



Frederick County Board of Elections

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MINUTES of the August 3, 2020 Meeting of The Frederick County Board of Elections

The meeting was called to order at 12:40 PM, via video and teleconference by the Board President, Mrs. Mary Lou Green.

PRESENT:

Mary Lou Green, President

Shirley McDonald, Vice President

Lawrence C. Hill, Secretary*

Mary Costello, Board Member

William L. Woodcock, Board Member

Daniel B. Loftus, Board Counsel

Stuart Harvey, Election Director

Noreen L. Schultz, Election Deputy Director

Clifton Mowell, Election IT Specialist

Marc R. Welch, Election Administrative Assistant

MC Keegan-Ayer, County Council President

*Mr. Hill joined the meeting at 1:34 PM.

GUESTS:

Jim Filson, League of Women Voters

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:

Mr. Harvey added a discussion of the just-completed DHS Tabletop the Vote 2020 to new business.

COUNTY COUNCIL:

Mr. Harvey has requested to be added to the Council agenda to update the Council about the status of the election. Additionally, Mrs. Keegan-Ayer suggests Mr. Harvey do some public service announcements and other content for cable channel 19.

ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Harvey summarized the contents of the written Election Director's report and provided copies to the Board. The Board discussed the report.

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OLD BUSINESS:

A. FY20 BUDGET

Mr. Harvey provided an update on the current budget status from the end of FY20. He expects that even though some categories had overages, in the overall budget, we'll return money to the County.

B. FY21 BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Harvey reports that not much money has been spent so far for FY21, but as expenditures for the November 3 election begin, that will change. The Board discussed the budget reports.

C. 2020 GENERAL ELECTION

1. BALLOT DROP BOXES

There will be a total of 8 drop boxes for the November election. Mr. Harvey has ordered 3 drop boxes in addition to the 3 used in the Primary. One box will be deployed at each early voting site. The City of Brunswick will loan the Board 2 drop boxes. These will be deployed in Brunswick and New Market. Locations to be determined as site surveys are performed. Mr. Harvey will work with County IIT to install additional cameras, or get access to existing cameras as needed. Drop boxes are expected to be in place in early October.

2. EARLY VOTING LOCATION - FREDERICK

Mr. Harvey has investigated several locations as a replacement for the Frederick Senior Center as an early voting site. He has discussed using Governor Thomas Johnson High School with the Board of Education. Mr. Harvey recommends the Board adopt using the school.

Mrs. Costello made a motion to adopt using Governor Thomas Johnson High School as the Frederick early voting site for the General Election. Mr. Woodcock seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Harvey will work with BOE on logistics, and will perform the required site survey.

3. PRECINCTS AND POLLING PLACES

a. MERGE PRECINCT 07-005 AND 07-006

Mr. Harvey and Mrs. Schultz provided an overview of the merging process.

Mr. Woodcock made a motion to approve the precinct merger. Mrs. Costello seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

b. POLLING PLACE CONSOLIDATIONS

Mr. Harvey advised the Board of a shortage of judges available for Election Day. Normally we use around 900 judges to operate the polling places on Election Day, and we expect to have approximately 450. As of this meeting, 431 of 750 polled have replied to the survey, and 278 have confirmed willingness to work.

As a result of the severe shortage, Mr. Harvey proposes merging a significant number of precincts (list attached) to reduce the total number of precincts from 63 to 37. He provided a list of consolidations. The Board discussed the necessary adjustments.

Mrs. Costello made a motion to approve the polling place consolidations as described. Mr. Woodcock seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

4. ELECTION JUDGES

Mr. Harvey updated the Board on the State's effort to recruit election judges from State employees. He's also requested the County Executive help recruit election judges from County staff. The Board of Education is also reaching out to staff and eligible students. The Board discussed the recruitment efforts.

5. CANVASS

Mr. Harvey advised the Board that canvassing of VBM ballots can't begin processing until 2 days after Election Day. With an expected VBM turnout potentially reaching 50% of ballots cast this will cause the canvass to be extremely long. This would delay certification. The State Board and/or Governor Hogan will have to change regulations to start canvassing earlier. Extending the canvass risks running up against the federally mandated deadline for the Electoral College to meet.

Mr. Woodcock asked about how to handle late arriving ballots which have a postmark later than Election Day. Mr. Harvey said this would require a change of law and regulation. The Board discussed the issue.

>>> Mr. Hill joined the meeting at 1:34pm <<<

D. MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS – BRUNSWICK UPDATE

The Brunswick municipal election is August 4, 2020. Mr. Harvey, Mr. Welch and Mr. Mowell visited Brunswick City Hall to conduct training of their election judges. They've been canvassing mail-in ballots since July 28, 2020, and will finish shortly after 8pm on August 4. The Board discussed the election.

E. 2020 MAEO CONFERENCE - AUGUST 25

Mr. Harvey updated the Board on the now-virtual MAEO conference scheduled for August 25. Ballots for the MAEO election will be delivered around August 7th. The ballots must be received