Montgomery County Board of Elections
Election Director's Report – January 2024

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Draft minutes of the November 20, 2023, meeting were distributed to the Board on January 13, 2024 and draft minutes of the December 18, 2023 meeting were distributed to the Board on January 15, 2024.

The Agenda for the January 22, 2024, meeting was posted on the Board of Elections web site on January 16, 2024, and shared with the Board.

The Director's Report, the budget document, and meeting materials were posted on the website and shared with the Board on January 18, 2024.

Action Items from Previous Meetings

1. Information on financing of the sorting equipment:

Montgomery County Board of Elections is leasing sorting equipment (including 30 bins) and two letter openers (with date and time stamp option) for a monthly lease of $11,630.22 and annual Maintenance and Support of $42,169. The lease expires on 6/13/2027 and BOE will be able to purchase equipment for $1 upon expiration of the lease.
The lease was approved by the County in second part of fiscal year 2022.   A onetime payment option in the amount of $461,326, plus annual Maintenance and Support costs, was the alternative to the lease agreement. The lease commenced upon equipment installation.

Voter Registration Statistics:

The Monthly Statistical Report for December 2023 was distributed to Board members on January 2, 2024, and published on the BOE's website. As of the end of December 2023, there were 680,086 active registered voters in Montgomery County and 66,134 inactive voters, for a total voter count of 746,220.

State Board of Elections (SBE):

Maryland State Board of Elections (SBE), at its January 4, 2024, meeting approved the updated Montgomery County Polling Place Plan for the 2024 Presidential Election Cycle that includes consolidation of precincts 04-19 and 04-34 in Candlewood Elementary School Polling Place as per Board's Decision from December 18, 2023, meeting.

As in 2022, SBE has mailed out on January 17, 2024, applications for mail in ballots to all registered Democrats and Republicans in the county who have not already signed up to receive a mail in ballot. This mailing will be followed by two subsequent mailings, first to unaffiliated voters who will have a Primary ballot due to Board of Education contests to appear on the ballot, and second after the Primary to all other voters who register in meanwhile.

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Personnel
Permanent positions:

Ms. Dalia Guevara joined Voter Registration as an Office Service Coordinator on December 18, 2023.

Timothy Gartrell and Adam Luton were selected for the IT Tech II positions and joined BOE on January 2, 2024.

Staff has completed interviewing for the Office Service Coordinator - Candidate Filing position with the Voter Services Section and onboarding of the selected candidate is expected at the end of January 2024.

Staff will conduct interviews for the Voter Education and Training Specialist position next week, with expected onboarding date in late January / early February.

Staff has completed interviews for the Program Manager II – Voter Services but none of the selected candidates completed the onboarding process. The position was readvertised, and the ad has closed. Staff is waiting for the list of candidates from Office of Human Resources.

Election Director has extended the ad for the Deputy Election Director position until February 2, 2024.

Temporary positions:

All Sections have commenced onboarding of temporary team members. Currently, BOE has 20 temporary team members on site. Onboarding of other temporary team members will take place through the end of March and it will be driven by election processes that require temporary staff support.

Budget
The attached Budget Document reflects the approved Fiscal Year 2024 Budget and Department's spending through the end of December2023.

Sections' Activities

BOE voter communication efforts
Staff is working with the Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) department on sending out over 430,000 emails to voters who shared their email address with BOE. The emails aim to remind voters to check their voter registration records, update name, address and/or party affiliation (if needed), request a mail in ballot or change the mail in ballot delivery option or cancel their voter registration if they moved out of the state or for any other reason. Additionally, the emails will promote BOE's website, relevant online links, and texting options that voters can use at any point to update their voter registration.

Staff has contacted 300 nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the county, notifying them about incoming election mail to their residents and seeking their cooperation in returning undeliverable mail to BOE so Staff can initiate inactivation or cancellation process.

Staff is working with the County's Print Shop to prepare precinct maps to be displayed at each polling place to inform voters of the precinct area assigned to the polling place, necessity to vote a provisional

ballot if a voter does not reside in the area shown on the map, and an option to text CHECK to 77788 to locate their polling place.

Staff has introduced text on BOE envelopes to inform voters to return the envelope if the person to whom official election mailing is addressed no longer resides at the address.

Staff is exploring options to introduce QR codes, in addition to paper Comment Cards, to enable voters to provide, using their cell phones, feedback on voting experience at an early voting center or a polling place.

Voter Services
The Voter Registration team continues its daily processing of paper and electronic voter registrations, list maintenance activities which includes processing all incoming records provided directly by the voters or received from DHMH, the Jury Commission, Courts or through ERIC. The Voter Registration Staff processed signatures that were submitted as a part of the No Labels – New Party Petition. Deadline to complete processing was January 10, 2024.

IT / Training Section
IT Staff is currently working on programming the training equipment and allocating the equipment for Early Voting and Election Day.
IT Manager is continuing to work with the Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) department on the implementation of the replacement election worker and future vote portal. TEBS and BOE Staff has completed functionality testing of the election worker software. TEBS and BOE are working with Microsoft to perform load testing to measure response times, throughput rates, and resource-utilization levels, and to identify the application's breaking point. At the completion of the successful load testing, the new portal applications will be made available to the election workers and Future Vote students to begin using for the upcoming election.
The Training Staff has begun preparing the training curriculum and materials to begin training in mid-February.

Operations Section
The Operations team continues to prep the warehouse space for intake of election supply orders and staging of 2024 supplies. Operations has added one temporary warehouse staff to begin supply/equipment intake, preparation, and packing. Additional temporary warehouse and drop box staff will begin in early February and March. Staff continue to finalize the 2024 Primary Ballot Allocation for submission to the state.

Recruitment and Election Support
Staff continues to process applications received through the QR code. The total count of responses (applications) received via QR code since April 10, 2023, is 2,412 and staff.

Meetings / Events

Board's Media Committee met on January 10th and reviewed Staff's Media budget allocation recommendation for the 2024 election cycle.

On January 12, 2024, Board President, Board Secretary and Election Director joined the Deputy State Election Administrator and SBE staff at the meeting with *Montgomery County Students For Change* to discuss a proposal to lower the voting age requirement.

The Election Director and Finance Specialist will meet the County Executive and Office of Management and Budget on February 1, 2024, to review BOE's budget submission for FY25.

Board members will meet the County Executive on February 5, 2024, to discuss BOE's budget submission for FY25.