

Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 18, 2023
MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
Virtual Board Meeting via Zoom

Attendance

Board Members:

David A. Naimon, President (virtual)
Daniel A. Koroma, Vice President (virtual)
Amoretta M. (Amie) Hoeber, Secretary (virtual)
Keyna I. Anyiam, Board Member (virtual)
Diane Nash Dillon, Board Member (virtual)
Margie C. Delao, Substitute Member (virtual)
Alexander C. Vincent, Substitute Member (virtual)

Board Attorney:

Kevin Karpinski (virtual)

In Person Staff Attendance:

Boris Brajkovic, Director
Janet Ross, IT Manager
Chris Rzeszut, Operations Manager
Charles (Chuck) Williams, Budget Specialist
Mindy Williams, Operations Manager
Lisa Merino-Dean, Administrative Specialist

A video of the meeting may be found on YouTube at the link below:

[December 18, 2023 Board Meeting - YouTube](#)

Convene Board Meeting (00:06)

Mr. Naimon opened the meeting with the entire Board membership present.

Board President's Remarks (00:28)

Mr. Naimon explained the limited Agenda for today's meeting and explained the need for the Board to meet in December, which it sometimes hasn't done in past years.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda (01:21)

Board members did not suggest any changes to the Agenda.

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions/Attendance at Fundraisers (02:46)

Board members did not report any campaign contributions or attendance at fundraisers.

Public Comments (02:36)

Mr. Michael Fletcher presented his comments to the Board that can be found [here](#).

In his comments, Mr. Fletcher asserted that there are discrepancies in the definitions of "blank ballots" in different State Board of Elections' (SBE) booklets and its website. He expressed his concerns that voters' rights would be infringed if tabulators are not counting ballots correctly. Mr. Fletcher suggested a hand count from a few tabulators and comparing results with the results obtained from the machines. Mr. Brajkovic suggested to Mr. Fletcher that he should contact SBE regarding any identified discrepancy in terminology on its website and documents. Mr. Brajkovic

added that the Montgomery County Board of Elections (BOE) completed and passed all legally required pre- and post-certification audits. He also explained the canvassing process followed in Montgomery County when voters do not return the entire ballot in their mail-in ballot envelope, pointing out that the Montgomery County BOE adds blank cards in those instances to make a complete set of cards for that ballot. Mr. Brajkovic also invited Mr. Fletcher to consider the number of ballot cards across different counties to make a complete comparison. Mr. Vincent suggested comparing the number of all votes cast in the gubernatorial contest with the total number of ballots cast to identify any potential differences.

Election Director's Report (31:42)

Mr. Brajkovic presented his report, which can be found [here](#).

Mr. Vincent asked for more information about the lease agreement for the sorting equipment. Mr. Brajkovic stated that the lease includes both the sorter and letter openers, and the annual costs also include maintenance and licensees. Additionally, the BOE will have the option to purchase the equipment for \$1 once the lease expires. Mr. Naimon emphasized the Board's diligence in regard to expenditures but also recognized the value of the sorting solution for the efficiency of the processes.

Board Attorney Report (44:50)

Mr. Karpinski reported that the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) for early voting sites have been sent to the facilities' representatives for review. He also added that MoUs with Montgomery College and MCPS regarding video surveillance of drop boxes and footage retention need to be completed. Mr. Karpinski informed the Board about an email from SBE's staff regarding the Board's adopted Bylaws. SBE staff compared the Montgomery County BOE's Bylaws against the SBE's Model Bylaws. Mr. Karpinski spoke to Assistant Attorney General, Dan Kobrin, and some minor corrections might be required without any substantive changes to the Bylaws that the Board recommended and voted on. He said that he suspects the bylaws will be approved during the SBE's January meeting.

Old Business (49:35)

Mr. Naimon informed the Board that he transmitted the list of legislative suggestions approved by the Board at its last meeting to the Chairs and Vice-Chair of Montgomery County House and Senate Delegation and the members of all relevant legislative committees from Montgomery County. The very last item brought up by Mr. Vincent at the last meeting was left off the list, as Mr. Naimon and Mr. Vincent concluded that the Board would need more information and more data from the 2024 elections to make a case to legislators why the Board should have an ability to decide on the number and locations of the polling places on Election Day.

Website (52:25)

Mr. Brajkovic presented a statistical report on BOE's website usage in November and the full statistical report can be found [here](#).

Outreach (55:05)

Mr. Brajkovic reported that the December/January Outreach Calendar was provided to the Board, and it could be found [here](#). He explained reduced engagement with the schools due to the holiday season and wished happy holidays and thanked all counterparts who helped organize more than 220 outreach events in 2023. Mr. Brajkovic informed the Board about the BOE's cooperation with the SBE to provide election-related messaging on the video monitors at all MVA locations.

New Business (56:10)**Polling place changes for 2024 Election Cycle**

Mr. Brajkovic presented the staff proposal for a polling place change for precinct 04-34. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

The presentation included options to either combine or consolidate the precinct with precinct 04-19 at the Candlewood Elementary School. The staff recommended consolidation of precincts 04-34 and 04-19. Ms. Dillon stated that she does not support consolidation of precincts in one polling place when there is a viable option to separate them into two separate locations and asked for the reasoning for the staff's proposal to consolidate two precincts in one room. Mr. Brajkovic explained that the rationale is based on the voting process and Election Day turnout numbers, and the desire to avoid unnecessary delays for voters. Mr. Koroma asked for an explanation on a voter's journey in a consolidated polling place and Mr. Brajkovic explained all the steps that a voter would take to vote in a consolidated polling place. Ms. Hoerber asked about the gym layout for a consolidated polling place and the financial impact of consolidating two polling places into one. Mr. Brajkovic confirmed that a cost reduction is expected due to fewer election judges being needed.

Mr. Naimon moved to support the staff's recommendation for precinct 04-34, and Mr. Koroma seconded. Mr. Naimon spoke in favor of the motion, indicating that the voters' experience and the positive financial impact make it the right decision. He added that the recommendation places the polling place closer to the voters, in a public building within the precinct as legally required, saves money, and saves labor. Mr. Vincent asked if the change would be in violation of House Bill 410. Mr. Brajkovic responded that SBE has been notified about upcoming adjustments to the polling place plan and staff does not anticipate any problems due to the validity of the explanation for the change. The motion was unanimously approved.

List Future Action Items form Today's Meeting (01:25:15)

- Explanation of the sorter solution lease agreements.

Mr. Naimon added that the Election Director is working with him, the Board Attorney, and staff to prepare a draft canvass plan for the 2024 Primary election canvass that starts on April 22, 2024.

Future Meetings (01:27:48)

January 22, 2024. A virtual Board meeting to be held at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment (1:28:28)

At 4:30 p.m., Mr. Naimon adjourned the Board meeting.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD


David A. Naimon
Board President