



Frederick County Board of Elections

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

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MINUTES of the
February 5, 2025, Meeting of
The Frederick County Board of Elections

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

PRESENT:

Mary Costello, President
Nathaniel C.W. Wilson, Vice President
Shirley McDonald, Secretary
Ted Neeves, Board Member
Daniel B. Loftus, Board Counsel
Barbara Wagner, Director
Thomas Coogan, Election Program Manager
Jeremy Levin, Election Program Manager
James Parr, Election Program Assistant
Joana Varela, Election Supervisor
Dan Callahan, Election VR Supervisor
Diane Zepp, Election Program Assistant
Brian Blakesley, Election Program Assistant

Winston Mann, Self
Kelly Foster, Self
Jay Kaminsky, Self
Mari Lee, FCDCC

Via WebEx:

M.C. Keegan-Ayers, County Council Liaison
Shelly Aloï, Self

Absent:

Michael Sowell, Board Member

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

N/A

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Neeves made a motion to accept the January 8, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS

The County Executive is working on the County budget, and they will also conduct several studies in the County

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT

Yesterday, the Fourth Circuit dismissed the Election Integrity case, in addition to the Gibson case. The Director noted we will still be holding all documents from the 2020 General as well as all the 2022 and 2024 documents until we get final notice.

ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 2025

Announcements and Important Meetings

- Candidate Filings are scheduled to open February 25, 2025.
- Working Class Party Petition deadline is February 23, 2025.
- Governor released his proposed FY'26 budget on 01/15/2024.
- 2025 Municipal Election Support to City of Frederick - Meetings have already started. Primary is September 9 and General is November 5.
- MAEO Conference and Biennial Meeting: May 4-9, 2025, Ocean City, Maryland
- Updating Website

1. Voter Registration

VOTER REGISTRATION STATISTICS REPORT

As of
2/5/2025

TOTAL ACTIVE + PENDING:		208,930	-	-
<u>PARTY</u>	<u>ACTIVE</u>	<u>PENDING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
DEM	79,643	48	79,691	38.14%
REP	70,242	34	70,276	33.64%
LIB	1,256	1	1,257	0.60%
UNA	55,558	52	55,610	26.62%
OTHERS - TOTAL	2,093	3	2,096	1.00%
<u>TOTAL</u>	208,792	138	208,930	100.00%

VOTER REGISTRATION TRANSACTIONS REPORT

January 2025

Additions to County Registration	2314
Subtractions from County Active Status	636
Party Affiliation Changes	1432
Address Changes within Jurisdiction	1633
Name Changes	1836

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

CURRENT PENDING VOTERS
As of 2/5/2025

Reason	Number
Confirmation Mail process	2
ID Not Provided	14
ID Not Verified	111
Incomplete Application	11
TOTAL	138

2. Administration & Reception Division

The division welcomed a new member in January. As a team of 3, daily touchpoint meetings are being held to solidify roles and duties. Tasks we will be undertaking include revision of current standard operating procedures as well as supporting the Voter Registration division in mailing procedures.

3. Voting Systems Division

Voting systems staff attended an Election Technology Committee (MAEO) meeting on January 31st. Next committee meeting TBD.

Staff is preparing for the Manual Audit which takes place on February 12th. Snow date is Feb. 19th. Poll Book Post Election Maintenance has been completed. We will be working on PEM for the DS-200's after the Manual Audit is complete. The State has released us to perform the equipment inventory which is due in June. Staff will be continuing to work on their interim projects.

4. Voter Registration Division

We completed January ERIC, COP Audit, DHMH Report, AOC Report, DHMH Fuzzy List, AOC Fuzzy List and the Jury List.

Staff continues working to get caught up with the backlog of voter information held during the Election.

Staff Daily Touchpoints are conducted in the morning and afternoon.

Professional Development: Dan completed Remote CERA Course 1

Upcoming Meetings –

February 5 MAEO Standard Committee meeting

February 10 & 11 Candidate Filing Refresher

February 13 @ 11am MAEO VR meeting and @ 2pm VR Lessons Learned meeting

5. Mail-In Ballot / Official Ballot Drop Boxes Section

MiB MAEO Committee meeting was January 8.

Lessons Learned meeting held on January 30.

Items discussed were creating a newspaper Obituary deadline for when Mail-in Ballots go out in the mail. Howard County discussed their success with internal locks on Drop Boxes. The State Board has hired a new employee to lead/assist with the UOCAVA

program and its processes. SBE also discussed updates to the Nursing Home Program Manual.

Upcoming Meetings – MiB MAEO Committee meeting February 25 @ 11am

6. Election Judge Division

2024 payroll has been closed out, with all outstanding payments distributed. The division is planning a robust outreach schedule for 2025 and is in the process of launch a new, fully email-based newsletter tool, which will allow more efficient outreach and more automated management of the approximately 3100 emails on the mailing list.

7. Network and IT Support Division

Support to staff of the office systems continues. Work continues improving office systems for greater efficiencies. The team is working on an upgraded conferencing system from Owl Labs to provide a more seamless Board Meeting. In addition, they are developing an improved in/out board and improved timesheet processing.

8. Building Management

Working with Frederick County DPW on permitting to add location signs for FCBOE on roads near the office.

Datawatch training on new technology added to Warehouse main entrance.

Continuing to update both the County and State Continuity of Operations Plans.

Completing yearly building manager self-inspection checklist.

Continuing to update safety and security SOPs for the office.

OLD BUSINESS

N/A

NEW BUSINESS

A. Swearing-In new employee – James Parr was sworn in by Ms. Costello, Board President.

B. FY26 Budget Report

Budget requests have been submitted to Budget Office. Met with the County Executive and staff on January 31, 2025. Requested a 7.7% budget increase due to the following: The addition an early voting site, which includes property rental and staffing of election judges; additional staffing to contribute to enhanced security and records management; additional security items related to the previous item and increases in office expenses due to an increase in registered voters.

The State Board of Elections billable items are increasing by 25% due to the following major IIT Projects to include a new Campaign Reporting Information System (NCRIS) which is slated for 2026; a State Pollbook Modernization and Voting System which are slated for delivery in 2028; and a new Voter Registration & Election Administration Modernization (VREAM) scheduled to be released in 2030 Election.

C. 2025 Legislative Update

Mr. Levin presented to the Board on four departmental bills put forth by the State.

HB41/SB267 – Petitions for the Formation of a New Political Party – Process

HB199/SB257 – Notice to Permanent Absentee Voters

HB274/SB259 – Local Boards of Elections – Election Plan Requirement

HB75/SB262 – Special Elections

D. Voter Registration List Maintenance Report

Mr. Callahan gave a presentation on our list maintenance process.

E. Pilot Project report on Polling Place Door Openers

Ms. Varela presented on a pilot program in which we partnered with Girl Scout Troop 81625 (Brunswick) to deploy 10 Scouts with their adult chaperones at 4 school locations during the 2024 General election to serve as “Door Openers”. The feedback was all positive, they had a few suggestions for improvement, and we will evaluate whether to continue this program in the future.

A motion by Mr. Neeves to move the Board of Canvassers meeting to next month’s at 2:41 p.m. and seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING

A. Presentation of additional 2024 General election ballots – There were 2 “Untimely” ballots presented to the Board that were postmarked and received after the election. Mr. Neeves moved to hold the untimely ballots till all 5 board members are present.

B. Mr. Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Neeves made a motion to adjourn the Board of Canvassers meeting at 2:45 p.m. Mr. Wilson seconded with the motion passing unanimously.

DISCLOSURES

N/A

NEXT MEETING

The Board scheduled the next meeting for Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at 8490 Progress Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Frederick County residents Winston Mann and Jay Kaminsky spoke during Public Comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Neeves and seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion passed unanimously to go into Executive Session. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m. by Ms. Costello.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On February 5, 2025, at 2:50 The Frederick County Board of Elections met in Executive Session following the February 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. Neeves, the vote was unanimous. The meeting was held to approve the minutes of the January 8 meeting, the October 2 meeting and to discuss a personnel issue and to obtain legal advice from counsel. 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.

§3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Mary Costello, President, present
Nathaniel C.W. Wilson, Vice President, present
Shirley McDonald, Secretary, present
Ted Neeves, Board Member, present
Michael Sowell, Board Member, absent
Daniel B. Loftus, Board Counsel, present
Barbara Wagner, Director, present

During the executive session, the only actions taken by the Board was to pass the minutes of the October 2 meeting, the motion to do so was made by Mr. Neeves and seconded by Mr. Wilson. The vote was unanimous, 4-0. The second action was to pass the minutes of the January 8 meeting, the motion for these minutes was made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Costello. The vote was 2 for and 2 abstentions (were not present for the meeting).

Motion made at 3:40 pm by Mr. Neeves, seconded by Mr. Wilson for adjournment, vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Shirley McDonald, Board Secretary

Respectfully submitted by Diane Zepp, Election Program Assistant

Approved by:

Mary Costello

Mary Costello, Board President

3/5/25

Date