

Worcester County Board of Elections

Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 11, 2023 – 10:00 am

In- Person

Board Members attending: Vice President Martina Barnes-Wharton
Board Members Audrey Wahl (via telephone)
and Terry Smith

Office Staff: Patricia Jackson
Teresa Riffin

Absent: President Ed Rodier
Secretary Linda Moran
Attorney Lindsey West

Guests: Pat Barbely
Andrew Hobbs, Republican Central Committee
Susan Ostrowski, Republican Central Committee
Vicky Wallace, Democratic Central Committee
Cherie McNett, Democratic Central Committee
Julia Butler, Democratic Central Committee

- I. Meeting called to order by Vice-President Martina Barnes-Wharton at 10:00 am.**
Vice-President Barnes-Wharton welcomed all guests. Mrs. Jackson explained that Mr. Rodier and Mrs. Moran were unable to attend this meeting.
- II. Minutes from October 5, 2022 were approved by Ms. Wahl and seconded by Ms. Barnes-Wharton.**
- III. No Correspondence to report**
- IV. Fiscal Year Budget from July 1, 2022 to January 1, 2023 were approved by Ms. Barnes-Wharton and seconded by Ms. Smith.**
- V. Old Business: Lessons Learned from 2022 General Election.** Ms. Barnes-Wharton, Ms. Smith and Mrs. Wahl all felt the General Election went very well and complimented the election office staff on their hard work. Mrs. Jackson commented the only change she would make in future elections concerned the canvasses: there should be one voting scanner unit for each 1,000 ballots to be counted, and there should be additional BMDs for canvasses where it is pre-known that there will be additional duplicated ballots possible.
- VI. Guests' comments:**
 - (a) Pat Barbely mentioned there was a problem during the 2022 Primary Election at Snow Hill Middle School where the school was open to students**

and voters had problems finding available parking spots and a longer walk to the polling place. Mrs. Jackson explained that when the Governor postponed the Primary to July 2022, the County schools were scheduled to hold summer school and the Board of Education declined closing the school for students on Election Day. Ms. Barbely wanted to know where she could voice her concern over this and make sure it does not happen again in the future and Mrs. Jackson recommended Ms. Barbely contact the Board of Education. Mrs. Jackson stated she tried numerous times to encourage the Board of Education to close the school to students on Election Day, but she was not successful.

- (b) Cherie McNett discussed a problem she encountered, but said it was resolved.**
- (c) Vicky Wallace had a question about the budget report income section.**
- (d) Susan Ostrowski mentioned her daughter voted an electronic mail ballot and complimented the system and our office.**
- (e) Numerous comments about mail ballot voting and the procedures to send out and canvass of same.**

VII. New Business

- A. Mrs. Jackson explained the manual canvass procedures and set the dates for the manual canvass for February 23rd, with a snow date of March 2nd.**
- B. Diana Chavis, Ocean City Clerk, called Mrs. Jackson to discuss alternate early voting sites for 2024.** She said the City Manager and Convention Center Director both felt there were numerous complaints from the vendors and attendees of other events at the convention center, mostly regarding being approached by electioneers in the parking lot. They also felt the voters and events vendors and attendees should not use the same entrance to the convention center. Ms. Chavis mentioned possibly using the senior center on 41st Street or the 15th Street fire department. The board discussed several solutions such as marking the parking lot for voters only and events attendees only or using a different entrance for early voting. The board also felt that if the early voting has to be moved to another venue, then Election Day voting should also be at the same venue so as not to confuse the voters. This issue is tabled until the next board meeting when all board members can attend and discuss fully.

There were numerous comments from the guests regarding early voting and a possible second early voting site in Southern Worcester. Mrs. Riffin and Mrs. Jackson answered all questions and explained that the Commissioners would have to approve a second early voting site and so far in the past, they have not been receptive to this due to the high costs of early voting.

- C. Mrs. Jackson mentioned she has received the FY24 budget paperwork and will submit it by the January 26 deadline.**

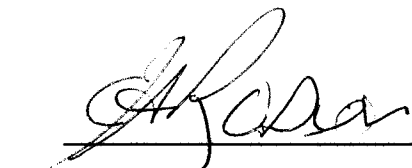
- D. Mrs. Jackson distributed the 2023 Board Meeting Dates paperwork to the Board and all attendees.**
- E. Mrs. Jackson reminded the Board Members that their Ethics Disclosure must be filed with the Maryland Ethics Commission by April 2023. They should receive an email from the Commission regarding this.**
- F. Mrs. Jackson mentioned she will be out of the office on FMLA from January 23 until April 23 due to surgery and Mrs. Riggin will be available for any questions until her return.**

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned by Vice-President Barnes-Wharton at 10:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted

Patricia Jackson

Election Director



President Ed Rodier

After the meeting, several Central Committee members remained and wanted to talk about the process of appointing new board members. Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. Riggin told them the chairmen of the central committees should receive an email from the Governor Appointments Office directing them what to do to complete this process.