

# Montgomery County Board of Elections

## Acting Election Director's Report – June 2022

### Notice and Distribution of Materials

Draft minutes were provided to the Board on June 16, 2022. The agenda for the meeting was posted to the website and circulated to the Board on June 23, 2022. The acting director's report and budget report were provided to the Board on June 23, 2022, and will be posted to the website on June 24, 2022.

### Action Items from Previous Meetings

**Changes to the Ballot.** By request of the Board, the acting director inquired with the State Board of Elections about the mechanism by which a change could be made to reflect candidate preferences for the listing of their name on the ballot prior to staff signoff on the final proofs, but after the legal filing deadline. The response of the State Administrator was that corrections can only be made to reflect the information on the legally filed paperwork.

**Canvass Schedule and Signup.** A signup form for Board members to indicate their availability for the canvass was circulated on June 16, 2022, and a copy of the tentative canvass schedule consistent with the dates circulated is attached to this report.

Due to the gubernatorial veto of Senate Bill 163, it will not be possible to conduct a canvass of ballots prior to Election Day and no Vote by Mail ballot will be opened or counted until Thursday, July 21, at the earliest. Additional dates of the canvass may be required, depending on turnout, but it remains the goal of the staff for the Board to be able to certify the election by August 12, 2022.

The canvass will be conducted at the Bioscience Education Center at Montgomery College, rather than at Watkins Mill High School as previously intended, due to a scheduling conflict for MCPS. While a quorum may be established virtually, staff recommends that at least one Board member from each party attend in person.

**Vote by Mail Requests by Party.** By request of the Board, this report includes current information on the breakdown of ballot requests by party. Charts illustrating this and other information are in the Voter Services section of this report. As of June 22, 2022, Montgomery County has processed 71,675 applications for a Vote by Mail ballot from registered Democrats; 9,552 applications from registered Republicans; and 4,544 applications from voters who are unaffiliated or are registered with another political party. The State Board of Elections has begun providing this information on their website, under Election Data and Reports > 2020 Gubernatorial Primary Election Reports.

**Drop Boxes.** On June 8, information on the installation schedule for the drop boxes was provided to Board members at their request. Drop boxes were installed during the first week of June and daily pickup of ballots began on Monday, June 6. Concerns about the placement of the drop box at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park were resolved by placing the box near the front entrance to the building. Arrangements have been made at county expense for video surveillance at each site and for retention of the video for the full 22 months that is the standard document retention period for election materials. An executive session is scheduled by request of the Board for staff to provide an update on the security of drop boxes and the use of surveillance video.

**Sample Ballot.** The sample ballot was mailed to all registered voters over the weekend of June 18. It includes proposed changes from Board members, including information about the event accommodation at the Silver Spring Civic Building that will limit the use of the Great Hall on the first days of early voting.

**Silver Spring Civic Building.** As requested by the Board, the sample ballot notes that voting will occur at that location from the first day of early voting through Sunday, July 10, in the activity rooms on the upper level of the building. Staff is considering other public information efforts to minimize wait times and concerns for voters who are accustomed to having ample space for weekend voting at this location.

**Germantown Community Recreation Center.** Although there was discussion in the May meeting of a change potentially being required at the Germantown Community Recreation Center, the intended roof work has been rescheduled and will not affect early voting.

### **State Board of Elections**

At its meeting on June 23, 2022, the State Board of Elections approved regulations allowing for the first ballot to be counted in circumstances where a voter casts both an absentee and a provisional ballot. In addition, the State Board approved a regulation providing for the use of electronic forms of identification and proof of residency when required at the polls.

### **FY22 Budget**

Year to date expenditures as of June 23, 2022, are \$6,605,786.83. The total budget for FY22 is \$8,300,356, which leaves \$1,694,569.17 in remaining funds for the fiscal year. Once the amount of the fourth quarter invoice from the State Board of Elections is known, staff will be in a better position to project either a deficit or a surplus. Significant operating budget expenditures remain to be made in the month of June or after July 1, for goods and services received prior to the end of the fiscal year but not invoiced until July.

### **FY23 Budget**

There were no changes made by the Council to the County Executive's recommended budget for the department in the amount of \$10,630,327, an increase of \$2,329,971 or 28.07 percent from the FY22 approved budget. Personnel costs are 43.58 percent of the budget, and the budget anticipates moving three temporary positions to permanent in Information Technology, for a total of 32 full-time positions and two part-time positions. The number of full-time equivalent positions in the department, including temporary personnel, is unchanged at 56.35 FTEs.

### **Voter Registration**

**Monthly statistics.** The Monthly Statistical Report for April was distributed to Board members on June 1, 2022. As of May 31, there were 674,603 active registered voters in Montgomery County and 73,855 inactive voters, for a total voter count of 748,458.

**Vote By Mail.** The State Board of Elections began mailing Vote by Mail applications to registered voters affiliated with the Democratic and Republican parties on February 1, 2022. Applications were mailed to voters affiliated with another political party or who are unaffiliated during the first week of June.

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As of June 22, 2022, the staff of the Board of Elections have processed 85,771 applications for a vote by mail ballot for the 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Election. Approximately two thirds of those requests are for permanent Vote by Mail and 13% are for web delivery ballots. Charts illustrating the breakdown of vote by mail ballot applications and ballots by type are attached to this report.

**Ballot sorting equipment.** On Thursday, June 23, 2022, the new high speed envelope sorting equipment was used for the first time on ballots received for the 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Election. The first run was successful and allowed for ballot receipt data to be collected automatically, rather than staff being required to use a handheld scanner and keyboard to accept each ballot.

**Personnel**

**Permanent positions.** The positions of Election Director and Election Operations Manager have been advertised and remain open until filled. Interviews are currently being conducted for an Office Services Coordinator position and two additional positions, for a Management and Budget Specialist and an additional Office Services Coordinator, remain vacant.

**Temporary positions.** The department currently has 69 temporary employees on the payroll, an increase of 6 temporary employees since last month. Interviews are ongoing for temporary positions throughout the department. Our current emphasis is on interviewing and onboarding employees for the Board's onsite call center to address peak customer service demand.

**Election Judge Recruitment and Training**

Election Judge recruitment continues to be a major emphasis for the election, as it is for every gubernatorial primary election. It is a particular concern this year, as staffing shortages are an issue across sectors of the economy and throughout the public sector and Montgomery County government. As of June 19, 2022, 1,804 had completed all training requirements and an additional 221 Election Judges were scheduled for training, for a total of 2,025 Election Judges. In the past, we have recruited between a low of 2,253 Election Judges (for the 2014 gubernatorial primary election) and a high of 3,556 Election Judges (for the 2016 presidential general election).

To keep class sizes small, the Board staff strives to have prospective Election Judges attend training as early as possible, but larger classes are always necessary as the election approaches and many of those who wish to serve sign up for last-minute training. The ability to offer training classes during early voting is reduced, as many of the trainers manage early voting sites.

As funds were provided for an Election Judge stipend increase in the FY23 budget, stipends are being increased by \$20 for this election.

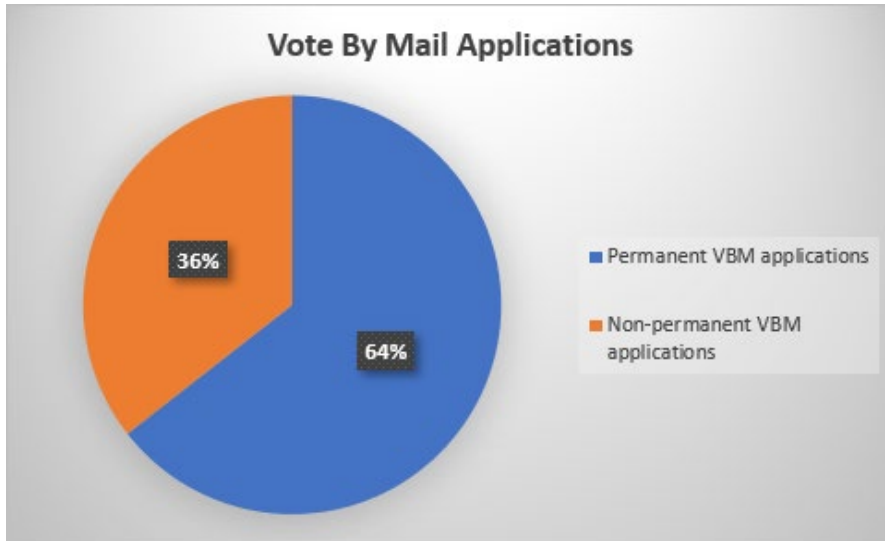
**Website**

Information on drop box locations has been added to the Board's website at [777vote.org](http://777vote.org).

as of June 22, 2022

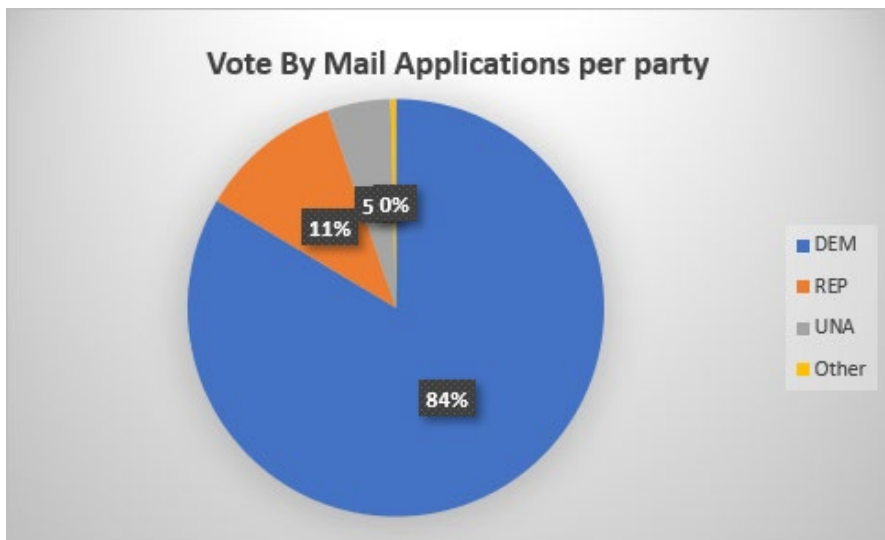
**Vote By Mail Applications by permanent/non-permanent:**

Permanent VBM applications	55,280
Non-permanent VBM applications	30,491
TOTAL received Vote By Mail applications:	85,771
TOTAL:	85,771



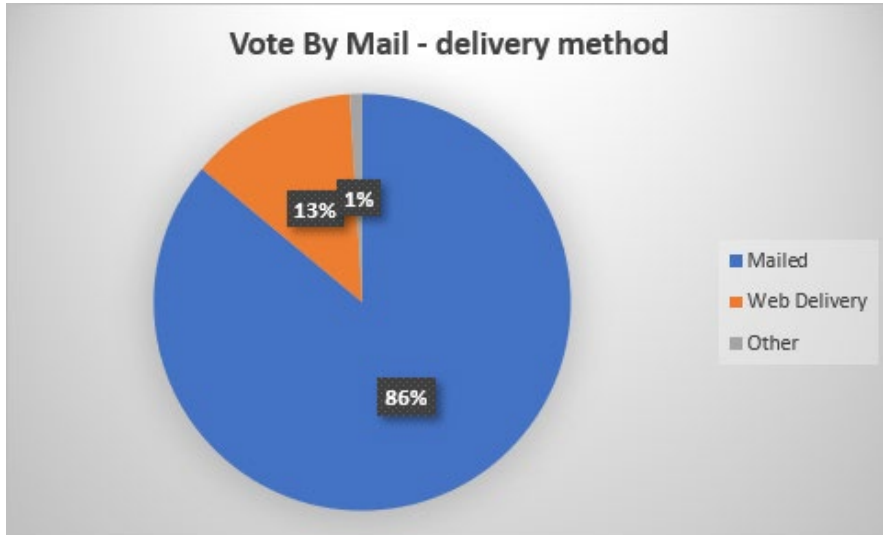
**Vote By Mail Applications by party:**

DEM:	71,675
REP:	9,552
UNA:	4,203
Other:	341
TOTAL:	85,771



**Vote By Mail ballots by delivery method:**

Mailed:	73,811
Web Delivery:	11,141
Other:	819
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>85,771</b>



**Vote by Mail ballots by mode of receipt:**

Drop Boxes	1,736
Mail	2,631
Nursing Homes	206
In-person	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,613</b>

