

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, October 16, 2023**  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
**Virtual Board Meeting via Zoom**

**In 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)

**Staff:**

Boris Brajkovic, Election Director (in person)  
Chris Rzeszut, Operations Manager (in person)  
Mindy Williams, Operations Manager (virtual)  
Laletta Dorsey, Acting Manager – Voter Services (in person)  
Lisa Merino-Dean, Administrative Specialist (in person)  
Thomas Chuck Williams, Administrative Specialist Finance (in-person)

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

<https://youtu.be/H7U4ymRqBf8?si=z5b0wwOYpnpAyD>

**Convene as the Board of Canvassers (00:00:06)**

Mr. Naimon opened the meeting of the Board of Canvassers, with a quorum of returning Board members present. Mr. Brajkovic presented two domestic untimely 2022 Gubernatorial General election mail-in ballots received in September 2023 (ballots were returned by voters with registered residency in Silver Spring and Bethesda). Neither ballot had a date when envelopes were signed.

Mr. Naimon asked that Mr. Brajkovic contact the Postmaster to find out more information about the untimely mail in ballots.

Ms. Hoeber moved to reject the untimely ballots, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dillon and passed unanimously.

**Additions/Changes to the Agenda (00:05:46)**

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

**Board President's Remarks (00:06:02)**

Mr. Naimon stated that the social media policy discussion, initially expected to be discussed today, will be instead discussed during the November Board meeting.

He added that he has appointed Ms. Delao and Mr. Vincent to be on the Board's Budget Committee and thanked them both for being willing and able to serve in that capacity.

Mr. Naimon noted that last month the Board voted on the staff's recommendation to use the 14 early voting sites previously used in 2022, including changes to the larger rooms in some early voting centers. The recommendation has been transmitted to the County Executive and the County Council. Mr. Dale Tibbitts, of the County Executive staff, has notified the Board that the Executive supports the Board's recommendation, but it has not yet been scheduled for discussion by the County Council. Mr. Naimon indicated that he has been in touch with different people, both in the Executive staff and in the Council staff, regarding this matter.

**Public Comments (00:08:42)**

Mr. Michael Fletcher addressed the Board to discuss his concerns with the election process. Mr. Fletcher said that the National Change of Address (NCOA) database showed 27,813 people were on the county registration list even though they had moved out of Maryland. He also discussed his concerns with blank ballots. His full comments can be found [here](#).

Mr. Brajkovic responded that he reviewed 500 records from the data that Mr. Fletcher provided and researched records with NCOA data that indicated changes in 2018 and 2019. The research indicated that the voters were not on inactive status as voters provided a change of address, or returned updated voter notification cards, or notified the Board that their mailing address had changed but not their residence (for example students or military personnel).

Mr. Brajkovic addressed the blank ballots and reminded those in attendance that for the 2022 General Election there were 6 pages spread over 3 cards for the Montgomery County ballot. He indicated that the terminology is the issue as, for instance, if you vote every contest on the first and second card and don't vote a single race on the third card, the third card would be counted as a blank ballot, while it's a blank card within a ballot.

To get a better understanding, he referred Mr. Fletcher to look at the State Board of Elections' (SBE) website under the number of ballots that were cast and received.

Mr. Naimon asked that Mr. Brajkovic contact SBE to inquire if the terminology can be changed to be more precise.

Mr. Koroma asked if the term blank ballot only applies to voting paper ballots and if it is the same for electronic voting machines. Mr. Brajkovic will follow up.

Patrick Sasu addressed the Board to support ballot drop boxes being located on the three Montgomery College campuses. His full comments can be found [here](#).

Schnell Reed Garrett, Service-Learning Coordinator and member of the MC Votes Committee at Montgomery College, testified in support of adding ballot boxes to the 3 Montgomery College campuses. She noted that the drop boxes would increase voter participation.

Mr. Mark Pace, Transportation Manager at Montgomery College, joined the conversation and provided statistics for students who don't drive. Montgomery College representatives and Board members further discussed the placement of the ballot drop boxes at each campus site.

Adam Reed, Director of Public Safety, joined the conversation and confirmed the existence of video surveillance for the suggested locations for three drop boxes and legally required footage retention.

#### **Ballot Drop Box Locations 1:15:56**

The Board discussed the State Board of Elections' (SBE) required deadline to submit ballot drop locations, and the legal requirement for 22 months retention of video recording/footage. The Board discussed the information Montgomery College representatives shared.

#### **Election Director's Report 01:32:19**

Mr. Brajkovic reviewed his Director's report. The full report can be found [here](#).

Mr. Vincent thanked staff for providing a breakdown on some of the requested items listed on the budget spreadsheet. He asked for clarification on the allotted funds for stipends for election workers. Mr. Brajkovic stated that the previous budgeted amount was \$1.4 million, and that amount was increased to meet the requirements set in House Bill 1200, legally requiring the increase of election worker pay from \$180 to \$250 per day for service during early voting and Election Day and that returning election workers be paid an additional \$100. Additional funds were requested, and the County Executive and County Council approved the increase, now totaling \$2.2 million for stipends for election workers.

Ms. Hoeber and Mr. Naimon thanked Mr. Brajkovic for a very good and very efficient Director's report.

#### **Board Attorney' Report 01:49:28**

Mr. Karpinski reported that he has drafted Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for facilities that have been proposed for Early Voting locations. They will be further reviewed with the Election Director, and they are expected to be completed in November.

He added that Mr. Brajkovic has emailed a letter agreement to the municipalities where ballot drop boxes will be placed.

On October 20, 2023, Mr. Karpinski will meet with Stephanie Williams, MCPS General Legal Counsel, to review the legal documents that need to be in place for the drop boxes so that they can be installed at high schools.

The Bylaws passed by the Board have been submitted to SBE staff and are to be presented to the State Board. In addition, Mr. Naimon's Open Meetings Compliance Act Training Certificate was also provided to SBE.

Mr. Naimon inquired if the BOE will have MOUs for every Early Voting and Drop Box locations. Mr. Karpinski confirmed and added that every location that has a drop box will need to affirmatively agree that they understand that the drop box will be under 24/7 video surveillance and that there is a retention schedule required under Federal law that needs to be satisfied.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Board Approval of Legal Descriptions of Precinct's boundaries 01:53:48**

Mr. Brajkovic stated that staff has prepared 76 legal descriptions due to redistricting, adding that the legal descriptions were posted to the Board of Elections' (BoE) website for public comments. All legal descriptions are required to be signed by Board members.

Mr. Koroma moved to approve the legal descriptions prepared by staff, the motion was seconded by Ms. Anyiam and unanimously approved.

#### **Polling Place Changes for 2024 Election Cycle 02:00:47**

Mr. Brajkovic presented the staff proposal for 2024 polling places. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

Mr. Vincent moved to accept the staff's recommended polling place changes for the 5 locations presented for the 2024 election cycle. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hoeber and passed unanimously.

Mr. Naimon stated that he is absolutely thrilled that there is only a small number of changes. He added that the changes are actually changes back to original locations, and that in almost all these cases, voters will be closer to their polling places.

#### **Website 02:10:15**

Mr. Brajkovic reported that the department is working with Technology Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) County agency to renovate the BOE's website.

He provided some statistics on usage of the BOE's website, with the plan to provide the information to the Board monthly.

- Number of page views: 7,388
- Number of active users: 3,267
- Average engagement time: 1 minute and 4 seconds
- Number of engaged sessions lasting more than 10 seconds had 2 or more screen/views: 2,671
- Home page: 2,944 views
- Job Descriptions: 425 views
- Elections/SBE Calendar: 294 views
- Board Meeting Documents: 293 views

Ms. Anyiam asked if the department is trying to achieve more voter engagements, better voter turnout, and increase the time voters engage on the website. Mr. Brajkovic responded that there are multiple goals, while the ultimate goal is to be the sole provider of the accurate information to every registered voter in addition to engaging voters.

#### **Outreach 02:19:18**

Mr. Brajkovic reported that the October/November outreach calendar was provided to the Board in advance. The outreach calendar can be found [here](#).

He added that BOE is intensifying engagement with private and public High Schools and that staff has been very busy with outreach events.

Mr. Naimon stated that there have been a number of board-initiated outreach activities, many of which have been attended by staff and they have done an outstanding job in doing so.

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Naimon was a guest speaker at an event with Indivisible Montgomery, where Mr. Koroma and Dr. Zelaya attended.

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Koroma, Ms. Anyiam and Mr. Naimon attended an event that celebrated Ugandan Independence Day and spoke to a number of Ugandan-Americans who were very interested in the political process. Dr. Zelaya also was in attendance.

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Naimon attended an event where Governor Moore, Congressman Ivey, and Delegate Peña-Melnyk spoke to the Women's Democratic Club. BOE staff also was in attendance.

On October 10<sup>th</sup> Ms. Hoeber, Ms. Anyiam, Ms. Delao and Mr. Naimon attended an event at Blake High School. They were invited by the Government Teacher, Dustin Jeter. Board members spoke about being an election worker, as well as the joys of being a political campaign worker.

Mr. Naimon expressed how very proud he is of what the Board is doing together to reach out to communities.

Mr. Koroma thanked the staff for their flexibility with attending events, especially with those requests given on short notice. In addition, he thanked staff for helping create the experience for many community members who have reached out.

### **Election Workers' Stipends 02:28:23**

Mr. Brajkovic reported that earlier in the year the election worker pay scale for the 2024 election cycle was presented to the Board with an omission for the Greeters' position. Staff is presenting an amendment to the pay scale, to add the Greeters' position with a pay of \$250 per day, plus \$50 for training.

Ms. Dillon moved to accept staff's amendment to the pay scale. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hoeber and passed unanimously.

### **Drop Box Locations 02:33:09**

The full 2024 proposed drop location presentation was provided to the Board in advance and can be found [here](#).

Ms. Delao moved to add 3 additional ballot drop boxes, one at each of the Montgomery College Campuses, to include Rockville, Germantown and Takoma Park. For Takoma Park, the drop box should be placed at the south location of the Charlene R. Nunley Student Services Center specifically because of its ability to serve more students. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anyiam.

Ms. Delao stated that adding drop boxes increases accessibility to voting, especially to students, recognizing that half of the students rely on public transportation and 20% have to commute between campuses for classes. There are also other voters who are on the campus.

Ms. Hoeber expressed concern with setting a precedent with requests and asked that the Board review a policy for adding drop boxes before approving additional drop box requests.

Mr. Koroma added that there is a clear policy that no location can be used unless 24/7 surveillance is available. He added that the Board had many questions regarding drop boxes at Montgomery College Campuses and those questions were answered during public comments.

Ms. Dillon agreed with Ms. Hoeber's comment regarding this issue being a policy matter. She asked that the Board think about placing drop boxes at locations that have been solicited to the Board by particular groups. She expressed concern with the security for all drop boxes in Montgomery County. She added that while she believes that political affiliation of students is skewed towards one party, she would equally oppose placing a drop box at a university with a more conservative leaning. Ms. Dillon also added that, as a policy matter, she does not endorse placing drop boxes when asked by a group.

Mr. Naimon emphasized that the Board had previously received requests and approved drop boxes for private senior centers at Leisure World, Riderwood, Friendship Heights and Asbury.

Mr. Naimon noted that Montgomery College is not a private institution but a public institution that serves the residents of Montgomery County and that the Board should be making decisions based on making voting convenient for everyone regardless of political demographic. He also added that the Board already has a policy which says that when someone approaches the Board with a proposal, the Board considers it. Additionally, the proposal for adding three drop boxes did not come from students but from the President of Montgomery College.

Mr. Naimon reminded the Board that each location where a drop box will be placed will be required to sign an agreement accepting that they meet all the legal requirements, with 24/7 video surveillance and video footage retention included.

Ms. Anyiam asked that Ms. Hoeber clarify her policy concern. Ms. Hoeber indicated that she was not aware that other requests were approved previously and clarified that the concern was with policy, not the placement of drop boxes at Montgomery College Campuses.

Ms. Anyiam asked if permitting drop boxes is primarily due to population density and inquired about considerations for political minority areas.

Mr. Brajkovic referred to the COMAR Regulations that the Board must follow, including satisfying a requirement to provide for accessibility of the ballot drop box to historically disenfranchised communities, including voters with disabilities, cultural groups, ethnic groups and minority groups. The second point is proximity of the ballot drop boxes to dense concentrations of voters and then accessibility of the ballot drop box by public transport. Additional requirements include ensuring equitable distribution of ballot drop boxes throughout the County, maximizing voter participation and use of community centers and public gathering places.

Mr. Vincent joined Ms. Dillon's opposition, adding that it would set a precedent by placing a drop box for a demographic that is more narrowly and tightly defined. He added that there are more legitimate reasons to establish drop boxes at senior centers because of age, infirmity and difficulty getting around.

Mr. Vincent added that the purpose of placing drop boxes at Montgomery College campuses is to drive turnout. There are many other people who have 2 jobs and who rely on public transportation, as he does. The reason drop boxes are at public schools is because they are also used as polling places and are accessible to the public. He added that there are some legitimate concerns and asked where would the Board draw the line if anyone asked for a drop box.

In response, Mr. Naimon stated that from his perspective, the Board will address each request that is presented to the Board. He added that the Board's outreach efforts, including outreach

efforts with the Republican Women's Clubs, also drive turnout as well as recruitment of election workers.

The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1 with Mr. Naimon, Mr. Koroma, Ms. Hoeber, and Ms. Anyiam voting for the motion, and Ms. Dillon opposing it.

Ms. Hoeber moved to approve the 55 drop boxes that were recommended by the staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Delao. The motion passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 1 abstention, with Mr. Naimon, Mr. Koroma, Ms. Hoeber, and Ms. Anyiam voting for the motion, while Ms. Dillon abstained.

**Action Items 03:12:46**

- Staff will contact the Postmaster regarding the 2 ballots discussed and rejected for being untimely during the Board of Canvassers meeting.
- Mr. Brajkovic will contact SBE to see if ballot marking devices report blank ballots.
- Mr. Brajkovic will contact SBE to inquire if the term "blank ballots" can be changed.


**Approval of Minutes 03:14:10**

Ms. Hoeber moved to accept the July and September minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dillon and approved unanimously.

Mr. Naimon adjourned the public meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Ms. Dillon moved to go into a closed Executive session at 6:21 p.m. to obtain legal advice. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hoeber and passed unanimously.

Approved by the Board

  
David A. Naimon  
Board President