Montgomery County Board of Elections

Election Director's Report – July 2024

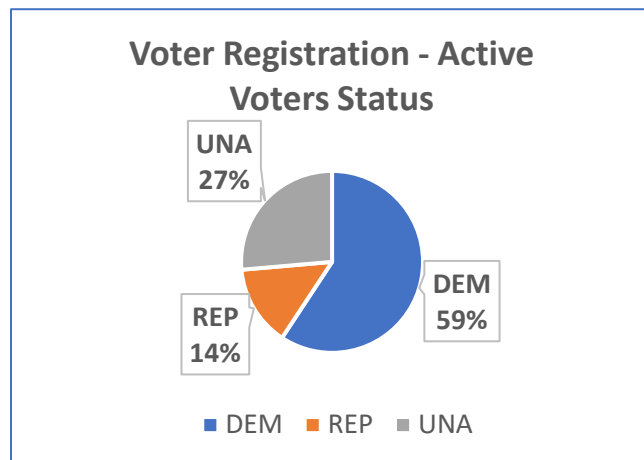**Notice and Distribution of Materials**

Draft minutes of the June 17, 2024, Board meeting were distributed to the Board members on July 8, 2024.

The Agenda for the July 15, 2024, Board meeting was posted on the Board of Elections website on July 9, 2024, and shared with the Board members.

The Director's Report, the Expenditure Tracking Report, and meeting materials were shared with the Board members and posted on the website on July 11, 2024.

Voter Registration Statistics:

The Voter Registration Monthly Statistical Report for June 2024 was distributed to the Board members on July 1, 2024, and published on the BOE's website. As of the end of June 2024, there were 684,032 active registered voters in Montgomery County and 69,014 inactive voters, for a total voter count of 753,046.
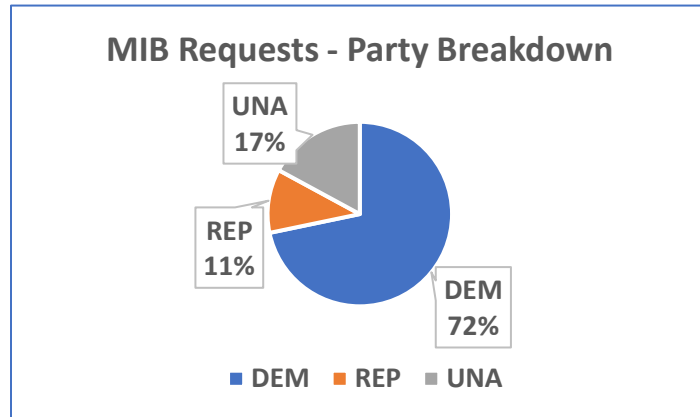

Voter Registration – Active Voters Status:

DEM: 405,476

REP: 98,097

UNA / Other Parties: 180,459

State Board of Elections (SBE):

On July 8, 2024, the State Board of Election sent out notifications to the voters who are on the permanent mail-in voting list. In Montgomery County, there are currently 110,814 voters on the permanent mail-in voting list. The total number of voters who have already requested a mail-in ballot for the 2024 Presidential General election is 135,885.

MIB Requests - Party Breakdown

UNA 17%

REP 11%

DEM 72%

■ DEM ■ REP ■ UNA

Party Breakdown:

DEM: 97,470

REP: 15,182

UNA / Other Parties: 12,233

As SBE postponed the project to replace the pollbooks, BOE received 638 tablets that were funded earlier as a replacement for the legacy pollbooks. Staff is exploring options to utilize the majority of the tablets for its operational purposes (real-time updates from roamers) and at the polling places (communication with the Chief Judges, updates, and upload of digital version of otherwise printed materials).

Personnel

Permanent positions:

After serving on the BOE Team for 17 years, Ms. Chris Rzeszut retired effective July 1, 2024. Over the course of her fruitful career, Ms. Rzeszut held a number of mission-critical positions with BOE, the most notable of which were Operations Manager and, as of 2023, Recruitment Manager.

Staff is working with the Office of Human Resources (OHR) to advertise the Vote By Mail Program Manager I position. Currently, OHR is upgrading its platform and the vacancy ad will be publicly posted once the platform is operational.

The ad for the Deputy Election Director position remains open until filled.

Temporary positions:

While the number of the onboarded temporary team members peaked around election day, the overall number has been reduced in the post-election period. However, petition processing and post-election list maintenance required a significant number of temporary staff to remain in the office to assist with the tasks. Additionally, the team is preparing for the Presidential General

election which will trigger a gradual increase of the number of temporary team members in the upcoming period.

Budget

The shared Expenditure Tracking Report reflects the approved Fiscal Year 2024 Budget and the Department's overall spending for the fiscal year 2024. Both historically and per the calendar of election tasks, most expenditures were accrued in the last quarter of the fiscal year, and some invoices will be paid in July 2024. The two highest remaining payments for the Fiscal Year 24 are the end-of-the-year State Board of Elections bill and stipends for Montgomery County volunteers who served as election workers in the 2024 Presidential Primary election.

The Board meeting packet also includes the Budget / Expenditure Report for the fiscal year 2025 as approved by the County Council in the amount of $17,141,137. The FY25 budget contains several enhancements, including an additional $70,000 funding for Outreach Media activities.

Board of Elections voter communication efforts

Staff cooperated with the MVA and SBE to arrange for Montgomery County specific ads to be presented on the TV screens at the four MVA locations in the county. The advertisement opportunity will be used to promote all key BOE messages in the run-up to the 2024 Presidential General Election.

Sections' Activities

Voter Services

On June 13, 2024, the Montgomery County Board of Elections received over 12,000 signatures collected by the Committee For Better Government for the petition to amend the County Charter of Montgomery County, Maryland to bar any County Executive from serving more than two full or partial consecutive terms of office.

On June 20, 2024, the Committee for Better Government completed its Petition Fund Report and filed it with the Maryland State Board of Elections, which was a prerequisite for the Montgomery County Board of Elections to start validating submitted signatures.

On Friday, July 5, 2024, the Montgomery County Board of Elections completed the verification of 12,130 petition signatures submitted by the Committee for Better Government. The Board of Election processed each submitted signature as per legal requirements and determined that:

- 9,374 submitted petition signatures were validated and

- 2,756 submitted signatures were rejected.

The Petition must have 10,000 validated signatures for the question to appear on the 2024 General Election ballot. The Committee for Better Government has until July 29, 2024, to submit additional petition signatures to the Board of Elections for validation.

The Committee for Better Government has notified BOE that they plan to submit another 6,800 signatures on Friday, July 12, 2024.

The Voter Registration Team's focus in the reporting period was on processing the petition signatures within the legal deadline. Currently, the Team is processing a backlog of online and paper voter registration requests and updates that have been generated since the voter registration closed before the election day. The Team is processing around 40,000 voter registration requests and updates. Additionally, as a part of its regular list maintenance, the team has processed 15,608 updates received through ERIC – Electronic Registration Information Center. The Voter Registration Team also processed updates from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and the Administrative Officer of the Court (AOC).

Vote By Mail Team is processing incoming requests for mail-in ballots for the 2024 General election and/or all future elections and processing returned mail (applications, vote-by-mail ballots, and sample ballots). The Team already processed 570 requests for cancellation of the mail-in ballots for either 2024 Presidential General election or all future elections that voters completed at Early Voting Centers and Election Day Polling Places.

The Voter Services Team, as all other BOE Teams, is preparing for the General Election.

IT / Training Section

IT Staff is completing Post Election Maintenance (PEM) on the allocated voting equipment as directed by SBE. IT Staff will begin PEM on the allocated electronic pollbooks once the voting equipment PEM is completed.

The IT Manager is continuing to work with the Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) department on software enhancements to the Election Worker and Future Vote portals. In addition, the IT Manager and TEBS have begun developing the software requirements for the internal modules of the Election Resource Management System which will be implemented for the 2026 election cycle.

Training staff developing classes for the election workers who attended training for the Primary Election and updating forms and documentation in preparation for the 2024 Presidential General Election.

Operations Section

The Operations team has begun processing supply and print job orders for the General Election and continues to prepare unvoted ballots for shredding.

Staff are making site visits to various polling locations as a follow up to election worker feedback.

Recruitment and Election Support

The Recruitment Team concluded processing payroll for Election Workers who served in the 2024 Presidential Primary election and service stipends were mailed to the election workers in late June.

The Recruitment Team continues to process received applications from voters who are interested in serving as election workers in the General Election and assists election workers with the EJ Connection Portal. The training and staffing of Election Workers will begin in August.

Meetings / Events

The Maryland State Election Administrator Jared DeMarinis, Deputy State Election Administrator Katherine Berry, Director of Candidacy and Campaign Finance Allen Norfleet, and Director of Mail-in voting Jennifer McLaughlin, accompanied a staff delegation from the State Department of Legislative Services (DLS) who visited Montgomery County BOE on July 8, 2024.   The visit is a regular practice for both SBE and DLS but it was the first such a visit to Montgomery County BOE. The meeting and subsequent tour of the building enabled a conversation on operational needs in terms of space, time and staff needed to complete the ongoing tasks, such as petition, list maintenance, processing of mail-in ballots, storing and preparation of election equipment, and supplies, and preparation for the upcoming election.