



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
February 20, 2024
17718 Virginia Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740
240-313-2050

Present:

Board:

Tammy Downin, President
Kandace Carpenter, Vice President
Donna Brightman, Board Secretary
Nancy Armstrong, Assistant Secretary
Claudia Martin, Member

Staff:

Barry Jackson, Election Director II
Teresa Morningstar, Election Deputy Director II
Sarah Hall, Election Program Specialist I

Absent:

Brian Kane, Board Attorney

Guest:

List of Public Speakers Attached

President Tammy Downin called the Special Meeting to order at 5:01pm at the Washington County Election Center, 17718 Virginia Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740. There was a quorum present.

Declaration of Quorum Present:

President Tammy Downin declared that a quorum was present.

Recess and Opening of Executive Session:

President Tammy Downin called for a motion to recess the Special Board Meeting and open the Executive Session. Claudia Martin made a motion at 5:02pm to go into Executive Session. Kandace Carpenter seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

SUMMARY OF CLOSED SESSION HELD ON February 20, 2024

1. Statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session:

Time of closed session: 5:02 pm

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Place (location) of closed session: Election Center 17718 Virginia Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740.

Purpose of the closed session: (7) To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter; and (8) consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

2. Record of the vote of each member as to closing the session:

Names of members voting aye: Tammy Downin, Donna Brightman, Kandace Carpenter, Nancy Armstrong, Claudia Martin

Members opposed: None

Abstaining: None

3. Statutory authority to close session:

This meeting was closed under the following provisions of General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b):

Topic #1: § 3-305(b) (7) Topic #2: § 3-305(b) (8) Topic #3: § 3-305(b) ()
(add others as needed)

4. Listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:

Topic description	Persons present for discussion	Action Taken/Each Recorded Vote
#1: Mediation	Tammy Downin, Kandace Carpenter, Donna Brightman, Nancy Armstrong, Claudia Martin, Barry Jackson, Teresa Morningstar, Brian Kane, Sarah Hall	None
#2 Mediation	Tammy Downin, Kandace Carpenter, Donna Brightman, Nancy Armstrong, Claudia Martin, Barry Jackson, Teresa Morningstar, Brian Kane, Sarah Hall	None

Brian Kane left the Executive Session at 6:00pm. After the discussion was completed, Nancy Armstrong made the motion to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene the regular session of the Special Meeting at 6:17pm. Donna Brightman seconded, and four parties voted aye. Claudia Martin was not present for the vote. Tammy Downin called the Special Meeting to order at 6:26pm.

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Unfinished Business:

1. Early Voting

As recommended by the State Supreme Court ordered mediation, Barry Jackson proposed to the Board that the Washington County Free Library, Smithsburg Branch be the second Early Voting Center location for Washington County. The Smithsburg Library is handicapped accessible, on a County Commuter line, near heavily populated areas, and reaches a larger number of unique voters than other locations that were considered. Tammy Downin opened up the meeting to public comment. Each participant would receive 1 minute to address the Board.

Cathy Poropatic stated that she was at the Smithsburg Library last week and, in her opinion, the facility is small for an Early Voting Center location. Barry Jackson clarified that, although the facility is small, there is enough space for an Early Voting Center location. Cathy also does not think the area surrounding the library is very heavily populated.

Corvus Crump stated that he is a long time Hagerstown resident. After reviewing the packet, he noted that various organizations have recommended the downtown Hagerstown Library and wondered why that location was not suggested today.

John Gundling, also a long time Hagerstown resident, expressed the opinion that the downtown Hagerstown library has no place to park and the location is not really feasible to anybody who does not already live downtown. It was his understanding that transportation will be provided to the downtown residents for the Election Center location. John noted that the number of unique voters being reached would go up if the location was outside of the range of the downtown library.

Bonnie Saunders stated that after reading the State Board's comments regarding disenfranchised voter, she believes that the downtown Hagerstown Library would satisfy the conditions set by the State.

Derek Harvey stated that most of downtown Hagerstown voters reside within a 5-mile radius of the Election Center itself. Thus, the Election Center does satisfy the State's recommendations for the downtown population already.

Joyce Shull stated that, in her opinion, the Hagerstown Library does satisfy all the recommendations for the handicap accessibility. She found the downtown Hagerstown Library location to be the easiest and most accessible.

Corvus Crump wanted to reiterate his support for the Hagerstown library and asked, "Why would the library not be considered at this time?"

Tammy Downin reminded everyone that the Board will not entertain questions for this meeting, just comments from the public..

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Cathy Poropatic also wanted to reiterate her support for the Hagerstown Library and its accessibility. As a resident of Hagerstown, she wanted the Hagerstown Library to be considered over the Smithsburg Library as a viable Early Voting Center location.

After all public comments, Tammy Downin called for a motion. Kandace Carpenter moved to:

“Designate a second requisite Early Voting Center in Smithsburg at the Washington County Free Library, Smithsburg Branch located at 66 West Water Street, Smithsburg, MD 21783 for the conduct of the early voting periods in Washington County during the 2024 Presidential Primary and General elections, subject to the pending litigation commenced in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County as Derek Harvey, et al. v. Jared DeMarinis, et al., No. C-02-CV-23-002315, and subject further to any order of the Supreme Court of Maryland in such litigation.”

Nancy Armstrong seconded. Tammy Downin asked if there was any discussion regarding the motion. Donna Brightman apologized to the public for confusion about tonight’s meeting’s purpose. Donna Brightman stated that the Board “has been threatened...the plaintiff’s and commissioners have threatened” the Board to make a decision that the plaintiffs would find favorable.


Tammy Downin called for a vote on the motion. Kandace Carpenter and Nancy Armstrong voted aye for the motion as written/read. Claudia Martin and Donna Brightman voted nay. Tammy Downin commented that a decision tonight would allow the process to move forward and voted aye. The motion passed at 6:42pm.

Adjournment:


There being no further comments at this time, Tammy Downin called for a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting at 6:42pm. Kandace Carpenter made the motion and Nancy Armstrong seconded and all parties voted aye. The Special Session was adjourned at 6:42pm.

Compiled by Sarah Hall
Election Program Specialist I

Respectfully Submitted,

 3/12/24

Tammy Downin, President Date

 3/12/24

Donna Brightman, Secretary Date

Washington County Board of Elections
Board Meeting
Date: February 20, 2024

	Name (please print)	Organization
1.	Nancy Allen	Self-citizen
2.	William A. Wren	Self Citizen
3.	✓ Derek HARVEY	Self
4.	✓ John Gundling	Self
5.	Adam Breivell	WLRC
6.	Patrick Leone	Self
7.	Roccia's	Self
8.	✓ Joyce Shull	Wash County Dem C.
9.	✓ Bonnie Saunders	Self
10.	✓ Cathy Poropatic	self
11.	Kaye Robucci	self
12.	Kathy Clark	Self
13.	✓ Corvus Group	Self