

BOARD MEETING
BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
NOVEMBER 16, 2023

The meeting of the Baltimore City Board of Elections was held at the Baltimore City Board of Elections Warehouse at 301 N. Franklintown Road, Baltimore MD 21223

IN ATTENDANCE:

BOARD MEMBERS

Scherod Barnes, Board President
Terrence Threweatt Jr, Board Vice President
Hope Williams, Board Member
Maria Vismale, Board Member

ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

Thomas Chapman

STAFF

Abigail Goldman, Election Deputy Director

GUEST

Senator Antonio Hayes

ON PHONE

Sam Novey, Secretary

ABSENT

Armstead B. Crawley Jones, Sr., Election Director

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Scherod Barnes, Board President.

Mr. Threweatt asked about issues he asked to be included on the agenda including concerns about the Farring-Baybrook Early Vote site and following relevant state laws about community impact studies for new voting locations. Mr. Barnes added these items to the New Business part of the agenda. Mr. Barnes also added an agenda item regarding Senator Hayes' proposal for a new Early Voting Location in at the BCCC location in West Baltimore.

Mr. Threweatt made a motion to approve the agenda which was seconded by Ms. Williams. The motion passed. A declaration of quorum was made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Williams made a motion to accept the minutes from the [October 26, 2023 Baltimore City Board of Elections meeting](#) which was seconded by Mr. Threweatt. The motion passed.

BOARD PRESIDENT REMARKS

Mr. Barnes said many items for this month needed to be discussed during an executive session later in the meeting. Mr. Barnes also said Mr. Novey will be sharing a copy of a name badge for board members to wear.

ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT (delivered by Deputy Director in absence of the Election Director):

Ms. Goldman shared that the election staff was reviewing plans for their new office. She also shared that the warehouse staff were testing equipment for use in the 2024 election.

She shared that the office is focused on processing ballot measure and candidate petitions coming in from the field. She said she expects the volume of this type of work to increase significantly in the coming weeks.

Ms. Goldman also shared that contracts have gone out to polling place site owners and that many have come back. She said that precincts would not be assigned until city council redistricting is complete after Thanksgiving.

Ms. Goldman shared an update on the recruitment of Election Judges. She said Ms. Sabrina Graves is leading the process and has started confirming some judges for 2024. She also said that she had hoped to have the Schaefer Center at UB back as a training site but that they have turned us down at this time. Training will be conducted by the Baltimore City Board of Elections Staff at the Forum and at Mt Pleasant Ministries.

Ms. Williams asked a question regarding the delay in assigning polling places. Ms. Goldman clarified that polling places are being confirmed but it is not yet confirmed which precincts will be assigned to them. Voters will only need to be notified if the polling place itself changes.

Ms. Williams also asked for clarification regarding how the board and community can get more awareness regarding how to sign up as an Election Judge. Ms. Goldman clarified that the election judge application form is available online and that the election staff will share updates with the board on the date and time of the trainings.

Mr. Threweatt asked for clarification regarding how polling place changes are communicated to the public. Ms. Goldman shared that there is an email list for people to sign up for to get notified of polling place changes. Ms. Williams followed up to clarify how the public would find out about this list and these changes. Mr. Barnes

suggested that we could put these in the newsletter to make sure that the members of the central committees receive the information.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Williams made a motion to have the board draft a letter and have board secretary Sam Novey send it to the Mayor, Comptroller, and City Council to introduce the new board members, inform them of our priorities as the Baltimore City Board of Elections, and seek their support in getting the Election Director the information they need in a timely manner and getting the office relocated. The motion was seconded by Mr. Threweatt.

Mr. Barnes clarified that Ms. Williams would draft the letter. Mr. Chapman clarified that in order for the whole board to approve the letter it would need to be reviewed at the December board meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Threweatt brought up that the election code requires the election staff to provide voter impact studies to communities experiencing a polling place change. Mr. Chapman and Mr. Goldman clarified that the board needs to notify communities 14 days before considering a proposal to change a polling site.

Mr. Barnes presented the letter from Senator Hayes proposing a new Early Voting Location at the BCCC campus in West Baltimore. Mr. Goldman clarified that the location would require approval from the State and City Board of Elections, Mayor, and City Council. Mr. Barnes asked for a motion approving the creation of an early voting site at the Liberty Road campus of Baltimore City Community College contingent on the approval of the Mayor and City Council and all other necessary bodies. Ms. Williams made this motion. Mr. Threweatt made the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Threweatt to enter closed session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Williams and passed unanimously. (See the attached Closing Statement.) Present during the closed session were Mr. Barnes; Mr. Threweatt; Mr. Novey (by teleconference); Ms. Williams; Ms. Vismale; Assistant Attorney General Chapman; Deputy Election Director Goldman; and Election Program Manager II Lisa Stanley. During the closed session, the Board discussed, and received legal advice on, a matter involving leave, compensation, and acting capacity status for specific individuals. The Board unanimously appointed Deputy Director Goldman as Acting Election Director and Ms. Stanley as Acting Deputy Election Director for the duration of Director Jones's leave of absence. The Board then returned to open session.

ADDITIONAL NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Barnes clarified that the December board meeting would be December 20th at 11 am.

Mr. Threweatt asked about the next Performance Evaluation for the Election Director. Mr. Barnes clarified that this would occur in January asked whether it would be fair to the interim director to do a performance evaluation given that Mr. Jones had been on FMLA during some of the period under review. Mr. Barnes said he would welcome any comments from other board members regarding the PEP.

Mr. Barnes instructed Mr. Novey to work with Mr. Chapman on the appropriate format for the notes on the closed session.

Senator Antonio Hayes arrived and spoke regarding his letter to establish an early voting location at the BCCC Liberty Road Campus. He shared his concern that while each legislative district has at least one early voting site, the University of Maryland Baltimore site mostly attracts voters from District 46 despite being located in District 40. Senator Hayes shared that he has heard consistently from constituents that Baltimore City needs an early voting location in the heart of West Baltimore and that BCCC has stepped up to offer to host the site.

Mr. Barnes thanked Senator Hayes for coming on behalf of the board and shared the board had unanimously approved a motion to establish this early voting location with the understanding that the city council, mayor, and state board of elections all still need to sign off. Senator Hayes shared that there would be a proposal in the city council next week and that he was working on getting a resolution in front of the board of estimates as well.

Mr. Barnes made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Williams seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 pm.

Approved at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting.