

City of Takoma Park, Maryland
Takoma Park Board of Elections
Official Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 14, 2016
7:30pm - Third Floor Council Conference Room
Takoma Park Community Center - Sam Abbott Citizens' Center

Present: Greg Lebel, Jim Roberts, Arthur David Olson, Marilyn Abbot, Jessie Carpenter, Ken Sigman

Minutes Taker: Brian Ernst

1. **Call to order:** 7:34pm
2. **Board Business:** The board chair noted that officer positions will need to be discussed at a later meeting. The board still has one vacancy for Ward 6.
3. **Review and Approval of Agenda:** Approved
4. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the February 8, 2016 approved as amended.
5. **Synchronization of City election with State Elections**
 - a. *Update from City Clerk.* Jessie has sent a letter to the State of Maryland regarding the timeline for requesting that Takoma Park's elections be combined with the state. She has not yet received a response. Jessie also contacted the county board and received the contact information of the assistant director of the state board of elections.
 - i. Ocean City - Jessie also reported on a discussion with the Ocean City city clerk regarding their recent synchronization with state and federal elections. Jessie noted that Ocean City has not unified with the state ballot. Instead, they have a concurrent election at the community center.
 - b. *HB 1032 Montgomery County:* Jessie distributed the fiscal analysis for HB 1032, which describes the cost for one-time modifications to the state voter registration database in order to include voters that are unique to Montgomery County. The fiscal note estimates a cost of \$250,000.
 - c. *HB 1116 Montgomery County:* Jessie also distributed the fiscal analysis for HB 1116, which describes the cost for modifying the polling machines to accommodate a ranked choice voting system. The county estimated a one-time cost of \$25,000.
 - d. *Questions to the state:* The board decided to send questions to the state on the following issue areas: the possibility of adding IRV to the ballot, incorporating Takoma Park only voters to the state registration database, using Takoma Park only ballots, and conducting same day election registration. The board will send them to the County Board for review and then later to the state.

- e. *Options for synchronization:* The board also discussed the options for synchronization, and proposed the several options for presentation to the city council. Plan A would be total unification, in which Takoma Park was able to align all its practices with the State Board of Elections. Plan B would be synchronization, in which Takoma Park elections occur on the same day and location as the county, state, and national elections but in a separate process. Plan C would keep our current system but simply change the date of the elections.
 - f. *City Charter amendment:* The board discussed the possibility of a city charter amendment with assistant city attorney Ken Sigman. The board asked about a contingent amendment to the city charter, but Ken noted that it would be an awkward method of attempting to prepare for the election changes and recommended choosing a path forward before amending the charter.
6. **Other Business:** The board thanked Ken Sigman for attending the meeting and for his assistance with inquiries on synchronization and changes to the city charter. The board looked at the schedule for attending street festivals this summer and fall and will consider this next meeting.
7. **Next Meeting:** April 18, 7:30pm
8. **Adjournment:** 8:52pm