

Board Meeting Minutes  
Worcester County Board of Elections  
201 Belt Street, Suite C, Snow Hill MD 21863  
Wednesday, January 10, 2024

ATTENDEES:

BOARD

President Martina Barnes-Wharton, Democratic Board Member  
Secretary Terry Smith, Democratic Board Member  
Thomas Butler, Democratic Board Member  
Jeff McMahon, Republican Board Member

Absent

Edward Rodier, Republican Board Member

STAFF

Patricia Jackson, Election Director  
Teresa Riffin, Deputy Director

GUESTS

Cherie McNett, Democratic Central Committee Worcester County  
Vicky Wallace, Democratic Central Committee Worcester County  
Susan Ostrowski, Republican Central Committee  
Mr. Vincent Gisriel, Jr. (Speaker)  
Mr. Dennis Evans (Speaker)  
Pat Barbely  
Marie Hazel  
Grant Helvey  
Rich Cropper  
Henry Robinson  
Mary Evans  
Gwen Cordner  
Loren Barrett (Unable to fit in room)  
Danny Barrett (Unable to fit in room)

Prior to the beginning of the regular Board Meeting, the Board met in closed session to discuss personnel matters.

- A. Meeting called to order and Quorum determined- A quorum was declared present, President Martina Barnes-Wharton called the meeting to order at 10:20 AM. Mrs. Jackson announced the purpose for the closed meeting was to discuss interviewing and hiring of a new board attorney. The board attorney interview is scheduled for Monday, January 15, 2023 at 9:30 A.M

Approval of Minutes – Jeff McMahon offered a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of October 4, 2023, and October 19, 2023. Thomas Butler seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. There was an erroneous date of 2023 on the Board Minutes and Mrs. Jackson corrected the date to 2024.

Correspondences:

- 2024 Election Cycle
- Sec.33.08.02.02 Definition of a Vote- Optical Scan Voting System
- Resolution 2023-01 Worcester County Board of Elections (Speakers at Board Meetings)

Fiscal Year to Date Budget Report

No discussion, Thomas Butler offered the motion to accept the fiscal year budget through December 31, 2023. Jeff McMahon seconded, with unanimous acceptance.

Old Business

Reviewed and discussed the resolution/bylaws for speakers at the Board Meetings. The bylaws have been approved by Cyril Komp at the State Board of Elections. President Martina Barnes-Wharton offered a motion to approve the bylaws. Thomas Butler seconded, with unanimous acceptance.

New Business

Discussions:

A. Elections Dates Discussed. Mrs. Jackson distributed a timeline for the 2024 election cycle with Board Members mandatory attendance dates marked in red.

- Board members must attend all events in red.
- Election Judge Training classes will be held March 25-April 4 at the election office.
- If needed the election canvass will be held at the Snow Hill Library, April 24, 2023.
- The board staff will need to see if registered patients in the nursing home need voting ballots.

B. Mold Update: Issue resolved. Associated bills will be covered by the county's insurance. Everything cleaned, monitors and humidifiers installed.

Guest Speakers

- Mr. Dennis Evans inquired about the definition of the blank ballot. Director, Patricia Jackson explained how every signed ballot submitted is counted even if it is left blank. Mr. Evans also questioned the process and time limit set for the public to speak. Ms. Jackson stated time was needed to gather information to address concerns. Ms. Jackson also informed the guests that Mr. Rodier proposed a 5-minute time limit for the public to speak and the board agreed. She stated we are in the range of most committee/commissioner meetings.
- Mr. Vince Gisriel shared and asked questions about data in the Governor 2022 Gubernatorial General Election Provisional Voting report. Ms. Jackson explained to Mr. Gisriel that she had provided him with statistics and explanations to his questions several times before this meeting, and encouraged him and others who had questions to submit their concerns to the state. They could also write and ask to attend the state board meeting. Mr. Gisriel's main question referenced why a certain number of provisional ballots were cast in the election and during the canvassing of provisional ballots, why the total numbers were "off". Mrs. Jackson explained the

numbers weren't "off", but that there were also 100 mail-in ballots canvassed with the provisional ballots, per the State Board of Elections regulations in order to protect the secrecy of the provisional ballot counts.

- Board member Jeff McMahon suggested board members could write down questions/talking points and respond to guests after they have spoken to ensure the 5 minutes allotted isn't interrupted or shortened. The board agreed.
- Since there were so many guests during this Board Meeting, Mr. McMahon suggested holding the April Board Meeting at a larger facility to avoid people having to stand and to avoid not having enough room to accommodate everyone. Mrs. Jackson will look into securing a different building for the April meeting.

Scheduling of the Next Meeting: April 3, 2024, at the 201 Belt Street Office

President Martina Barnes-Wharton asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeff McMahon made the motion, second by Thomas Butler.

So moved, meeting adjourned 10:49

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Smith- Secretary



Martina Barnes-Wharton, President

