

**2018 Gubernatorial General Election
Operations -- Summary Report
Board of Elections, Montgomery County, MD
March 18, 2019**

The November 2018 General Election proved to be busy--turnout matched anticipated expectations and the Operations staff was prepared. Various Primary post-election resources such as Polling Place Evaluations, voter comment cards and Election Judge reports were reviewed. Based on these results, staff adjusted where appropriate for the upcoming General Election and the overall 2018 General voter comments confirmed the staff mission—a successful, safe election. Ninety-three percent of the voters polled said their voting experience was completely satisfactory. Polling Place Support volunteers noted “although the turnout was heavy, most polling places were well laid out and operating smoothly.”

The Operations group manages multiple functions including candidate filing; ballot preparation--proofing, ordering and distribution; precinct boundaries, mapping and polling place site selection; communications with each site; polling place supply packing and distribution; the Polling Place Support Program; and delivery and retrieval of voting equipment and supplies. Along with providing Montgomery County voters a well-organized election, the Operations staff severed 190 candidates, 236 polling places and 11 Early Voting Centers while safeguarding the integrity of the election.

Candidate Filing:

Because of the new Public Funding program (managed by the State Board of Elections) and the opportunity to file and run for many open contests, a significant number of County residents were interested in filing or at least curious about the candidate filing process. The number of filings in the 2014 Gubernatorial Election was 134 with a contrast of 190 filings in 2018. The staff fielded a great number of questions through meetings in the office with potential candidates, telephone conversations and emails.

Supply Warehouse:

The major focus for the warehouse staff during the General Election was managing the unprecedented number of ballots needed to accommodate the projected turnout. The ballot consisted of three pages and 919,300 ballots were ordered which equates to 2.75 million pieces of paper. The project was historically unparalleled in this Agency; however, with organization and a team dedicated to ballot accounting, an accurate complement of ballots was packed and delivered to the appropriate voting locations. Also, an issue arose during the General ballot preparation when it was discovered that the perforation between the stub and the ballot on some ballots was not allowing a clean separation. Through testing of ballots printed, the Director made the determination that cutting the stubs off the ballot would be consistent throughout the polling locations and render ballot distribution at the polls easier and faster. Staff members proceeded to remove the stubs and Election Judges were appreciative. Not separating the stubs from the ballots at the polls decreased the time needed to issue a ballot.

Supply verification is also a critical process in the warehouse. During each election cycle, three formal, independent verifications are conducted by the Supply Warehouse Manager, BOE Administrators and members of the Board to ensure that both Early Voting Centers and Election Day polling places receive the materials necessary for the conduct of the election. The verification process maximizes the ability to equip each polling location with the correct materials.

Polling Places:

The June 2018 Primary Election was challenged with numerous changes to the polling place list because the Montgomery County Public Schools system uses the summer months to preform small maintenance and construction projects. After the list of schools was reviewed by MCPS, the Board of Elections was notified of the unavailability of 26 school facilities during the summer maintenance period. This meant a change for some voters; however, with multiple voter notifications, most voters were aware of their polling place change and arrived at the right precinct, polling place. The changes remained in place for the General. Note most of these changed locations will return to their original location in the 2020 Elections.

An accessibility issue that was concerning during the Primary Election was the distance traveled by voters with mobility issues and was addressed for the General Election. Remedial action was implemented. A rest area was designated along the pathway in polling places where the Election Judges felt the distance to walk was too far.

Equipment Delivery:

With the loss of the Kane Company in 2016, the State initiated new contracts with Maryland moving companies. Montgomery County was served well by two of the State contractors. Able Moving delivered the voting equipment and JK Movers delivered the pollbooks and retrieved the blue ballot bins containing voted ballots on election night. Both entities were attentive and realized the sensitivity of the voting equipment and materials. Equipment was delivered and retrieved efficiently.

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