

**BOARD MEETING**  
**BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
**OCTOBER 15, 2024**

The meeting of the Baltimore City Board of Elections was held at the Baltimore City Board of Elections Warehouse at 301 N Franklinton Road, Baltimore, MD 21223

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Terrence Threweatt Jr, Board Vice President  
Sam Novey, Board Secretary  
Hope Williams, Board Member  
Scherod Barnes, Board President

**STAFF**

Armstead B.C. Jones, Election Director  
Abigail Goldman, Deputy Election Director  
Sam McAfee, McAfee Election Solutions

**ABSENT**

Maria Vismale, Board Member

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Barnes called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Mr. Barnes corrected the September minutes to reflect that he was “disappointed” and not “frustrated” that Bill Henry and Odette Ramos were the only two elected officials who attended our debrief meeting after the primary. Mr. Threweatt asked that we clarify the September minutes to show that we would be responding to the letter from the Baltimore City GOP but had not done so yet. Mr. Threweatt moved to accept the minutes of the September 19, 2024, meeting with these two amendments. Ms. Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**PRESIDENT REMARKS**

Mr. Barnes thanked everyone for being present at the October 15, 2024, canvass of mail-in ballots. Mr. Barnes shared that he and Mr. Threweatt were both concerned about board member Maria Vismale who they had not been able to reach in several days. Mr. Barnes confirmed that Mr. Threweatt would be following up in person to learn more about her absence from board business.

Mr. Novey asked for clarification regarding the bylaws' rules regarding attendance. Mr. Chapman clarified that any board member who does not attend at least 50% of meetings in any consecutive 12-month period will be considered to have resigned.

Mr. Barnes expressed his appreciation for everyone who had indicated their availability already for the ballot canvass after election day.

Mr. Barnes congratulated Mr. Novey on the birth of his second child on September 30th.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Jones said staff at the main office continue to do daily work processing voter registrations, entering ballots that have been returned, and other tasks like that. He shared that staff are doing a fantastic job keeping up with everything coming in and that staff was prepared to work longer hours around Election Day.

Mr. Jones shared that the judge department was still placing judges for both early voting and election day. He shared that election judge training was nearly complete and that close to 4,000 applications had been received. Mr. Jones shared that they were nearing the goal of having 28 election judges to staff each of the busiest early voting sites.

Mr. Jones confirmed that staff was working hard to have enough election judges trained to have several hundred reserve judges available at the downtown office. He shared that the judge department was working to train at least 2,500 judges compared to 2,100 who were trained for the primary (over 1,500 of whom showed up).

Mr. Barnes asked for an update on student election judges. Ms. Goldman confirmed that they were going to training later this week. Mr. Novey shared that there are 127 students who have signed up and verified their registration and were intending to attend training, but that staff had not yet gotten scheduled for training by staff. Ms. Goldman confirmed that Ms. Graves would be reconciling this issue in the coming days.

Mr. Barnes asked for an update on the office and warehouse move. Ms. Goldman confirmed that it was still at a standstill and that city leaders wanted to go ahead with moving only the warehouse and downsize the space footprint. Ms. Goldman shared that she anticipated the state board of elections to issue regulations in the coming days that would require Baltimore City to collocate its election warehouse and election office. Ms. Goldman said she was concerned that the landlords might not hold the location we had anticipated using any longer.

Mr. Barnes expressed his frustration that city leaders had a meeting about this issue without including either the director, deputy director, or any board members. Ms. Goldman shared that the need to use the general fund to pay for the buildout of the new space was a major barrier to getting support.

Mr. Jones expressed his concern about the city's insistence on renting rather than owning property and recurring costs that this preference creates for the Baltimore City Board of Elections.

Mr. Barnes asked whether Mr. Jones or Ms. Goldman had reached out regarding why elections leadership had not been invited to the meeting. Mr. Chapman clarified that Baltimore City is required to fund the needs of the Board of Elections as prescribed by state law and after the State Board passed a regulation on 10/24 requiring offices to be collocated, this requirement will include the need to fund the Baltimore City Board of Elections transitioning to a collocated office and warehouse situation.

Ms. Williams asked whether the city real estate department was supposed to be finding us a new location or whether that responsibility was laid with the board of elections. Ms. Goldman clarified that city real estate has tried to find locations and has consistently produced options that are not practical and don't meet our needs. That's why our team has proactively looked for spaces and identified the space in southwest Baltimore.

Mr. Jones and Ms. Goldman said they were not sure about the square footage that would be included in the state regulations and whether that would include space for training.

### **WAREHOUSE UPDATE**

Mr. McAfee reported that packing for early voting and election day was nearly complete and that they were waiting on the state to get us the voter registration database so they can pack the e-pollbooks. Ms. Goldman shared that the voter registration database would not be ready until 10/20/24. Mr. McAfee shared that in that case, board inspections of the cabinets would need to occur 10/21/24 as the haulers were contracted to begin moving the early voting equipment to early vote sites on 10/22/24. Mr. McAfee shared that he had spoken with the haulers, and they are ready to do their job.

Mr. Barnes asked the board to keep Mr. McAfee and his community in Tampa in prayer in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton.

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL REMARKS**

Mr. Chapman shared that all litigation over the ballot is resolved. The question F case was litigated by the state board of election and the Maryland State Supreme Court said the question could go forward. Mr. Chapman shared that we had filed a motion to dismiss the case brought against us about sample ballot confusion in the primary. Mr. Threweatt asked if that case would be considered moot. Mr. Chapman said that we had included mootness among other reasons for dismissing the case.

Mr. Barnes thanked Mr. Chapman for representing the board well in court.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Novey asked how many election judges had been trained. Ms. Goldman shared that they had at least 1800 signed up already.

Ms. Goldman asked the board to come on Monday 10/21/2024 at 10 am to verify the early voting cabinets are completely packed. Mr. Barnes asked if the board would be ok with staff assisting the board in reviewing the cabinets. Mr. Novey moved that the board allow staff to help with cabinet checking. Ms. Williams seconded. The motion passed.

Mr. Novey shared that he went on WYPR on 10/14/24 and discussed the student election judge program.

Mr. Thre watt disclosed that he donated to John Tester's campaign. Ms. Williams disclosed that she donated to the Maryland Democratic Party.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Thre watt followed up about responding to the GOP letter regarding a recent Baltimore Banner article. Mr. Thre watt confirmed that he had gotten the language approved by Mr. McAfee and would be following up with the GOP. Mr. Thre watt expressed his gratitude to Mr. McAfee for his remarkable record of service to Baltimore City.

Mr. Chapman clarified that board members are appointed by the parties and do not "represent" them on the board.

After a robust board discussion, it was agreed that the response to the GOP should reflect that McAfee election services provides a "cost competitive" service. Mr. Novey moved that the board approve the letter with this change. Mr. Thre watt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mr. Jones expressed his feeling that this contract was much cheaper than hiring additional employees to do these duties.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 am.