

BOARD MEMBERS

THOMAS M. CORKRAN
PRESIDENT

RALPH C. LEWIS JR.
VICE-PRESIDENT

EMMA D. PINKETT
SECRETARY

WILLIAM J. BISHOP
BOARD MEMBER

EMORY E. TAMPLIN JR.
BOARD MEMBER



**DORCHESTER COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

TATIANA RENDELL
ATTORNEY

GWENDOLYN H. DALES
ELECTION DIRECTOR

BRITTANY M. PHILLIPS
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

JESSICA R. NORANBROCK
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

KIMBERLY K. JONES
ELECTION PROGRAM MANAGER

SLOANE P. HURLEY
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

ATTENDEES: Thomas M. Corkran, President
Ralph C. Lewis Jr, Vice President
Emma D. Pinkett, Secretary
William J. Bishop, Member
Emory E. Tamplin Jr, Member

Gwendolyn H. Dales, Election Director
Jessica Noranbrock, Election Asst.
Tatiana Rendell, Attorney

ABSENT: None.

GUESTS: None.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING September 26, 2023

Call to Order and Determine Quorum:

Mr. Corkran called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM; quorum was determined.

Welcome any Guests:

None.

Report any Board or Staff Absences:

None.

Additions to Agenda:

Director Dales added an update on the County audit.

Approval of Minutes:

- **July 25, 2023 Minutes**
 - Mr. Lewis motioned to approve the minutes with a spelling correction on page 2, seconded by Mrs. Pinkett. The minutes were approved.

Election Director's Report:

- **Budget: FY2024 –July & August 2023 year/date/monthly expenditures**
Director Dales distributed the monthly budget(s).

Old Business:

- **Bylaws: Disclose Contribution Amount & Permanently Retain Audio**

Director Dales informed the Board that the Bylaws needed to be re-approved with a few items added from SBE, and that those items were highlighted in their copies. She then shared an email from the former Deputy Administrator of SBE, Nikki Charlson, which addressed the questions the Board had regarding disclosing contribution amounts and the retention of audio recordings of meetings. In the email, Ms. Charlson explained the intent of the provision is to be transparent and that she stated that the Board Members should disclose the entity and the contribution amount. She stated that this is how the State Board Members have interpreted this provision. She also stated that the audio recordings should be retained permanently as they are considered “meeting materials”.

Mr. Corkran asked if they have to disclose a contribution to a political candidate or campaign if they are not on the ballot. Ms. Dales said she thought any political contribution should be disclosed, but that it was up to the Board to interpret the provision and deferred to the attorney. Ms. Rendell agreed that it was up to the Board to determine how they interpret the provision. Mr. Bishop stated that he doesn't mind disclosing a contribution, but doesn't agree with disclosing the amount. He then suggested disclosures be made when members have contributed to any campaign or committee that will appear on the local ballot.

Mr. Lewis asked if this applied to contributions his wife may make. Mr. Corkran said it did not. He also stated that disclosures should be made on anything that would appear on the Maryland ballot, statewide. The other Board Members agreed. Mr. Bishop asked when disclosures are supposed to be made. Mr. Corkran said they are made at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the Bylaws with the additions from SBE, seconded by Mr. Lewis, the Bylaws were approved.

- **T1 Line (Skyline & Verizon) Status**

Director Dales informed the Board that Mrs. Noranbrock met with Skyline and Verizon at the new location. Skyline is the contractor the State sent to determine where the conduit will be run for the T1 line, and Verizon is the contractor the State sent to run the wires. The vendor said they are working about three (3) months out once approved through DOIT to commence work. Mr. Bishop asked if the work was scheduled. Ms. Dales said that it is in process and all the right players are in place and the ball is moving. The entire move pivots on this T1 line being installed, but we're hoping by the end of the year. We will continue to maintain contact and communication with the vendors. Mr. Bishop asked if there was a drop-dead date it had to be installed in time for the Primary Election. Ms. Dales said that would probably be March or April.

New Business:

- **Hurlock Election (Nov. 4) Lease/Candidate Filing Deadline Oct. 2**

Director Dales reminded the Board of the Town of Hurlock Municipal Election coming up on November 4th, and that the deadline for candidates to file is Monday, October 2nd. Mrs. Noranbrock spoke with the Town Manager yesterday and he said they haven't had anyone file to run against the incumbents, but that someone had picked up an application and may still file. Ms. Dales told the Board that in 2019 the Town of Hurlock ended up not having an election because no one filed to run against the incumbents, this may happen again. Mr. Bishop asked if the Town of Hurlock pays anything for the Election Office to administer their elections. Mr. Corkran stated that they reimburse the County for the cost of the election, and that this Board has no function in municipal elections; they have their own canvassers. Mrs. Pinkett motioned to approve and allow the President to sign the lease, seconded by Mr. Bishop, the lease was approved and signed.

- **Early Voting Agreement**

Director Dales mentioned that every election we have an early voting agreement that has to be signed and sent to SBE. In the meeting notice it states that we will be discussing the new early voting location and that the meeting is open to the public. Mr. Corkran asked if we have to mail every voter something to inform them of the change. Ms. Dales stated that we will advertise the new location, and every eligible voter will receive a specimen ballot which will include the address of the new location in noticeable font.

Mr. Bishop mentioned that in the prior meeting, Ms. Dales spoke of signage being placed that will direct voters to the new location. He asked if this process had begun. Ms. Dales said that we will be getting signs as we get closer to moving. Mr. Bishop asked why there was a section in the agreement regarding the "No Electioneering Zone". He believes that's the responsibility of the election staff to maintain, not the owner. Ms. Dales stated that it is in there to inform the owner of the activities that will take place on the property. Mrs. Pinkett agreed that it should be in the agreement. Mr. Bishop motioned to approve and allow the President to sign the early voting agreement, seconded by Mrs. Pinkett, the agreement was approved and signed.

- **Drop Box Locations**

Director Dales asked the Board to approve the locations of the drop boxes for Dorchester County. One drop box will be at the new location and the other will be in the Town of Hurlock. The one in Hurlock was required in 2022 by SBE because of certain parameters. Ms. Dales sent SBE the total number of ballots received from the drop box in the Primary and General Elections and will let the Board know if SBE still concurs that there should be a drop box in Hurlock. Ms. Dales informed the Board that in the Primary 99 ballots were received and in the General 184 ballots. Mr. Corkran asked what costs are associated with having a drop box in Hurlock. Ms. Dales stated that there are costs to having a drop box delivered and checked every day, twice a day closer to the election.

Mr. Corkran asked if the drop box at the new location has to be under 24 hour surveillance. Ms. Dales said it does, and that the installation has been scheduled. Mr. Bishop asked if the drop box in front of the County Office Building would be the one moving to the new location. Ms. Dales said that since our office and early voting will be

there, the drop box should be there, as well, but, if the Hurlock drop box is no longer required then we could possibly place one at the County Office Building instead. Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the drop box locations, seconded by Mrs. Pinkett, the locations were approved.

FYI:

- **Board Tax Forms & Direct Deposit**

Ms. Dales had the forms mailed to Board Members, all were complete and delivered to staff.

- **Met with Ways & Means and SBE**

Director Dales informed the Board that she was invited to attend a meet and greet in the Dorchester County Office Building by the House Ways and Means Committee. Councilman Detmer, the new Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the State Board of Elections attended, as well. The Administrator talked about how he wants to open the lines of communication between SBE and the LBEs, and wants to have more transparency with the LBEs. Mr. Tamplin asked if there was any disclosure on the cost. Ms. Dales wasn't sure, she was only invited, she wasn't a host.

- **Mandatory SBE Biennial – October 19th Annapolis, MD**

Director Dales reminded the Board of the Biennial date and distributed a copy of the agenda. Mrs. Pinkett asked if the Board Members needed to register. Ms. Dales said that staff had already registered everyone, but that if anyone won't be able to make it, we can request a waiver. Mr. Tamplin asked when they have to be there for roll-call and when do they check out. Mr. Corkan said roll-call is at 8:00 and Mrs. Pinkett said that according to the agenda it ends at 4:45 PM.

- **Pollbook Update**

Director Dales heard two (2) Fridays ago during the Director's Meeting that the new pollbooks will not be ready for the 2024 Elections, we will be using the old pollbooks. Ms. Dales explained that a pollbook is a device used to check in voters at polling places.

Addition(s) to the Agenda:

Director Dales informed the Board that the County had posted the 2021 audit on their website.

The Board decided to start a new process of approving purchases. Ms. Dales will provide a list of bills that are automatically charged to the credit card, and will submit a copy of the statement to the Board. Any credit card purchases over \$350 will be pre-approved by the Board.

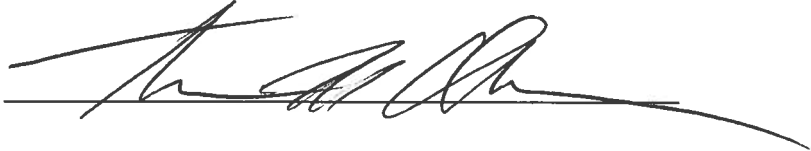
Confirmation of Next Meeting:

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 24th, 2023 at 10:00 AM, in Room 110 of the Dorchester County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, MD 21613.

Adjournment:

Mr. Lewis motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Bishop. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. A. A.', written over a horizontal line.

Emma D. Pinkett

William Bishop

Emy C. Temple