

Attendees: David McManus, Chair
Patrick J. Hogan, Vice Chair
Michael R. Cogan, Member
Kelley A. Howells, Member
Bobbie Mack, Member
Linda H. Lamone, State Administrator
Jeff Darsie, Assistant Attorney General
Nikki Charlson, Deputy Administrator
Donna Duncan, Assistant Deputy for Election Policy
Mary Cramer Wagner, Director, Voter Registration
Steve Galloway, NVSR Project Team
Rachel Rachfel, NVSR Project Team

Also Present: Jim Shalleck, Chair, Montgomery County Board of Elections
Nahid Khozeinich, Montgomery County Board of Elections
Margaret Jurgensen, Election Director, Montgomery County Board of Elections
Ralph Watkins, League of Women Voters
Lewis Porter, Maryland 20-20 Watch
John O'Malley, Montgomery County

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

Mr. McManus called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm and confirmed that a quorum of the State Board of Elections was present. Mr. McManus stated that the meeting was being recorded.

EARLY VOTING CENTERS

Ms. Charlson presented the proposed early voting centers for Montgomery County and displayed a map showing the percentage of that county's voters that reside within 5 miles of one of the proposed early voting centers. The Montgomery County Board of Elections' revised proposal has the same nine early voting centers as the 2014 elections and a request for the General Assembly to designate a tenth early voting center, which will be located in Potomac.

Jim Shalleck, President of the Montgomery County Board of Elections, reported that the Montgomery County Board of Elections unanimously approved the nine centers from the 2014 elections and unanimously agreed to request that the General Assembly approve a tenth site, which will be located in Potomac. He also reported that there may be interest by the General Assembly to authorize additional centers.

Mr. McManus noted that, while he will give deference to the local board and vote to approve the proposed centers, he is still concerned that suburban and rural voters are being underserved. Mr. Hogan expressed his support for more early voting centers but does not want to specify the number of centers.

Ms. Lamone stated that the State Board does not usually take a position on legislation but provides administrative information on the impact of a bill. She noted that the fiscal note associated with legislation adding early voting centers will likely have a high fiscal note. Ms. Mack stated her concern with the fiscal note and the need for funds for voter outreach and

education. Mr. Cogan noted his support for additional early voting center while acknowledging the fiscal impact.

In response to a question from Mr. Shalleck about whether the State Board must approve the tenth center in Montgomery County, Mr. McManus stated that it would depend on how the legislation was written.

Ms. Mack made a motion to approve the recommendations of the Montgomery County Board of Elections and the State Administrator, and Mr. Cogan seconded the motion.

Lewis Porter stated that Montgomery County does not need a tenth early voting center and noted that four of the proposed early voting centers cover neighboring counties and Washington D.C. He expressed his support for early voting centers that are more spread out throughout the county.

John P. O'Malley distributed a handout showing precinct results from the 2012 Presidential Election by party. He stated that early voting centers were deliberately placed where Democrats live and that rural voters and Republican voters are not served by early voting centers. Mr. O'Malley recommended that the regulations be rewritten so that rural voters are no longer subject to voter discrimination.

The motion to approve the recommendations of the Montgomery County Board of Elections and the State Administrator was approved unanimously.

There was a discussion about whether the State Board should recommend to the Governor and General Assembly additional early voting centers for Montgomery County if necessary and if resources are available by local jurisdictions and the State. Ms. Howells stated that early voting is an expensive convenience and is difficult for volunteers to manage early voting activities. She noted that early voting is not needed because absentee voting is available to all voters and that voter turnout is not the responsibility of the State. Ms. Mack expressed her support for early voting but does not believe that early voting centers should saturate an area. She noted that voters prefer to vote in person rather than voting by absentee ballot. Mr. Cogan agreed with Ms. Howells but noted that the State Board must support the efforts of the local boards of elections and the General Assembly makes decisions on how to allocate funds. Mr. McManus expressed his strong support for election day voting.

Mr. Hogan made a motion to recommend to the Governor and General Assembly additional early voting centers for Montgomery County if necessary and if resources are available by local jurisdictions and the State, and Mr. Cogan seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote, with Ms. Mack opposing.

There was a subsequent motion to amend the recommendation to remove the reference to Montgomery County and make the recommendation apply statewide. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote, with Ms. Howells opposing.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Lamone reported on the on-going mock election. The mock election included pre-election logic and accuracy testing of the voting equipment, early voting, election day, election night results reports, and 100% verification of results. She noted that the mock election generally went smoothly and it was time well spent. Mr. McManus asked if the State Board could issue a press release about the successful mock election and recognized the agency's Facebook activity. Ms. Duncan introduced Rachel Rachfel and thanked her for her efforts. Ms. Jurgensen agreed that it was helpful to work through the processes.

DISCLOSURE OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

None.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 13, 2015 at 11:00 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Howells made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Cogan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McManus adjourned the meeting at 4:54 pm.