

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street, Easton, MD 21601
Board of Elections Meeting Room

Monday, September 08, 2025

Present:

Board

Susan J. MacKinnon, President
Gugy Irving, III, Secretary
Barbara H. Perry, Member
Walter W. Black, Member

Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

Staff

Tammy Stafford, Election Director
Donna Kegley-Hacker, Election Program Manager II

Members of the Public

Kathi Bangert, League of Women Voters of the Mid-Shore
Steve Funderburk, Self
Terrence Bernard, Self
Shari Wilcoxon, Self
Gary Judy, Self
Mark Harrison, Self
Mary Yancey, Self
Sarah Akridge, League of Women Voters of the Mid-Shore
Clay Stamp, Talbot County Government

Absent/Excused:

Board

Denise Lovelady, Vice President

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. MacKinnon called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. She welcomed the public, announced that a sign-in sheet and copies of the agenda were available, and reviewed key elements of the Public Comment protocols, which are also listed in the next to the last paragraph on the agenda.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

With one Board member not in attendance, Ms. MacKinnon declared that a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

CLOSED MEETING SUMMARY

Ms. MacKinnon asked Board Attorney Ms. Ryan to give the summary of the Closed Meeting. Ms. Ryan announced that the Board met in a closed meeting on August 12, 2025, from 10:05 a.m.- 11:21 a.m. to discuss a personnel matter regarding a specific individual. Ms. Ryan stated that no decisions were made at that meeting.

APPROVAL OF OPEN MINUTES- 07/16/2025 Open Board Meeting

Minutes from the Open Board Meeting held on 07/16/25 were mailed in Board packets to members and were posted on the LBE website, allowing for review prior to this meeting. Ms. MacKinnon called for any corrections to the minutes. There were none. Mr. Black motioned to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Irving. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Perry motioned to approve the agenda as written. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. MacKinnon opened the floor for public comments. Four members of the public spoke.

1. Mr. Judy expressed concern about parity of Election Judges for the 2026 Election. He stated that Election Law requires parity but that the numbers were not equal in 2024 or in years past. He stated that “we” know there were more than enough Republican volunteers in 2024. He stated that the count was 61 Democrats, 53 Republicans, and 10 Independents. He stated that it appears now that Election Law may have changed, effective 10/01/2025, and quoted from the TCLBE website. He stated that “we” take special notice to the phrase “to the extent practicable”, what does that mean? He stated that it is so far trending that “we” will have more than enough Republican volunteers to be Election Judges and that as of 09/08/25 there is ample time to train them so that there will be an equal number of Republican and Democrat judges. “We” will be paying close attention to this.
2. Mr. Bernard stated he was really puzzled by the video and most of the time when he gets home there is no audio. He added that he hoped the video of the Board meetings

has finally been perfected so that the public can actually hear. He added that we're all professionals in our own way.

He added that so much of the time "you" specify that we must follow your rules. We give you feedback and you should spend more time listening to the public; this is a public forum.

3. Ms. Wilcoxon thanked Ms. Perry for the minutes accurately reflecting her statements from the last meeting. (Ms. Perry does not prepare the minutes.) However, Ms. Wilcoxon stated that since her letter from 11/13/2024 was not attached to the minutes and posted for the public, she would read the letter aloud, which she did. Ms. Wilcoxon stated that she knew others who had written letters also.
4. Ms. Yancey stated that the agenda today includes considering polling place locations. She stated that she agreed with the list as proposed. However, she asked about 01005, the Talbot County Community Center and whether or not it was accessible by voters without automobiles and if not was there another possibility for voters who do not have a car.

ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Stafford's written report which was mailed in the Board packets for review prior to the meeting is attached to these minutes. Ms. Stafford highlighted all key areas of the report.

One date correction was made. Under Upcoming Meetings/Events- the last date should be October 19, 2025 (not 2024 as typed).

BOARD ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Ms. Ryan stated that, at the request of Ms. Lovelady, she sent an email to the Board with the legislative updates related to Election Law. She asked if the Board wanted anything additional. The members stated that they had the information previously provided by Ms. Ryan and could refer back if needed.

Ms. Stafford asked Ms. Ryan if she would report on the Open Meetings Act complaint.

Ms. Ryan stated that there was an Open Meetings Act complaint relating to the Board of Canvassers canvass meeting minutes. She stated that she believed that every jurisdiction in Maryland received this same complaint. Ms. Ryan stated that the LBE was found not in violation and that she would provide more detailed information at the next Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Facility for the Election Office

Ms. Stafford stated that she had no updates for this meeting.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that she wants to keep this topic on the agenda because she wants to make sure it stays on the Board's and the County's radar that the LBE may potentially need additional space.

B. Public Comment Policy

Ms. MacKinnon stated that at the last meeting the Board received, reviewed, and suggested edits to the draft that the Board Attorney, Ms. Ryan, prepared.

The revised document was mailed as part of the meeting packet and was posted on the LBE website which allowed time for review. Mr. Irving made a motion to accept the Public Comment Policy as revised. Ms. Perry seconded the motion. There were no questions or further discussion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Polling Place Assignments

All documents were mailed in the Board packets and were posted on the LBE website.

Drop Box Assignments

Ms. Stafford presented the Drop Box assignments, which remain unchanged from the 2024 Election Cycle.

Mr. Irving commented that they were in close proximity to each other. Ms. Stafford explained that the LBE is required to have a drop box at the office and the second one is located at the Early Voting Center, a location that a lot of voters are familiar with.

Mr. Irving asked if location was determined by County population to which Ms. Stafford replied yes.

Ms. Perry asked that if the county could have another drop box if the population was different. Ms. Stafford replied that the Board deemed it necessary to have another drop box, we could add another. Ms. Ryan added that this would require a request be submitted to SBE.

Mr. Irving asked if Ms. Stafford knew the number of voters using the ballot drop boxes. Ms. Stafford replied that she did not have this figure of the top of her head but stated quite a few voters using the drop boxes.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that data is available.

Ms. Ryan asked what would the process be to request an additional drop box. Ms. Stafford responded that property owner approval would be needed and a survey to determine if it meets the requirements of the polling place plan. If the LBE and Board determined it was needed and approved, a request would then need to go to SBE.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if it is the same criteria used for selecting the locations for drop boxes as Early Voting or polling places, to which Ms. Stafford replied, yes.

Mr. Black asked about a drop box location in St. Michaels. Ms. Stafford replied that this had not been a location in the past but the Board could consider it. The LBE would also have to inquire with SBE to determine if a third drop box would be available for our county.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that drop box locations are based on voter density. Ms. Stafford confirmed this.

Mr. Black asked if there were any geographical concerns. Ms. Stafford replied that there had not been in the past. Many people in the county travel to Easton regularly and there has been no negative feedback received from voters regarding the drop box locations.

Mr. Black stated that he still felt it was a long way to come to vote (by drop box).

Ms. Perry stated that voters travel to Easton for Early Voting.

Ms. Stafford stated that 90% of voters are within 10 miles of the current/proposed ballot drop box locations.

Following this discussion, Mr. Black made a motion to approve the Drop Box Assignments as proposed. Mr. Irving seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

Early Voting and Early Voting Alternative Site Assignment

Ms. Stafford presented the Early Voting and Early Voting Alternative Site Assignment, which remain unchanged from the 2024 Election Cycle.

There were no questions or additional discussion. Ms. Perry motioned to accept the Early Voting and Early Voting Alternative Site Assignment as presented. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

Election Day Polling Place Assignments

Ms. Stafford presented ten Election Day Polling Place Assignments, which remain unchanged from the 2024 Election Cycle.

Mr. Black asked if all were approved by the entities that own/control them. Ms. Stafford replied that MOUs have been sent to each and are in the process of being returned by each location.

Ms. MacKinnon replied that she was happy to see St. Michaels Middle/High School and Easton High School again proposed as polling places.

Mr. Irving made a motion to accept the Election Day Polling Place Assignments as proposed. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

Ms. Stafford announced that the full Polling Place Plans will be presented at the October Board meeting.

B. Board Correspondence

Ms. MacKinnon stated that there was a question about how staff should deal with emails addressed to Board members when the subject matter is not Board business. Ms. MacKinnon stated that this discussion would be deferred until the next meeting since Ms. Lovelady is not present today.

BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. MacKinnon stated that Board Comments is a new item and allows Board members the opportunity to make any comments they wish.

Mr. Black asked about Election Judge parity and how it is currently looking.

Ms. Stafford replied that there has been an increase interest in Election Judges and we have a very good response rate from returning judges about their intentions to serve again in 2026. She added that the office continues to accept interest from voters who would like to serve as Election Judges.

Mr. Black asked how is the parity.

Ms. Stafford stated we are doing well in regards to the number of voters expressing interest in serving. She added that interest in serving tends to be focused in one area and that makes it more difficult to staff smaller polling places. We have seen an increase in serving from both parties. Ms. Stafford emphasized that it is always the intention of the LBE to be as party

balanced as possible. She added that it is too early in the process to say what the Election Judge parity is going to look like for the 2026 Elections.

Ms. Perry added that we have to wait and see who completes the training because people drop out.

Ms. Stafford said the window to train is 1-2 months before the election. We are planning that schedule now.

Ms. Stafford reminded everyone that recruitment of Election Judges is a fluid process. She added that 100% showed up for 2024 (General Election) and many are planning to return.

Mr. Black then asked if the staff position left vacant by the resignation of Mr. Thomas would be filled.

Ms. Stafford replied yes.

There were no other Board comments made.

DISCLOSURES

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any Board disclosures to report.

There were none.

CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. in the LBE meeting room.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. MacKinnon announced that the Board would be going into Closed Session.

Mr. Black motioned to go into closed session. Mr. Irving seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by all members present. Ms. Ryan clarified that the closed session was to discuss a personnel matter.

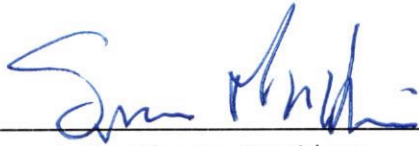
The Board met in closed session beginning at 10:12 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board did not return from closed session. A statement about the Closed Session will be provided at the next Open Meeting.

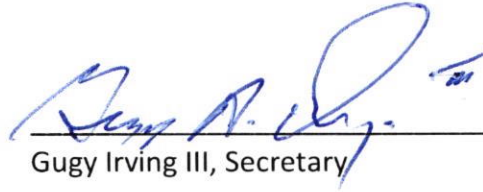
Minutes prepared by: Donna Kegley-Hacker

Attested,



Susan J. MacKinnon, President

Reviewed and submitted,



Gagy Irving III, Secretary

TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ELECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 8, 2025

Notice and Distribution of Materials

Meeting materials were prepared and mailed to Board Members, August 26, 2025.

The agenda and meeting materials for the September meeting were posted on the Board of Elections web page and the entrances to the office and building at 215 Bay Street, Easton, MD, August 26, 2025.

Personnel:

As of September 3, 2025, Larry Thomas has left the Talbot County Board of Elections. He has accepted a position with the Caroline County Board of Elections. We appreciate the work that Larry did while on staff with the Talbot County Board of Elections and wish him all the best in his new position.

Meetings Attended:

I attended monthly meetings with SBE and MAEO.

Correspondence:

Nothing to report at this time.

Voter Registration Activities:

Monthly Statistical Report- The Report was distributed to board members in the monthly packet. As of July 24, 2025, there were 28,741 active registered voters in Talbot County.

Voting System Activities:

Staff is preparing to replace all of the CMOS batteries in the ballot marking devices and DS200s for the 2026 election. This should be occurring between now and early September.

Candidate Filing:

Candidate filing began February 25, 2025 for the 2026 Gubernatorial Election cycle. The deadline to file is February 24, 2026. The list of local races can be found on our website.

Precinct and Polling Issues:

Staff is working on Polling Place Plans for the 2026 election cycle. They will be presented to the Board at the October monthly meeting.

Election Judge Recruitment is ongoing. We have quite a few judges returning and we have also seen an increase in interest in serving as election judges in Talbot County since the 2024 election.

Budget:

A report documenting Board of Elections Expenditures for FY2026 was included in your board packet.

Other projects:

The update on the webpage is continuing and should be complete by the October meeting.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Constitution Week September 17- September 24, 2025

Constitution Day September 17, 2025

National Voter Education Week October 6- October 10, 2025. We will be at the Easton Branch of the Talbot County Public Library Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Saturday, October 19, 2024 Community Resource Expo