

St. Mary's County Board of Elections

23250 Leonardtown Hollywood Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Board Meeting Minutes of 07 August 2024

Present:

Board Members:

Rebecca Wathen, Board President (D)
Mary Coombs, Board Secretary (R)
Jack Payne, Member (R)
Darlene Johnson, Member (D)
Ann Raley, Member (D)

Staff Members:

Wendy Adkins, Director
Susan Julian, Deputy Director

Cynthia Panos, Board Attorney

Absent: None

At 09:02 AM, Ms. Rebecca Wathen, Board President, determined that there was a quorum present and called the meeting to order. President Wathen announced that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of preparing the minutes.

Guests Present: Ann Marie Abell
Miriam Klapka

Documents Distributed:

- Meeting Minutes for June 5, 2024
- Letters of Concern received from the Primary Election – Qty 2
- Attorney General's Guidance on Voter Intimidation
- 2024 Presidential General Election Board Member Important Dates
- MAEO Agenda

Approval of Minutes:

- The minutes from the meeting held on June 5, 2024 were presented. Mr. Jack Payne made a motion to approve the minutes, with corrections from the floor, seconded by Ms. Mary Coombs. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting Agenda: The meeting agenda was reviewed. No changes were made.

Director's Report: Ms. Adkins reported the following:

- **St. Mary's County Emergency Services Meeting:** Ms. Adkins advised that she met with the Emergency Services Department on June 25, 2024 to discuss Early Voting Centers Parking Lot and Election Day Parking Lot concerns. St. Mary's County was approved for a Homeland Security Grant and a portion of that grant was designated to Elections. Ms. Adkins requested that the Elections portion of the grant money be used for Parking Lot security at the three Early Voting Centers and at Mechanicsville Firehouse on Election Day.
- **Local Board of Elections By-Laws:** Ms. Adkins advised that she received a memo from the State Board of Election (SBE) on July 24, 2024 approving our By-Laws as of the SBE's meeting held on May 23, 2024.
- **Petitions:** Ms. Adkins advised that there are two petitions coming from SBE. One is for the Green Party and the other is for John F. Kennedy Jr.'s Candidacy.

- **Maryland's Mandatory Teleworking Agreement:** Ms. Adkins advised that the LBE Staff will be returning to full time in-office work on September 3, 2024 until after the Election has been certified.
- **Personnel Update:** The office's Summer Intern's last day will be August 16, 2024. However, she will be returning as the County Tech for the SBE on September 3, 2024 and will continue those duties through November 8, 2024. The Ballot Drop Box two-person team will also be returning to do the daily Drop Box pick-ups for the General Election.

Old Business:

- **Clear Ballot Phase 2 Reports:** The Board Members were advised that the final report from the 2024 Primary Election has been received and is available for review. Our final margin of error was 0.003% which is well within the allowable margin.
- **Letters of Concern:** Ms. Adkins presented two (2) letters that were received by the LBE:
 - **#1** – The first one was concerning the inability for non-partisan/independent voters to vote for the Judges Race. The person submitting the concern was referred to the Circuit Court Case for future reference which discusses this very situation.
 - **#2** – The second letter received (one wished to remain anonymous expressed concern when they voted during the Primary Election that when they checked in, the election judge verbally announced their party affiliation. Ms. Adkins advised that this voter did not wish to vote on the Ballot Marking Device (BMD) and requested a paper ballot. As election judges are trained, they request the specific parties ballot from the ballot keeper so that correct ballot is provided to the voter. In accordance with the Election Judge training, there is no issue that needs to be corrected.

New Business:

- **Attorney General Voter Intimidation Guide:** Ms. Adkins provided a copy that has been provided by the Attorney General's office.
- **2024 Important Dates for the Board:** Ms. Adkins provided the important dates for the Board Members to mark their calendar's for the upcoming General Election. Board Member's were requested to ensure they mark their calendar's and plan on attending accordingly.
- **MAEO Meeting:** The MAEO one-day conference will be held on August 20, 2024 starting at 9:00 AM. The LBE will be attending virtually from the office in Leonardtown. Lunch will be provided. Ms. Adkins needs to know if you are attending no later than August 14, 2024. This conference is not mandatory for Board Members.

CLOSED SESSION: The Board entered into a closed session to discuss a personnel matter at 9:22 AM. The Board returned to the open session at 9:30 AM.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be on September 4, 2024. Board members will be sworn in for the Canvass at the Clerk of the Court's Office at 9:00 AM and will return to the LBE office's immediately following to hold the meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Coombs to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Raley. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 09:33 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Coombs
Board Secretary