



## *Kent County Board of Elections*

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MINUTES  
KENT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
135 Dixon Drive, Chestertown MD 21620  
December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Present:

Lisa Thompson, President  
Scott Lockerman, Vice President - GT  
Paul Showalter, Secretary  
Barbara Reed, Member

Staff:

Cheemoandia Blake, Election Director

I. Call Meeting to Order

Lisa Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:40 am and declared a quorum was present.

II. Welcome Guest(s)

Carol Droge

III. Report Board Absences

Mary Walker

IV. Approval of Minutes

Lisa Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes from October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 Paul Showalter seconded the motion; the motion passes unanimously.

V. Directors Report/Attorneys Report There will be no board meeting held in the month of January 2025.

VI. Documents

- a. Board Minutes – October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024
- b. Polling Place Law Enforcement Guidance
- c. September Newsletter Update & Events
- d. 2024 Voting Supplies Checklist and Certification for ED/EV
- e. Precinct Voter Count – September 2024
- f. Law is Being Broken – request to added to the agenda/submitted by Dawn Jacobs and Scott Lockerman

g. SBE Statement on Recruiting and Assigning Election Judges

VII. Old Business

- a. Ballot Approved/ Ordered – ballots approved, and orders sent to SBE.
- b. Jazz Festival – board agreed to not have a voter information table at this event in the future.
- c. Board Members Duties– once again a hard copy was provided to the board, and a short discussion was held as to what the board duties consisted of. Board member duties were discussed and signed by the board at their second board meeting after being appointed by the governor.
- d. Election Judges – 71 Democrats, 44 Republicans, 11 Other parties as of September.
- e. Worton Elementary School – the board agreed Worton Elementary School would not be an ideal location for the election office due to multiple factors. Talbot Blvd would be a better location. Ms. Blake plans to recruit 2 additional full-time permanent employees between FY 2025 -2026. Also, during the election cycle SBE provides a county tech and support tech to assist the election office, therefore additional space would be needed at Talbot Blvd.
- f. Trainers – Cindy Davis and Rhonda Greene. Both are great trainers and have trained for Kent County in the past.
- g. Ballot Drop Box - located at Kent County Public Library, Galena Fire Department and Rock Hall Fire Department. Atlantic Security has installed cameras and monitors at each location. The election office will utilize the CT/ST to assist with picking up ballots M-F and board members on the weekend as needed.
- h. CTCL Grant – Election Director, Cheemoandia Blake has applied for a grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life. This is a nonprofit organization. The grant will be used for security related expenses that are not covered in the county budget.
- i. Voting Supplies Checklist and Certification ED/EV – D/R board members are required to view election supplies and sign off, verifying that all supplies have been packed and ready be delivered to each site. The deadline is October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

- j. Law is Being Broken – Dawn Jacobs and Scott Lockerman request to add the documents to the agenda. Scott Lockerman asked if the election office had been trying to recruit republican election judges. Election Director, Cheemoandia advised Mr. Lockerman, that election judge application was sent out to all republican households in 2020 and 2022, majority of the application returned stated that the voter was not interested in serving as an election judge. Cheemoandia also advised the board that she has consistently asked the board and the republican central committee to help with election judges’ recruitment.

Scott Lockerman also had concerns about out-of-county election judges working in Kent County, he requested to see this in writing. Election Director, Cheemoandia explain that if the citizen is a registered voter in Maryland, the voter is allowed to work in any county if needed. Election Director, Cheemoandia Blake advised the board they can review the document sent over by election administrator Jared DeMarinis “Issues Statement on Recruiting and Assigning Election Judges”.

Scott Lockerman also stated that Election Director, Cheemoandia Blake was jumping down his throat, Ms. Blake was not aware of why Mr. Lockerman made this statement. Ms. Blake stated that it was not her character, and she was not jumping down his throat. Ms. Blake stated that she and Scott Lockerman have never had any issues in all the years Mr. Lockerman has been on board.

- k. SBE Statement on Recruiting and Assigning Elections Judges - recruitment of election judges have always been a difficult and trying task. The law permits the appointment of an election judge from outside the county in which they are serving and election judges who are not affiliated with either party to serve as an election judge. There are never enough election judges on call to serve, individuals get sick, have emergencies, transportation issues and other issues that may prevent them from serving on election day. An election judge partisan affiliation does not impact or determine the outcome of the election. The party affiliation of an election judge does not stop the voter from casting their ballot or disenfranchise a voter.
- l. Law enforcement at polling places – The sheriff office does not have any legal authority to conduct security checks or a role in securing the ballots. Nor does the sheriff enforce the requirements of the election law article A police officer must obey the order of the election judge at the polling place.

a. Canvass Minutes – Minutes will be sent to the board for review and approval.

b. 2024 Election- Ms. Blake asked the board if there was anything they wanted to discuss regarding the 2024 PG election, such as polling place, election judge issues or any concerns they may have had. Barbara Reed stated that Mrs. Blake does not follow the state law regarding the appointment of the election judge. Other than that, there were no other issues or concerns. The board agreed that Ms. Blake and her staff had a successful election.

c. Brief discussion – Barbara Reed inquired why Shawn Polson was not hired as a Chief Judge, since KCBE needs Republican judges. Election Director, Cheemoandia Blake explain that once an election judge is assigned, they are required to work both Primary and General Election per state law, unless they were deemed to be incompetent by the board. The board will then decide to remove and replace them.

Ms. Blake stated that Shawn Polson was offered a position as a standby unit judge, Mr. Polson did attend the mandatory training on Sept 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. After training Mr. Polson asked if he was called before or on election day and decided to decline the offer, what would happen. Ms. Blake advised Mr. Polson that the election office would contact the next standby judge on the waiting list.

Barbara inquired about the election judges; Barbara stated that the parties should be equal. Ms. Blake explained once again, that in 2020 and 2022, election judge applications were mailed to all republican households. All applications that were returned stating that they were interested in working as an election judge were sent a training date and election day assignment.

Ms. Blake also referred to the letter submitted by Jarad Demaris regarding the recruitment of election judges has always been a difficult and trying task. The law permits the appointment of an election judge from outside the county in which they are serving and election judges who are not affiliated with either party to serve as an election judge. There are never enough election judges on call to serve, individuals get sick, have emergencies, transportation issues and other issues that may prevent them from serving on election day. An election judge partisan affiliation does not impact or determine the outcome of the election. The party affiliation of an election judge does not stop the voter from casting their ballot or disenfranchise a voter. Ms. Blake supplied the board members with the election judge's applications to help with future recruitment. Ms.

Blake also advised the board to follow up with the election office and potential future election judge during the recruitment process.

IX. Closed Session:

Closed session – PEP The board closed meeting at 9:10 am to complete Ms. Blake Performance Evaluation and reconvened at 9:20 to briefly review the PEP with Ms. Blake.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, Paul Showalter made a motion at 9:23 am to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Barbara Reed. Motion passed by all. The next meeting is scheduled for February 6<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,



President



Secretary