

BOARD MEMBERS

MICHAEL W. DETMER
PRESIDENT

THOMAS M. CORKRAN
VICE PRESIDENT

RALPH C. LEWIS JR.
SECRETARY

WILLIAM E. BATSON
BOARD MEMBER

ROBIN A. WILLEY
BOARD MEMBER



**DORCHESTER COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

HUBERT H. WRIGHT, IV
ATTORNEY

GWENDOLYN H. DALES
ELECTION DIRECTOR

BRITTANY M. PHILLIPS
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

JESSICA R. NORANBROCK
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

KIMBERLY K. JONES
ELECTION PROGRAM IT SPECIALIST II

SLOANE P. HURLEY
ELECTION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

ATTENDEES: Michael W. Detmer, President
Thomas M. Corkran, Vice President
Ralph C. Lewis, Secretary
William Batson, Member
Robin Willey, Member
Hubert H. Wright, IV, Attorney

Gwendolyn H. Dales, Election Director
Jessica Noranbrock, Election Asst.
Brittany Phillips, Election Asst.

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: None

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING October 2, 2020

The Board of Canvassers were Sworn In by the Clerk of the Court, Amy Craig.

Call to Order and Determine Quorum:

President Detmer called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM; quorum was determined.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all. The meeting was led in prayer, delivered by Mr. Batson.

Welcome any Guests:

None

Report any Board or Staff Absences:

None

Additions to Agenda:

President Detmer and Director Dales added to discuss the recent events regarding the City election.

Approval of Minutes:

- **6.12.20 Minutes**

Ms. Willey motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Batson, approved.

Election Director's Report:

- **Budget: FY2021 – July & August 2020 year/date/monthly expenditures**

Director Dales presented the monthly budgets.

Old Business:

- **Not timely received ballots from Primary Election**

The Board convened as the Board of Canvassers at 10:08 AM. Mrs. Phillips presented 30 ballots received since certification of the last election. Mrs. Phillips tried to reach out to each person to inform them about their untimely ballot. President Detmer asked if any were postmarked on or before Election Day, could they even be added? Mrs. Phillips said they must have been postmarked by election day and received by 10:00 AM on the last Primary canvass day. Mr. Lewis motioned to reject the not timely ballots from the Primary Election, seconded by Mr. Batson, motion passed. The Board of Canvassers adjourned and the regular meeting resumed at 10:10 AM.

New Business:

- **Delegation of Supplies Verification (memo)**

Director Dales presented the memo for the Board President to sign delegating a staff member to perform the supply verification. Mr. Corkran motioned to sign the memo, seconded by Mr. Batson, motion passed.

- **Approval of Judges List**

The list of election judges scheduled for early voting and election day was presented to the Board for approval. Mr. Lewis motion to approve the list, seconded by Mr. Corkran, motion passed.

Ms. Dales mentioned the Board may have heard some push back from Hoopers Island. She spoke with Jay Newcomb and the County Manager, and told them she would speak to the Board about if, in the future, we have vote centers, asking to consider having one at the Dorchester K – 8 School. Mr. Detmer requested that be added to a future agenda if there are vote centers again, so that concerns can be expressed by citizens. Mr. Detmer said that, for the record, culpability for this Board is low because public meetings have been constricted. This wasn't a mistake that was made, we've been mostly powerless through this. Ms. Dales agreed, a lot of these changes were made by the State and the Governor.

Mr. Lewis said he tried to explain to people that we were prepared and then things were changed by the State and Governor. A lot of people are upset because Smith Island got approval. Mr. Detmer mentioned that Smith Island is completely inaccessible by vehicles. Ms. Dales stated that, for the record, 72% of Dorchester's population of registered voters live within 10 miles of a vote center, this wasn't done erroneously.

Mr. Detmer expressed concern about parking for voters. Ms. Dales informed the Board the rest of the schools in the County will be bringing more students back in November, but the High Schools will be virtual on Election Day. Mr. Detmer asked to get that in writing because he is concerned the vote centers will be very busy. **(ACTION)**

Ms. Dales informed the Board voters will be able to drop their mail-in ballots off at the vote centers on Election day. We will have an EFS technician assigned to an empty scanner unit for people to deposit their ballots so they won't need to enter the vote center. EFS technicians will be available for anything that may be needed.

Mr. Detmer asked if there would be police coverage on Election Day. Ms. Dales said that usually they are here, outside our office, on Election night, but they're not currently scheduled at the vote centers. Mr. Detmer asked if there is utility in us paying a Deputy at each spot. Mr. Lewis agreed, we need to be as safe and as careful as can be. Ms. Dales said that line item was removed from the approved budget, but she would reach out to them. **(ACTION)**

FYI:

- **Signs to be Posted at Polling Locations**

Director Dales presented the sign that will be posted at our regular twenty-one (21) polling places so there is no confusion for citizens. They are corrugated plastic signs that will go into the ground that have vote centers listed on them and our phone number.

Mr. Detmer asked if the rest of the County Office Building will be open, and should there be concern about parking. Ms. Dales said the building is open to the public now.

- **Letter from County Council to Linda Lamone**

Director Dales presented the letter to the Board. Mr. Detmer appreciated the way they handled this and that they understand. Ms. Dales informed the Board that we surveyed election judges to see if they were willing to work in the 2020 General Election.

- **Election Day and Polling Place Evaluations**

Director Dales informed the Board they are not required to perform the polling place evaluations. The EFS technicians have been fingerprinted and are allowed to perform the polling place evaluations. Due to COVID-19, and to save parking, we are not asking you all to take on this task. EFS technicians are an outside entity and are already at the vote centers. Mr. Detmer said he plans on going to all three (3) if another member of the opposite party is willing. Mr. Corkran asked how many have to be evaluated. Ms. Dales said 25% and it can't be the vote center that was used as an early voting center. Mr. Corkran said we need to make sure heat or air conditioning is available at the vote centers. Mr. Detmer asked for that to be included in the request for written confirmation that we have the high schools reserved for election day and no other events taking place at the schools so that enough parking is available to voters. **(ACTION)**

Mr. Corkran asked if all the alternate judges get paid \$50, there are a lot on the list. Director Dales said yes, and she had already spoke to Mr. Detmer about have more alternates during the pandemic.

Mr. Corkran asked the board if anyone received their check. No one had received one, yet. Ms. Dales will look into it. **(ACTION)**

- **Canvass Dates:** Oct. 22nd – Vote by Mail 1 – Board must attend 9:00 AM
Nov. 5th – Vote by Mail – 10:00 AM
Nov. 12th – Provisional – Board must attend 10:00 AM
Nov. 13th – Final Vote by Mail – Board must attend, Time TBD

Director Dales asked the Board to meet at the County Office Building in-person in Room 110 to open the Vote by Mail 1 Canvass. The canvassing will then begin at the warehouse and will be livestreamed. This decision was made because things will still be in action at the warehouse moving equipment.

Mr. Corkran asked if Room 110 is available on Election Day. Ms. Dales said we have the room reserved. Mr. Corkran asked if the Board should meet here to plan things out, Mr. Detmer agreed.

Ms. Dales said that because the County Office Building is a Vote Center on Election Day, and we will have to be packed up Election Night, this room might be more appropriate for people to await results. Also, normally the Board must convene Election Night, but Ms. Dales believes they do not have to this time. She will let the Board know of anything different.

Additions to the Agenda:

Director Dales informed the Board that the City of Cambridge posted on their Facebook page the following statement:

“The city learned this morning the Dorchester County voter mailing list included 51 names of people under the age of 18.

The City Election Supervisor spoke with the Dorchester County Board of Elections this morning to alert them of this problem. They are currently working to update their voter list and will return a revised list to the city election vendor this week.

The Election Supervisor also spoke this morning with the president of our election vendor, TrueBallot. TrueBallot advised only the ballots from the voters on the FINAL (revised) list we receive back from the Dorchester County Board of Elections will be counted by TrueBallot on election night.”

Director Dales spoke with the City Manager about messaging and that we should have had a conversation about this. This is affecting peoples’ perception of our election rolls. We do have 16- and 17-year olds on our rolls. In the State of Maryland, 16- and 17-year olds may register to

vote, but are not allowed unless they will be 18 years old by the General Election. We send a letter to registered 16- and 17-years olds before every election explaining this. We forwarded a copy of this letter to the City.

Mr. Corkran said it came across like the City is waiting for us to send the letters. Ms. Dales said it would be inappropriate for us to send letters to their voters. We gave them a copy of the letter and printed address labels for them.

Mr. Detmer asked about the Dorchester Banner newspaper. Ms. Dales informed the Board that the Banner mistakenly published what we had given them for the Primary, not the information we paid for them to print for the General. Mr. Corkran asked if they will be publishing a correction. Ms. Dales said we asked them to say they made a mistake, but they will be publishing the correct information in the next edition.

Mr. Detmer asked if anyone had seen the front page of the Star Democrat. He wanted to let everyone know that he always refers his colleagues to Director Dales, he had nothing to do with the article and gave no insight. The City has had a difficult process and it has been contentious. He applauded the staff for being proactive.

Ms. Dales wanted to inform the Board that the City's vendor requested the voter list to only include active voters' first name, last name, voter ID, address, and ward. They did not want any other information included, like date-of-birth or inactive voters' information. There is no provisional way for inactive voters to vote that day, that Ms. Dales is aware of.

Mr. Corkran mentioned that the City was previously trying to get on the Presidential ballot. Ms. Dales said this process is getting them on the road to running their election themselves.

Closed Session:

- **There was no need for a closed session.**

Confirmation of Next Meeting:

Mr. Corkran asked if they will all meet here, at the County Office Building, on Election Day. Mr. Detmer suggested meeting for lunch. He and Mr. Batson can visit the North Dorchester High School. Mr. Corkran and Mr. Lewis will visit the Cambridge – South Dorchester High School. Director Dales will give the Board their Evaluation forms at the Vote by Mail 1 Canvass meeting on Thursday, October 22 at 9:00 AM. Mr. Detmer said they will firm up their plans for Election Day on the 22nd.

Adjournment:

Mr. Corkran motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Batson. The meeting adjourned at 11:18 AM.

APPROVED:

Michael Decker

William E. Catson

Robin Willey

Tom M. White

Rhonda L. J.

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