

Howard County Board of Elections
8900 Columbia 100 Parkway
Columbia, MD 21045
July 07, 2009

Present:

Ann M. Balcerzak, President
Donna K. Thewes, Vice-President
Raymond M. Rankin, Member
Charles M. Coles, Jr., Substitute
Donna L. Rice, Substitute
Michael S. Molinaro, Board Counsel
Vivian L. Dixon, Board Secretary

Staff: Betty L. Nordaas, Director
Guy C. Mickley, Deputy Director

Ms. Balcerzak called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM, followed by Pledge of Allegiance. All members were present, constituting a quorum.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Balcerzak deferred approval of Minutes.

Correspondence: Copy of letter to West & Associates, mail/received by Board Members.

MAEO Conference Highlights:

- Ms. Balcerzak deemed the MAEO Conference to be excellent, in terms of a learning experience and asked that her appreciation be given to Guy Mickley as the President of MAEO. Highlighting the appreciation for having to run two different elections at the same time with new machines would take top priority.
- Ms. Thewes found the Conference most informative. Especially the Board Break-out Sessions and interesting presentations of Guest Speakers.

President:

- President acknowledged and thanked Donna Thewes, Guy Mickley and Vivian Dixon for participating in the annual Howard County Board of Education Simulated Congressional Hearings.
- In light of current economic times, a policy relating to travel by Board Members to be placed on August Agenda. Ms. Nordaas asked to share Guidelines associated with staff travel.
- President thanked Guy Mickley for executing the July 6th News Release - Election Board Votes for Voluntary Furlough, and Mr. Rankin for proposing the issue that was unanimously supported by the Board.

Directors Report:

- Particulars for August 4th Staff Appreciation Day was discussed.
Board will explore what their contribution will be (no County funds will be used).

Attorney's Report:

- MAEO's Attorney Session was very active, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm (5-hours), including a working lunch.
- Attorneys from eleven (11), Counties attended and Sandy Brantley, Asst. Attorney General, Ross Goldstein, Deputy Administrator, Nikki Trella, Dir. Election Reform Division were in Attorney Session.
- Briefed on new legislation ref: Early Voting Law and SBE need to establish standards for Counties to follow this Fall.
- Feasibility and cost of printing machines to accommodate "on demand" printing of Ballots for Early Voting is yet to be determined.
- SBE's goal to have Contract for Optical Scan equipment by end of calendar year.
- During discussion of petitions as related to Doe Case, gave Board Counsel an opportunity to share what evolved in HC.
- A lengthy and controversial discussion of "double voter" referrals and failure of State Prosecutor to provide feedback or to take any action took place. Although Atty. Goldstein and Ms. Trella reported having met recently with States Prosecutor to talk about referrals to his office, they had no answers to offer.
- The need to have more "conference calls" was agreed upon. The Early Voting Guideline standards will be the opportune time for Counsels to talk. (*Atty. Molinaro will notify Ms. Nordaas, Director and Ms. Balcerzak, Board President of Conference Call schedule to allow for their participation*)

Old Business: Board Secretary noted that Agenda clarified the items carried over from June 22nd Meeting. No further discussion required.

Approval of Minutes: Review and approval of minutes of Meetings was delayed for close review. Motions to accept the Open/Executive Minutes of March 12, 2009 and Open/Executive Minutes of March 23, 2009, were made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Mr. Rankin raised the issue of considering polling site discussion in open vs. closed session. Board President agreed noting that last months discussion in Executive Session was to get legal advice on requirements of Election Law. Board unanimously agreed not to convene in Executive Session.

Director: Handouts for revised polling locations were provided, followed by discussion on anticipated growth. Action item from last Board meeting was to research options for combining and relocating polling sites to comply with Law while not inconveniencing voters. Board Member Rankin and the Director raised and discussed at length the pros and cons of proposed actions. Although the Board reached agreement on some changes, Mr. Rankin expressed concerns and his dissent was recorded and noted. Locations were to bring HCBE in compliance with MD State Elections Law.

The Next meeting of the Howard County Board of Elections is scheduled for August 24, 2009 at 4:00 PM in the Howard County Board of Elections Boardroom.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and unanimously agreed upon. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Vivian L. Dixon 24 Aug 09
Vivian L. Dixon, Board Secretary

Ann M. Balcerzak 24 Aug 09
Ann M. Balcerzak, Board President