kits for the voting equipment and 50 floor decals were ordered. We have been told that 100% of the cost for the PPE will be the responsibility of the County. Since this was not a budgeted expense for FY21, an email was sent to the County Finance Director informing him of this issue and asked if he had any objections to please let our office know as soon as possible. He responded to proceed with the order and he would cover the costs.

ELECTION JUDGES

Once we know how we will be conducting the general election, election judges will be notified by phone to see who is willing to work. Once we have that information, we will assign them and setup training classes. We are expecting to have early voting and in person voting on election day but do not know to what extent that will be.

2020 GENERAL ELECTION

- Election Judge Training – It is not necessary for board members to come to training classes for the general election. We are limiting the number of people for the training because of COVID-19.
- Vote Center Suggestions – Mrs. Loibel requested that the board think about which polling places would be best to serve as vote centers if that is what the Governor decides to do for the November election. Mrs. Loibel suggested that buildings owned by the county or schools would be the best locations because they have plenty of parking and the rooms are large.
- Ballot Drop Box Locations & Ballot Retrieval – Mrs. Loibel requested that the board discuss possible locations to place additional ballot drop boxes if necessary, for the general election. Mrs. Loibel explained that we would still have the ballot drop box at the County Office Complex like we did for the primary election. Members asked if the additional ballot drop box would have to be emptied twice a day like in the primary and if a surveillance camera would be necessary. Mrs. Loibel explained that the same procedures would be in place for the general election. Somewhere in Frostburg would be best but members were concerned over the security with the college students.

- # of Election Judges & Salaries – Mrs. Loibel reported that there is no additional money available to raise the judges' salaries for the general election and she is not sure that we will have enough election judges to fill all the spots for a traditional election.

Computer Systems and Software Security Updates:

Mrs. Loibel reports that office staff has successfully applied the Microsoft Security updates for the month of June on SBE workstations. We have also updated other third-party software applications to their latest versions on all workstations.

Registration Statistics:

Statistics as of June 30, 2020 were as follows: Total Active Registration 43,596, 13,007 Democrat, 22,232 Republican, 1 Working Class, 11 Bread & Roses, 7,675 Unaffiliated, and 670 Others.

Board Members Report:

There was nothing to report.

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions:

There was nothing to report.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be held on August 5, 2020 at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Spiker made a motion for adjournment. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Stakem adjourned the meeting at 11:30 A.M.