

Montgomery County Board of Elections

Acting Election Director's Report – October 2022

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Draft minutes for the meetings on August 13, 2022, and August 25, 2022, were circulated to the Board on October 10, 2022. The agenda was posted to the website and draft minutes for the September 19 meeting were circulated to the Board on October 13, 2022. The Acting Director's report and attachments were provided to the Board on October 14, 2022.

Action Items from Previous Meetings

Postmark Dates on Untimely Ballots. As requested, staff inspected the postmarks on all ballots that were rejected by the Board of Canvassers for untimeliness at its September meeting. Out of 68 total ballots, 57 were postmarked after July 19, 2022, and 11 were postmarked prior to that date. All 11 of the ballots postmarked on or before Election Day were from military or overseas civilian voters qualified for earliest possible mailing of their ballot under the provisions of the federal Uniformed Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).

Canvass Plan. As directed, the staff prepared a dual canvass plan for either a scenario in which the court would or would not allow ballots to be opened prior to Election Day. Canvassing will begin at the Board's office on Saturday, October 15, 2022, and will subsequently move to locations at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds and at Montgomery College. The schedule of initial dates is posted on the website and will be updated shortly to reflect additional dates planned.

Canvass Stipend. As requested in the September meeting, the staff looked into reports of canvassers being paid higher amounts in other jurisdictions. In light of the Board's concern, and since we have also expanded the hours of the canvass for the general election by an hour, Election Judges who work in the canvass are now being offered \$175 per day instead of the \$110 that they received for the primary election. This is not quite as high a daily rate as in some jurisdictions, but those jurisdictions are canvassing on fewer days and working longer hours on the days that they canvass. Our past experience has been that productivity goes down with longer hours. The number of hours that we can realistically canvass without making unrealistic demands on our staff is also limited because conducting the canvass offsite with a higher volume of ballots also requires Montgomery County to build in time to prepare and transport materials to and from the canvass location each day.

Sample Ballot. Changes requested by Board members were made to the text of the sample ballot. Final proofs were approved on October 5, 2022, and printing began that weekend with initial delivery to the Post Office on Friday, October 13. Voters can expect to receive the publication prior to the start of early voting. An electronic copy is available on our website (direct link is <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/VotingServices/SampleBallotVoterGuide.html>), along with a link to the SBE voter lookup tool where a voter can view an electronic copy of their ballot.

Precinct 13-24. In response to an inquiry about a change in leasing arrangements at the Holy Cross Resource Center, staff followed up to confirm that the facility will still be available as a polling place for the 2022 general election.

State Board of Elections

At its meeting on September 28, 2022, the State Board of Elections approved the allocation of additional ballot marking devices to specific polling places requested by Montgomery County.

Voter Registration

Monthly Statistical Report. The report for September was distributed to Board members on October 1, 2022. As of September 30, 2022, there were 681,531 active registered voters in Montgomery County and 75,994 inactive voters, for a total voter count of 757,525.

Vote by Mail Ballot Applications. As of October 12, 2022, staff of the Board of Elections had processed 124,104 applications for a Vote by Mail ballot for the 2022 Gubernatorial General Election. Approximately 63% of those requests are for permanent Vote by Mail and 15% are requests for a web delivery ballot.

Vote By Mail Ballots. Vote by Mail ballots for military and overseas citizens were mailed on September 24, 2022. Ballots for domestic voters were mailed by the State Board of Elections to voters in Montgomery County who have requested one beginning on September 29, 2022. As of October 13, 6,909 ballots had been returned, including 5,886 ballots that were mailed to voters and 1,023 ballots that were sent to voters electronically using web delivery and then returned by mail, drop box, or over the counter.

Ballot, Supply and Equipment Preparation. Inventory and packing of ballots for early voting sites and polling places is underway, with the first trucks scheduled to begin delivering to early voting sites on Friday, October 21. We ask that Board members be available to verify the supplies being delivered to early voting sites on October 20, the same day as the public test of the voting equipment, and for Election Day supply verification on November 3, 2022.

Personnel

Permanent positions. We are pleased to announce a promotion for Aarti Chumble, who has accepted a new position as an Office Services Coordinator with the Voter Services Division. In addition, we are pleased to announce that Mindy Williams, a Logistics Specialist with Community Use of Public Facilities, has accepted the position of Election Operations Manager and will be starting the position on October 24. Due to the key nature of this position, we obtained permission to fill the position through a temporary overage after the incumbent, Christine Rzeszut, announced plans to retire, and the position will be occupied by both individuals for a transition period.

Unfortunately, we must also announce that Lisa Jones, Information Technology Technician III, has resigned her position. Her duties are being performed by multiple permanent and temporary personnel and we have additional support in place from the State Board of Elections while we hire to fill the position, along with three newly created Information Technology Technician II positions in the department.

Temporary positions. The department currently has 74 temporary employees on the payroll, including seven new temporary "floater" positions hired to assist with flexible assignments in multiple areas.

Election Judge Training

As of October 14, we have trained Election Judges to fill 2,012 full-day positions and 276 half-day positions on Election Day. Training began on September 7 at our primary Fleet Management training

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location and will continue there until Election Day. Additional training was conducted at the Nancy Dacek Community Recreation Center in the second half of September, at the Silver Spring Civic Building in the first half of October, and is being conducted at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center in the second half of October. On October 24, 2022, we are also having a day of training classes specifically for high school students, because there is no school that day.

Website

The schedule for canvass dates and livestream links are available at 777vote.org (direct link is <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/2022PrimaryElection/general-ballot-canvass.html>).