



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Office of Audits and Investigations

May 6, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Derrick L. Davis, Chair
 Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee (GFP)

THRU: David H. Van Dyke, County Auditor *DHV*
 Turkessa M. Green, Deputy County Auditor *TMG*

FROM: Jude S. Moise, Staff Auditor *JSM*

RE: Board of Elections
 Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Review

Budget Overview

The FY 2020 Proposed Budget for the Board of Elections is \$6,121,500. This represents an increase of \$340,500, or 5.9%, over the FY 2019 Approved Budget. The increase is primarily due to compensation for anticipated cost-of-living adjustments and merit increases, fringe benefit costs, and compensation and training for additional Election Judges to meet Same Day Registration requirements. The Board's expenditures are funded entirely by the General Fund.

The Board initially reported that FY 2019 estimated total expenditures of \$6.1 million were expected to exceed the FY 2019 approved level of \$5.8 million. However, the Board is reporting that, based on an analysis of third quarter expenditures for FY 2019, a supplemental budget appropriation will not be needed.

Budget Comparison - General Fund

Approved Fiscal Year 2019 to Proposed Fiscal Year 2020

Category	FY2018 Actual	FY2019 Approved	FY2019 Estimated	% Change - Est vs App	FY2020 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Compensation	\$ 3,560,589	\$ 4,351,300	\$ 4,600,300	5.7%	\$ 4,480,500	\$ 129,200	3.0%
Fringe Benefits	452,979	531,200	575,000	8.2%	600,400	\$ 69,200	13.0%
Operating Expenses	673,527	898,500	944,500	5.1%	1,040,600	\$ 142,100	15.8%
Capital Outlay	9,297	-	-	N/A	-	\$ -	N/A
Total	\$ 4,696,392	\$ 5,781,000	\$ 6,119,800	5.9%	\$ 6,121,500	\$ 340,500	5.9%

Authorized Staffing Count - General Fund

	FY 2019 Approved	FY 2020 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Full-Time	18	18	0	0.0%
Total	18	18	0	0.0%

Staffing Changes and Compensation

- The FY 2020 Proposed Budget includes authorization for 18 full-time General Fund positions, the same as the FY 2019 approved level.
- As of March 26, 2019, the Board reported three (3) full-time vacant positions. All three (3) positions are funded in the FY 2020 Proposed Budget.
- Compensation is proposed to increase by \$129,200, or 3.0%, over the FY 2019 approved level. The increase is primarily due to anticipated cost-of-living adjustments and merit increases, as well as the addition of Election Judges for Same Day Registration.
- The Board reported that it did not have any staff turnover in FY 2019. The Board cites a key factor that contributed to past attrition levels is staff retirements.
- The following table provides the Board’s rate of attrition for the last five fiscal years.

Attrition Rate - Historical Trend					
	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019 (YTD)
# of Separations	0	0	2	1	0
# of Filled Positions	16	15	13	13	15
Rate of Attrition	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	7.7%	0.0%

Source: Responses to 1st Round Questions provided to A&I during budget reviews.

- The table on the following page compares the FY 2019 actual number of Election Day temporary employees to the FY 2020 actual amount.

Election Day Temporary Employees		
Descriptions	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Projected
Early Voting Election Judges (including Chiefs, provisional)	2,203	2,816
Election Day Election Judges (including Chief, provisionals and closing)	3,493	4,315
Election Day Judge Trainers / Election Day Recruiters	14	14
Election Day Technicians and Telephone Operators	438	395
Voter Registration, Absentee Ballot Data Entry	50	50
Data Coordinators, Voting Unit Programmers	45	45
Department of the Environment Staff Drivers	25	25
Canvass (Workers, Board, Security)	68	61
Public Safety (Office of the Sheriff, Police Department)	9	9
Board Members	8	8
Summer Youth	6	5
TOTAL	6,359	7,743

- Funding is provided for 13 individuals (General Clerks, Data Coordinators and an Absentee Clerk) through personal service contracts to process voter registration and absentee ballots, as well as to conduct site surveys. Personal service contracts in the amount of \$418,900 are proposed for FY 2020.
- The Board consists of five (5) members – the President is paid \$11,000 a year, the other members are paid \$10,000 a year, and the alternate Board members are paid \$200 per meeting. The current members are as follows:

Board Members

John E. Rowe (R), President
 Beatrice P. Tignor (D), Vice-President
 Thomas J. Slezak (R)
 Roberta B. Deegan (R)
 Jaime J. Vazquez-Saldana (R)

Alternate Board Members

Olivia D. Vaughns (R)
 Clement A. Gaynor (R)
 Lester W. Jones (D)

Fringe Benefits

- FY 2020 Fringe Benefits are proposed at \$600,400, an increase of \$69,200, or 13.0%, over the FY 2019 approved level, to align with actual expenses.
- A five-year trend analysis of fringe benefit expenditures is included below.

Fringe Benefits Historical Trend					
	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimated	FY 2020 Proposed
Fringe Benefit Expenditures	\$ 455,669	\$ 536,369	\$ 452,979	\$ 575,000	\$ 600,400
As a % of Compensation	12.4%	13.3%	12.7%	12.5%	13.4%
Annual % Change		17.7%	-15.5%	26.9%	4.4%

Operating Expenses

- The FY 2020 operating expenses are proposed at \$1,040,600, or 15.8%, over the FY 2019 approved level. The operating expenses are comprised of the following major items:

• Training	\$257,500
• Gen. and Admin. Contracts	215,000
• Telephone	141,000
• Printing	131,000
• Office/Building Rental/Lease	85,000

- The accompanying table compares the FY 2020 Proposed Budget operating expenditures with the FY 2019 Approved Budget operating expenditures. In five (5) of the categories, the FY 2020 Proposed Budget increases planned spending from the FY 2019 budget. In eight (8) of the categories, the FY 2020 Proposed Budget level remains unchanged compared to the FY 2019 budget. FY 2020 expenditures decrease in two (2) categories.

Operating Objects	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2020 Proposed	FY 2019 - FY 2020	
			\$ Change	% Change
General & Administrative Contracts	\$ 140,000	\$ 215,000	\$ 75,000	53.6%
Training	217,500	257,500	40,000	18.4%
Printing	115,300	131,000	15,700	13.6%
Office Automation	56,000	67,400	11,400	20.4%
Office/Building Rental/Lease	83,500	85,000	1,500	1.8%
Telephone	141,000	141,000	-	0.0%
Advertising	46,700	46,700	-	0.0%
General Office Supplies	36,500	36,500	-	0.0%
Equipment Lease	30,000	30,000	-	0.0%
Other Operating Equipment	15,000	15,000	-	0.0%
Data-Voice	3,000	3,000	-	0.0%
Equipment Repair/Maintenance	1,600	1,600	-	0.0%
Membership Fees	400	400	-	0.0%
Periodicals	2,000	1,500	(500)	-25.0%
Mileage Reimbursement	10,000	9,000	(1,000)	-10.0%
TOTAL	\$ 898,500	\$1,040,600	\$ 142,100	15.8%

- The most significant increases between the FY 2020 Proposed Budget and the FY 2019 Approved Budget are in General and Administrative Contracts (\$75,000 increase), as a result of transferring funding for security staff that were previously budgeted as Other Compensation costs, and Training (\$40,000 increase) as a result of additional Judges needed for same-day registration in the upcoming FY 2020 election.
- Other increases include Printing costs (\$15,700 increase) for additional ballots, and Office Automation charges (\$11,400 increase) as a result of an increase in charges by the Office of Information Technology.
- The most significant reduction between the FY 2020 Proposed Budget and the FY 2019 Approved Budget is in Mileage Reimbursement (\$1,000 reduction) to align with actual costs.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Board attended several community outreach events this fiscal year, including student government elections, County Fairs/events, and homeowners and civic association meetings to inform voters of elections, voter registration, same day registration, and voting equipment. In FY 2019, the Board plans to attend an estimated 35 public outreach events.
- The Board reported that it developed a new training module for an Election Judge Training Program to offer Election Judges more hands-on training with the election equipment. The Board plans to spend \$2.9 million for voting equipment in FY 2020.
- The Board also reported that it increased the number of optical scanners during the 2018 General Election in an effort to reduce the voting lines. The Board anticipates a high turn-out during the 2020 Presidential Election and is planning to take precautions to ensure that wait times do not exceed 30 minutes.
- In FY 2019, the Board reported that one of its top priorities was to reduce the number of duplicate voters registered in various states utilizing the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). ERIC is a non-profit organization with the sole mission of assisting states in improving the accuracy of America's voter rolls and increasing access to voter registration for all eligible citizens. ERIC is governed and managed by states that choose to join. The Board reported that the system is serving its purpose and hopes to reduce even more duplicate voters in FY 2020.
- In FY 2020, Same Day Registration on Election Day will be implemented. The Board plans to hire 2-3 additional Election Judges per polling place to facilitate the new requirement. The hiring of the additional Election Judges has an estimated cost of \$146,000.
- The Board anticipates 285 voting precincts in FY 2020. Currently, the Board has 11 early voting sites across the County. The number of votes cast during General Election early voting have risen from 46,236 in FY 2015 to an estimated 103,298 in FY 2019.
- The Board stated that a major challenge that it will face over the next three years is protecting voter data and equipment from hackers. The Board reported that, considering all the foreign intrusion attempts into election networks on a national level, it will be critical for the Board of Elections and the Office of Information Technology, at both the State and Local levels, to ensure that the network, voter registration database, and all voting equipment are secured.
- The Board reported that the following legislative bills, which passed the Maryland General Assembly 2019 Session, may have an impact on the Board's operations and/or finances.
 - **HB 237** – This bill authorizes all counties, rather than only counties with fewer than a certain number of registered voters, to establish one (1) additional early voting center beyond the number required to be established, if the State Board of Elections (SBE), in collaboration with the local board of elections, and the governing body of the county agree to establish an additional early voting center.

The Board estimates a cost of \$87,800, if the County and the State Board of Elections decide to add an additional early voting center.

- **HB 286** – This bill establishes an exception to the voter registration deadline to allow an individual to appear, on election day, at a precinct polling place in the individual's county of residence and apply to register to vote; requiring an applicant for voter registration on election day to provide certain proof of residency; requiring the State Board of Elections to take appropriate measures to notify potential registrants of the correct precinct polling place for the potential registrants' residence addresses under certain circumstances; etc.

The Board reports that the funding needed for the additional Election Judges required, as a result of this bill, is included in the Board's FY 2020 Proposed Budget. Also, the Board reported that an estimated \$390,000, needed to purchase routers, antennas and other peripherals, was factored in the projected \$2.9 million for equipment included in the proposed FY 2020 Non-Departmental budget.

- **SB 364** – This bill establishes the Election Day Page Program to stimulate student interest in elections, provide assistance to election judges, and assist elderly and disabled voters at polling places; requiring the State Board of Elections to develop a page training program for use by participating local boards that includes the duties, responsibilities, and prohibited conduct of pages at polling places; requiring participating local boards, in collaboration with local school systems, to establish a procedure for the selection of pages; etc.

The Board anticipates that the Election Day Page Program will not have programmatic, operational or fiscal impact on its functions.