



# Frederick County Board of Elections

8490 Progress Drive, Frederick, Maryland 21701  
FrederickCountyMD.gov/elections

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## MINUTES of the December 6, 2023, Meeting of The Frederick County Board of Elections

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm, in person and virtually, by Board President Mary Costello.

### **PRESENT:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Mary Costello, President                 | Diane Zepp, Voter Registration                      |
| Nathaniel C.W. Wilson, Vice President    | Dan Callahan, Election Program Supervisor II        |
| Shirley McDonald, Secretary              | Brian Blakesley, Election Program Assistant I       |
| Michael Sowell, Board Member             | Linda Kulina, self                                  |
| Daniel B. Loftus, Board Counsel [WebEx]  | Jill Griffith, self                                 |
| Anthony Gutierrez, Deputy Director       | Mari Lee, Democratic Central Committee [WebEx]      |
| Thomas Coogan, Election Program Manager  | Shelley Aloji, Republican Central Committee [WebEx] |
| Marc R. Welch, Voting Operations Manager |   |

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### **ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

N/A

### **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES**

Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve and accept the November 1, 2023, meeting minutes. Ms. McDonald seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **COUNCIL LIASON COMMENTS**

N/A

### **BOARD COUNSEL REPORT**

Mr. Loftus provided an update on the Gibson trial, which is before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia. We're waiting for a decision sometime in January 2024.

Mr. Loftus mentioned about Washington County Board of Commissioners and other plaintiffs filed a complaint for emergency relief with early voting locations. They filed it in Anne Arundel County against the State Board of Elections. Anne Arundel County denied their complaint and granted motion for summary judgement in favor of the State. It will be going before the Maryland Supreme Court. He is not aware of the decision and/or status yet.

## **ELECTION DIRECTOR REPORT**

Anthony Gutierrez in for Barbara Wagner

### **1. Announcements and Important Meetings**

Holiday Party – December 7, 2023

Director/Division Meeting – County December 19th

➤ **2024 Election Candidacy**

- Currently, FC has 1 Board of Education candidates.

Primary Election Tuesday, May 14, 2024

Early Voting Dates – Thursday, May 2-9, 2024

### **2. Voter Registration**

#### **VOTER REGISTRATION STATISTICS REPORT**

**As of  
12/6/2023**

**TOTAL ACTIVE + PENDING: 199,742**

| <b><u>PARTY</u></b> | <b><u>ACTIVE</u></b> | <b><u>PENDING</u></b> | <b><u>TOTAL</u></b> | <b><u>PERCENT</u></b> |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| DEM                 | 77,609               | 22                    | 77,631              | 38.87%                |
| REP                 | 67,477               | 5                     | 67,482              | 33.78%                |
| LIB                 | 1,209                | 0                     | 1,209               | 0.61%                 |
| UNA                 | 51,670               | 21                    | 51,691              | 25.88%                |
| OTHERS - TOTAL      | 1,727                | 2                     | 1,729               | 0.87%                 |
| <b><u>TOTAL</u></b> | <b>199,692</b>       | <b>50</b>             | <b>199,742</b>      | <b>100.00%</b>        |

| <b><u>VOTER REGISTRATION TRANSACTIONS REPORT</u></b> | <b><u>December<br/>2023</u></b> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Additions to County Registration                     | 1087                            |
| Subtractions from County Active Status               | 1113                            |
| Party Affiliation Changes                            | 0                               |
| Address Changes within Jurisdiction                  | 485                             |
| Name Changes   | 647                             |

- **Pending status – identification has not been able to be verified by either MVA or the Social Security Administration.**

**CURRENT PENDING VOTERS**  
**As of 12/6/2023**

| Reason                 | Number    |
|------------------------|-----------|
| ID Not Provided        | 8         |
| ID Not Verified        | 40        |
| Incomplete Application | 32        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>50</b> |

### **3. General and Continuing Items**

Four 4 Early Voting Sites and were approved by the State Board on November 30, 2023. A list of sites can be found on our website. Polling Place review is set for December 14, 2023.

Surrender License Mailer – SBE sent out 14, 000 letters to Maryland Voters who have been reported as surrendering their MD licenses in other states. 621 Frederick voters were sent letters. Most of these voters moved without notifying the Board of Elections. SBE is processing the responses. So far, they have logged 216 responses:

- 50 have confirmed moving to a new state and have been cancelled.
- 17 have replied that they remain in the state of MD, and VR is unchanged.
- 84 have been returned as undeliverable with no forwarding information.
- 65 have been returned as undeliverable with some forwarding information on the return sticker and have been sent to our office for NVRA processing.

#### **Voting Systems Division**

Our staff has been assisting the State Board staff with testing the new Electronic Pollbook system for future elections.

#### **Voter Registration Division**

November ERIC was completed on time and December's ERIC came out with Duplicates and Deceased. The team has already completed those ERIC for December. SBE came out with three new lists (DHMH Fuzzy, AOC Fuzzy, and Century Club). These lists will come out monthly going forward for us to work. The DHMH and AOC Fuzzy lists have been finished. The Monthly DHMH report came out Dec 1<sup>st</sup> and has been completed.

#### **Election Judge Division**

Volunteer Voter Registration training on December 6.

Open House on December 12.

Judge applications are currently at 696 total. The Judge team is distributing flyers to the Libraries and Municipal Town Halls to recruit judges.

#### **Social Media and Website Content**

The Plan to Vote and 2024 Election pages have been updated and include information

about the approved early voting sites, proposed ballot drop box sites, and the proposed 2024 polling place assignments.

**The Board of Elections is approximately 5 months from the Primary Election on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Major goals include the following:

- Districts/Precincts Clean-up – plan to take out lines between precincts that already vote in the same place and share the same ballot style. These changes WILL NOT affect the place where the voter votes on Election Day.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) each division is tasked with going over current procedures and writing or re-writing them to a standard which can be given to any incoming employee to assist with training.

#### **Grants**

The Board of Elections worked with the Office of Emergency Management to submit one project. The DHS grant will be used for the AI Phone for Suite 125 this fall. Quote for the work has been received and we are waiting for an EHP approval from FEMA. No timetable has been established.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Biennial Meeting Update**

Ms. McDonald and Ms. Costello are still waiting for the evaluation form. Ms. Costello will reach out via the evaluation form. Will try one more time and then send a letter.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. FY25 Preliminary Draft Base Budget**

Tom Coogan briefed the Board on the FY'25 preliminary base budget.

#### **B. Suspicious Mail Training**

Tom Coogan briefed the Board that the office is addressing suspicious mail concerns.

#### **C. Summary of Office of Legislative Audit**

Mr. Gutierrez discussed enhancing procedures to fully identify deceased or duplicate voters. SBE states that agenda must be posted 48 hours prior to a meeting. Mr. Gutierrez gave a brief description of the Fuzzy list.

#### **D. Personnel**

Mr. Callahan promoted to Election Supervisor II and Mr. Blakesley new hire as an Election Program I. Both were sworn in by Ms. Costello.  
Supervisor I position in the Voting System posted and closes December 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **E. Other**

Board Members are receiving pay bi-weekly.

#### **DISCLOSURES**

Mr. Sowell contributed to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He attended the Meet and Greet for the 6<sup>th</sup> District candidates that was sponsored by the Democratic clubs. Also attended a dinner for a former Congressional Congresswoman, Beverly Byron. Attended the League of Women Voters Choice Voting Seminar. Frederick Budget hearing.

Ms. McDonald and Costello attended the League of Women Voters.

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#### **NEXT MEETING**

The Board scheduled the next meeting for Wednesday, January 3, 2023, at 2:00 pm at 8490 Progress Drive.

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#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Per the board's by-laws, public comment is allowed after the request has been approved by the Board President.*

N/A

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The motion to close was made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Sowell, and passed unanimously. The meeting was called to a close at 2:31 pm by Ms. Costello.

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## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On December 6, 2023, at 2:35 The Frederick County Board of Elections met in Executive Session following the December Board meeting in the conference room at 8490 Progress Dr. Frederick, MD. A motion to close the session was made by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Sowell, the vote was unanimous. The meeting was held to approve the minutes of the October 4 meeting and a personnel matter. This action was in accordance with the authority granted under the Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article, Sections §3-305. The session discussions pertained to the following subsections under this provision:

§3-305 (b)(1) to discuss the appointment, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

Mary Costello, President, present  
Nathaniel C.W. Wilson, Vice President, present  
Shirley McDonald, Secretary, present  
Ted Neeves, Board Member, absent  
Michael Sowell, Board Member, present  
Daniel B. Loftus, Board Counsel, present via remote access  
Anthony Gutierrez, Election Deputy Director, present

Two votes were taken during the meeting. The first was on a personnel issue and the motion was made by Ms. McDonald and seconded by Mr. Sowell. The vote was unanimous.

The second vote was on the October 4 minutes. The motion was made by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Sowell and the motion was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45.

Respectfully submitted Shirley McDonald, Secretary

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Respectfully submitted by Diane Zepp, Election Program Assistant II

Approved by:

  
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Mary Costello, Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date