

St. Mary's County Board of Elections

23250 Leonardtown Hollywood Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Board Meeting Minutes of 5 December 2023

Present:

Board Members:

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

Staff Members:

Wendy Adkins, Director
Susan Julian, Deputy Director

Cynthia Panos, Board Attorney

Absent: None

At 11:17 AM, Ms. Rebecca Wathen, Board President, determined that there was a quorum present and called the meeting to order. President Wathen announced that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of preparing the minutes.

Guests Present: The guests present signed in and were welcomed by President Wathen. The sign in sheet is attached.

Documents Distributed:

- 2024 Presidential Primary Important Dates

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the meeting held on November 1, 2023 were presented. Mr. Jack Payne made a motion to approve the minutes, with corrections from the floor, seconded by Ms. Ann Raley. Motion carried.

Meeting Agenda: The meeting agenda was reviewed. No changes were made.

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

- **Ballot Drop Boxes:** Ms. Adkins advised that she requested a status of the drop box approval from the State Board of Elections (SBE). As of this meeting date, no response has been received.
- **Ballot Drop Boxes/Mail In Ballots (MIB):** At the Director's meeting held in November, the SBE introduced enhancements to the ballot drop boxes and the MIB Envelopes. The ballot drop boxes will have a durable vinyl sticker attached to the drop box rain flap. The sticker will say "Insert Ballot Here." The MIB envelopes will have a punched hole added to the return envelope, which will show a gray interior. This will enable local board of elections (LBE) staff to be able to determine if there is a ballot inside or if the envelope is empty. These enhancements are not final. The SBE is waiting for each county to vote for approval of the enhancement or not.
- **Ballot Drop Boxes:** Ms. Adkins advised that the SBE is now requiring a "plan" for the ballot drop box retrieval process. It will not be as elaborate as the polling place plan but will require a calendar based plan for ballot pickup from the drop boxes. Current requirements are that ballots must be picked up daily. However, a second pick-up each day can be made if it appears to be warranted. The second pick up will need to be documented in the plan. The SBE will be sending out a template for the LBEs to follow.

- **Election Judge:** Ms. Adkins advised that election judge recruitment has started. Flyers are being placed in the voter notification cards.

Old Business:

- **Polling Place Plan:** Ms. Adkins advised that at the November 30, 2023 SBE meeting, SBE approved our polling place plan for 2024. Beginning in January, the polling place plans will be advertised and promoted on the website, through the Public Information Office, and QR Codes, etc. to the voters so that they have an understanding of where and how they can vote in 2024.

New Business: **None**

Next Meeting: There will be no January meeting. The next meeting will be on February 7, 2024 at 9 AM.

A motion was made by Mr. Payne to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Coombs. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:29 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Coombs
Board Secretary

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Coombs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.