

**MINUTES**  
**Wicomico County Board of Elections**  
**345 Snow Hill Road, Salisbury, MD 21804**  
**Wednesday, July 15, 2020**

**ATTENDEES:** Brad Bellacicco, Board President, Republican Member, present in office  
Katrina Purnell, Board Secretary, Democratic Member, present in office  
Joseph Collins, Republican Member, via phone  
Catherine Keim, Republican Member, present in office  
Sharon Morris, Democratic Member, present in office  
Peter Golba, Board Attorney, via phone  
Anthony Gutierrez, Election Director, via phone  
Dionne Church, Deputy Director, present in office

**ABSENT:** None

**GUESTS:** None

The Wicomico County Board of Elections met Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Public notice was given and the agenda was posted at the Board of Elections office the week prior to the meeting. Additionally, a special public notice that, in compliance with the Governor's Order to prevent of spreading the COVID-19 virus, and in compliance with a directive from the State Board of Elections office, the board would not meet in-person but the public would have a way to call-in and listen to the meeting if they would like.

Brad Bellacicco, Board President, called the meeting to order, conducting a roll call of the board members, and declared that there was a quorum present.

Brad Bellacicco voluntarily led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Board chose to recite The Lord's Prayer.

Brad Bellacicco asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2020 meeting of the Board of Elections. Catherine Keim made a motion to approve the minutes with one correction; seconded by Sharon Morris, passed unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT: (See Attached Copy)**

Anthony Gutierrez, Election Director, referred the Board to the items listed on his Director's Report. The following items were highlighted.

Sharon Morris and Katrina Purnell have been officially approved and confirmed in their terms as Board members.

Veronica Fox has been hired as a State contractual worker and will be working in voter registration as well as absentee voting for the General Election.

Elise Koch has accepted a position elsewhere, and her last day at our office will be July 24, 2020, at which time her position will be posted.

Wayne Burton has submitted his retirement documentation with an effective date of October 1, 2020. The Election Director stated that hiring an Acting IT Specialist will ensure that someone is available to perform the duties necessary for the upcoming election, and allow flexibility to either hire that employee permanently following the election or to conduct further interviews if necessary. SBE Human Resources agrees with this plan. A motion was made by Catherine Keim to hire an acting IT

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Specialist to learn the duties of the position currently held by Wayne Burton; seconded by Sharon Morris, passed unanimously.

The Election Director referred to the SBE (State Board of Elections) report to the Governor, dated July 3, 2020, a copy of which was mailed to Board members.

There was discussion regarding some of the line items on the monthly financial report. The Election Director will inquire as to the figures on the report, and will notify the Board of his findings by email.

The Board inquired about the annual MAEO conference which has been cancelled. The Deputy Director stated that the funds allocated for Board members and staff to attend will be refunded soon.

It was also noted that, in the elections category, there is currently an approximate \$250,000 surplus from the Primary Election due to emergency changes in the election process.

Sharon Morris asked if there are currently any particular challenges to the office related to COVID. The Election Director related that office procedures to address this remain in place, including an alternating telework schedule and an occupancy limit for the front lobby.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Regarding an update on the 2020 Primary Election, the Election Director stated that there will soon be a meeting to discuss lessons learned during the 2020 Primary Election. He also stated that he received compliments from certain voters on the availability of the ballot drop boxes used.

The Board discussed the issue of allowing campaign signs on the Board of Elections property (outside the current non-electioneering zone). It was the consensus of the Board to ask SBE about this issue and whether this Board has the authority to decide if such signs are allowed on this property. Pending this information, the Board will table this issue until next month.

A motion was made by Catherine Keim to recess this meeting and to convene the Board of Canvassers; seconded by Sharon Morris, passed unanimously. The Board of Elections meeting recessed at 9:38 a.m., and the Board of Canvassers convened at 9:39 a.m.

41 ballots and 2 oaths were presented. These were received after the deadline. A motion was made by Sharon Morris to reject these ballots as late; seconded by Catherine Keim, passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Board of Elections reconvened at 9:40 a.m.

The Election Director stated that polling places for the 2020 General Election are presently being contacted and confirmed. It is possible that some polling places may need to be consolidated. He also stated that we need more election judges. Staff recommended that 2 drop boxes would be enough for the upcoming election.

Brad Bellacicco suggested that perhaps the Board of Education might be able to assist in recruiting judges from among their employees, and that high school students might be recruited for cleaning duties on election day and that, in doing so, could earn community service credit.

The Election Director stated that the Governor has indicated that he will encourage state employees to augment election staffing needs. The Director also stated that he and the Deputy Director will be talking to the Board of Education in coming days regarding sites for polling places. There was also

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discussion as to public buildings being required to be available for use as polling places, and a possible press release (following consultation with the Governor's office) in the event that schools are not utilized.

A motion was made by Catherine Keim to submit a request for emergency replacement of Holy Redeemer Church with Delmar Elementary; seconded by Sharon Morris, passed unanimously.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Sharon Morris inquired about dates on mailed ballots, postmarked date versus date received. Discussion followed. She also asked if there had been any further communication from the election judge who called into last month's meeting regarding election judge compensation for the 2020 Primary Election. The Election Director stated that there has not been.

Brad Bellacicco inquired if the previous billing issue with the 2019 Salisbury City Election had been resolved. Discussion followed.

**MEMBERS TIME:**

None.

**BOARD ATTORNEY'S REPORT:**

Peter Golba stated he had nothing to report at this time.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

None.


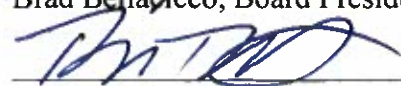
**ADJOURNMENT:**

Brad Bellacicco announced that the next regular meeting will be Wednesday August 19, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

The Election Director proposed that a tentative special meeting be scheduled for next week, pending possible issues forthcoming regarding the General Election, for which the Board may be required to provide input. Therefore, a special meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 20, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. The Election Director will email the Board on Friday, July 17 as to the necessity of this meeting.

A motion was made by Sharon Morris to adjourn this meeting; seconded by Joseph Collins, passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

	8/19/20
Brad Bellacicco, Board President	Date
	8/19/20
Bill Blockston, Recorder	Date