

St. Mary's County Board of Elections

23250 Leonardtown Hollywood Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Board Meeting Minutes of 1 March 2023

Present:

Board Members:

Jack Payne, Board President (R)
Rebecca Wathen, Board Secretary (D)
Kenneth Boothe, Member (R)
Mary Coombs, Member (R)
Ann Raley, Member (D)

Staff Members:

Wendy Adkins, Director
Susan Julian, Deputy Director

Cynthia Panos, Board Attorney

Absent: None

At 9:00 AM, Mr. Jack Payne, Board President, determined that there was a quorum present and called the meeting to order.

Guests Present: None

Documents Distributed:

- League of Women's Voters Letter
- Manual Audit Results
- Copies of "hot" bills

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the meetings held on January 11, 2023 were presented. A motion was made by Ms. Wathen to approve the minutes, with corrections from the floor, seconded by Ms. Coombs. Motion carried.

Meeting Agenda: The meeting agenda was reviewed and no changes were requested.

Director's Report: Ms. Adkins reported the following:

- **Green Bag Appointments** – Ms. Adkins provided the list of green bag appointments for the Board. The Maryland Senate will still need to approve them. The new Board takes office in June 2023.
- **Election Judge Pay** – Ms. Adkins advised that her staff met with the County Finance Office prior to the General Election. At the meeting, it was decided that if Election Judges made over \$600 and wanted taxes taken out, the judge was to check the box and a tax form would be sent. The justification is that the Election Judges are traditionally tax exempt. However, as judges worked early voting and canvassing activities, the amount earned by the judges could exceed the \$600 threshold. The LBE Staff followed the Finance Office's guidance and when the judge's received their payment after working the General Election, the Finance Office did not remove the taxes and erroneous W-2s were issued. Some election judges did not get W-2s at all. The Finance Office is working to correct this issue. Another meeting will be held with the Finance Office prior to the 2024 Election Cycle.
- **League of Women's Voters** – Ms. Adkins advised that she received a copy of a letter that was submitted to the State Board of Election (SBE) concerning the 2022 Election. Ms. Adkins advised that she would not be responding as the letter was addressed to the SBE.

- **MAEO Meeting** – The next MAEO Meeting will be held March 31, 2023 and is being hosted by St. Mary’s County Local Board of Elections (LBE). Board members are invited.

Old Business:

- **2022 General Election Manual Audit** – Ms. Adkins provided the results of the manual audit that was conducted on February 7, 2023. The results of the manual audit showed that there were no differences found between the voting machine totals and the hand tallies. There were no observers present during the process. The date of the testing was publicized as required. All counties will have their results posted to the SBE website.


New Business:

- **2023 MAEO Conference** is scheduled for May 14 – 19, 2023 in Ocean City, MD at the Ocean City Clarion. Board members are reminded to provide your reservation confirmation number to Ms. Julian along with their jacket size.
- **2023 Legislative Update** - Ms. Adkins reported that legislation is in full swing in Annapolis and she has received a copy of the “hot” bills as determined by MAEO.
 - **HB447 – County Commissioner – District Voting** – wants to change the way that the County Commissioners are elected locally. Voters would only vote for their district’s commissioners and the Commission President.
 - **HB597 – County Commissioner Election Method – Straw Poll** – wants the question to be put on the November ballot to allow the voters to decide the method of voting for the four commissioners in our County either by way of current method or a new method, which would be the voter would only vote for their desired candidate in their own district.
 - **HB1092 – Early Voting Number of Days** - wants to reduce the number of days for early voting from eight (8) to four (4). A cost analysis spreadsheet was provided for the Boards review.
 - **SB39 – Affiliating with a Party – Unaffiliated Voters** – wants to allow LBEs to change an “Unaffiliated” voter to a party up to the day before early voting begins so that it is effective on the first day of Early Voting.
 - **HB1279/SB955 – Election Law – 2024 Primary Date – Alteration** – wants to change the Primary date to the third Tuesday in April - April 16, 2024 from April 23, 2024.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on April 5, 2023 at 11:00 AM.

A motion was made by Ms. Wathen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Coombs. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,


Rebecca J. Wathen
Board Secretary