



City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364
www.rockvillemd.gov

240-314-5000
TTY 240-314-8137

May 30, 2024

Mayor Monique Ashton
Councilmember Kate Fulton
Councilmember Barry Jackson
Councilmember David Myles
Councilmember Izola Shaw
Councilmember Marissa Valeri
Councilmember Adam Van Grack

Re: Report of the Rockville Board of Supervisors of Elections on the 2023 Election

Dear Mayor Ashton and Members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Rockville Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE), I am submitting to you the attached report on the 2023 election. In that report, the BSE describes the conduct and results of that election; the BSE's own accomplishments in preparing for and administering the election; problems that arose during the election, the BSE's efforts to enforce Rockville's campaign finance law against violators; suggested changes to Chapter 8 of the City Code; and lessons learned as a result of the election.

As you know, in 2023, Rockville conducted its second vote-by-mail election. Despite the problems that arose, the election was highly successful. Voter registration increased and voter participation remained at the 2019 level, which was essentially double that in previous years in which voter participation had been declining. Moreover, the BSE has served municipal infraction citations on those persons and entities that violated Rockville's campaign finance laws.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work and support of the City Staff, particularly the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations and those in her office. The BSE acknowledges and appreciates that support.

The BSE looks forward to presenting the attached 2023 Election Report to the Mayor and Council on June 10, 2024. In the meantime, the BSE would like to make this report available to the Mayor and Council and the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert D. Kurnick".

Robert D. Kurnick, Chair
City of Rockville Board of Supervisors of Elections

Attachment

MAYOR
Monique Ashton

COUNCILMEMBERS
Kate Fulton
Barry Jackson
David Myles
Izola (Zola) Shaw
Marissa Valeri
Adam Van Grack

ACTING CITY MANAGER
Barack Matite

CITY CLERK/DIRECTOR OF
COUNCIL OPERATIONS
Sara Taylor-Ferrell

CITY ATTORNEY
Robert E. Dawson



Report of the Board of Supervisors of Elections on the 2023 Election

Board of Supervisors of Elections

Robert Kurnick, Chair

Clerk/DCO

Stephen Fisher

Cathy Sindos

David Sklar

Stephen Weiner

City of Rockville Staff

Sara Taylor-Ferrell, City

Judy Penny, Executive Assistant

Jennifer Dailey, Election Assistant



Overview

- Voter registration Increased
- Voter turnout remained at the 2019 level
- Voter database became more accurate
- BSE made new services available
 - Simplified CFRs
 - Outreach materials in Chinese
 - Ballot curing
 - Drop boxes
 - Second vote center
 - Spanish and Chinese translators at both vote centers
- Increase in cost was insubstantial
- Some Issues
- Process was accurate, fair, and transparent





Preparation for the 2023 Election

- Revising CFR forms
- Engaging in community outreach
- Proposing amendments to City Charter and City Code
- Conducting training sessions for candidates and treasurers
- Revising Candidate information packet
- Using mailings to update voter database
- And much more



Community Outreach

- Tables at community events
- Four mailings in English, Spanish, & Chinese
- Posters in the City of Rockville high schools
- Voter guide in Rockville Reports
- Visited each nursing and assisted living facility twice
- QR codes for other languages
- Election website
- Social media, videos, dedicated phone line, message boards, banners



Improvements to the Election Process

- Second vote center at Thomas Farm Community Center
- Additional indoor and outdoor drop boxes
- Ballot curing
- Spanish and Chinese translators at both vote centers
 - Mandarin and Cantonese



Voter Registration and Turnout 2011-2023

Election Year	Estimated Population	Registered Voters	Voter Percent
2011	62,102	36,840	6,240 / 16.94%
2013	63,736	40,494	6,685 / 16.51%
2015	66,673	40,749	6,468 / 15.87%
2019	68,268	39,395	12,287 / 31.18%
2023	67,117	40,975	12,770 / 31.16%

Data from US Census Bureau and October 2023 Voter Database File



Election Costs 2019 and 2023

Rockville Election Cost 2019 and 2023		
	2019	2023
VOTE		
Total Cost of election	\$193,540	\$208,214
Number of ballots cast	12,287	12,770
Cost per ballot (voter)	\$15.75	\$16.53

Increase cost of \$14,674 or 7.58% or 1.89% per year



Election Issues

- The Bainbridge Apartment Complex
 - Cause: GIS mistake when Mont. Co. redistricted
 - Solution: Computerized comparison of Rockville addresses with Rockville registered voters
- Some ballot packets delayed
 - Cause: Failure of State BOE to transmit addresses of those choosing web delivery
 - Solution: Review of database and addition of addresses by BSE and City Staff
- Inaccurate ballot tracking emails sent to voters (vendor)
 - Cause: Never adequately explained
 - Solution: Monitor accuracy in 2024 and 2026 elections
- Inadequate USPS sweep
 - Cause: USPS failure to sweep all postal facilities for ballots
 - Solution: Security Service will pick up ballots from postal facilities at the close of the election at 8 pm



Enforcement Actions

- After investigation, the BSE issued municipal infraction citations against:
 - Citizens Helping Elect Cheryl Kagan
For failing to include required disclaimer on campaign materials
 - Harold Hodges and Diane Lee
For failing to file any of the CFRs required by the City Code
 - Chair and treasurer of Our Revolution
For distributing text messages to voters without filing any of reports required by the City Code



Enforcement Actions

- After investigation, the BSE took no action against:
 - Affordable Maryland
 - Progressive Maryland
 - Rockville for Democracy
- Text messages and robocalls
- Candidate interviews



Recommended Changes to Chapter 8 of City Code

- Independent expenditures
- Definition of campaign materials
- Streamlined procedure for those who fail to file timely CFRs
- Earlier dates for nomination petitions and pre-election CFRs
- Reducing mailings from 4 to 3
- Protecting election workers and officials



Conclusions

- Overall election was successful
 - Registration increased
 - Number of voters increased
 - Turnout remained the same
 - Database became more accurate
- BSE made improvements
 - More effective outreach
 - More drop boxes
 - Second vote center
 - Translation services in Spanish, Chinese, and French with QR code
- There were some issues
- There were violations of City Code requiring enforcement
- Work of Rockville City Staff was exemplary
- We will continue to work to increase turnout and improve the election process





Rockville

Board of Supervisors of Elections

November 7, 2023

City Election Report

Board of Supervisors of Elections

Robert Kurnick, Chair

Stephen B. Weiner

Stephen Fisher

David Sklar

Catherine Sindos

City of Rockville Staff

Sara Taylor-Ferrell, City Clerk/Director of Council Operations

Judy Penny, Executive Assistant

Jennifer Dailey, Election Assistant

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
BSE ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2019–2023	2
WHY VBM?	4
CONDUCTING THE ELECTION	6
Updating the Voter Database	7
Conducting Community Outreach.....	7
Pre-Election Day Ballot Process.....	9
Vote Centers	10
Canvassing Ballots	10
Tabulating Ballots	10
ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING THE 2023 ELECTION	11
ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS	13
LESSONS LEARNED	16
PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 8 OF THE CITY CODE	17
CONCLUSIONS.....	20
APPENDICES	21
Appendix A: Voter Participation in City of Rockville Election 2011- 2023	21
Appendix B: Ballots Cast by District 2019 and 2023	22
Appendix C: All District Turnout 2011–2023.....	23
Appendix F: Comparison of 2019 and 2023 Election Costs	25
Appendix G: Comparison of 2019 and 2023 Election Costs	26
Appendix H: Votes Cast for Mayoral Candidates by District in 2023	27
Appendix I: Votes Cast for Councilmanic Candidates by District 2023	27
Appendix J: Voted Percentage by District and Year	28
Appendix K: Votes on Ballot Questions.....	29

INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Rockville conducted a successful Vote by Mail (VBM) election in which voters chose a Mayor and six members of the City Council. Voters also answered four advisory ballot questions.

There are many measures of success—some qualitative and some quantitative. Qualitative measures include fairness and openness. The City has a well-earned reputation for conducting fair and open elections. This election was fair and open. Rockville adopted VBM prior to the 2019 election, primarily to increase voter participation, a key quantitative measure of success. In that election, voter turnout nearly doubled from 16% in 2015 to 31% in 2019. Our success in significantly increasing voter turnout is one reason why many area jurisdictions have contacted the Office of the City Clerk for information and guidance on conducting their own VBM elections.

In other jurisdictions, Oregon for example, voter turnout decreased in the second VBM election but still remained higher than it had been prior to the adoption of VBM. In 2023, however, the turnout in Rockville's second VBM election, did *not* decrease. It remained at essentially the same level as in 2019.

In the period between elections, the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) experienced significant turnover. Three of the five BSE members joined the Board only months before the election. Nevertheless, the BSE not only successfully conducted the election, but also made several improvements in the election process, including simplifying campaign finance report forms; producing voter outreach materials in English, Spanish, and Chinese; providing several additional ballot drop boxes; offering ballot curing; operating a second vote center on Election Day; and stationing translators at both vote centers.

No elections, no matter how successful, are problem free. The BSE encountered some problems in 2023 and resolved most. The more significant are discussed in more detail in the body of this report. The BSE, with the exceptional support of the Office of City Clerk, responded to these problems as they arose, mitigating potential negative effects, investigated each and explored how to avoid them in future elections.

The BSE's responsibilities include enforcing Rockville's campaign finance laws. Some individuals and organizations appeared to have participated in the 2023 election process without complying with those laws. In response, the BSE investigated and voted to issue municipal infraction citations against those individuals and organizations that the BSE concluded had violated Rockville's election law.

Overall, the 2023 election was a success. The process was accurate, fair, and transparent. Voter registration increased, and voter turnout remained at the 2019 level, significantly higher than in previous years. That success would not have been possible without the assistance, hard work,

and dedication of City Staff, in particular the Office of the City Clerk. The BSE appreciates that hard work and all the support that it received.

BSE ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2019–2023

Planning for the next election begins immediately after the preceding election ends. The BSE began planning for the 2023 election even before the results of the 2019 election were certified. Although the substantial turnover in BSE membership hampered those efforts, the BSE still accomplished a great deal during the interim period between elections. Those accomplishments include:

- Modifying the campaign finance report forms to make them easier to complete and file accurately;
- Recommending a series of amendments to the City Charter and Chapter 8 of the City Code - Elections, most of which were enacted into law by the Mayor & Council;
- Forming a joint committee with the Rockville Human Rights Commission and the Asian Pacific American Task Force to encourage voter participation among Rockville's Asian community;
- Placing posters in all three Rockville high schools, in English, Spanish, and Chinese (with a QR code for other languages), urging students to remind their parents of their right to register and vote;
- Conducting voter outreach at various public events – e.g., National Voter Registration Day, Hometown Holidays, National Night Out, Lunar New Year celebration, Juneteenth and Pride Day – to encourage voter registration;
- Observing ballot canvassing in the 2022 primary and general elections;
- Reviewing, revising, and issuing the Candidate Information Election Packet;
- Confirming that each nominating petition included the requisite number of signatures and certifying the candidacy of those seeking election as Mayor or as members of City Council;
- Conducting two training sessions for candidates and treasurers on how to complete and file Campaign Finance Reports;
- Mailing four post cards to residents and voters – in English, Spanish, and Chinese (with a QR code for other languages) – with reminders about the election and instructions on how to vote;
- Using those mailings, particularly those returned undelivered, to clean up the voter database, resulting in far fewer undeliverable ballots than in 2019;
- Visiting every nursing home and assisted living facility in Rockville – twice – once to register residents as voters and update their registration information and again to assist residents in casting their ballots, resulting in more votes cast by nursing home residents than in 2019;
- Drafting the ballot questions that the Mayor and Council voted to include on the ballot;
- Reviewing the First Pre-Election, Second Pre-Election, and Post-Election Campaign Finance Reports submitted by candidates and their treasurers, accepting those that were

properly completed, and providing guidance regarding those that were not properly completed;

- Distributing a “Voter Guide” in *Rockville Reports* and making it available at City Hall and elsewhere;
- Operating an additional vote center at Thomas Farm Community Center;
- Providing six ballot drop boxes, including outdoor drop boxes at City Hall and Montrose Community Center and indoor drop boxes at the Rockville Senior Center, Lincoln Park Community Center, Twinbrook Community Center, and Thomas Farm Community Center;
- Responding in writing to the questions posed to the BSE in the run-up to the election;
- Issuing written guidance to candidates and treasurers on the applicability of the newly enacted disclaimer requirements;
- Permitting, for the first time, ballot curing for voters who neglected to sign the oath on their VBM return envelopes or included two ballots in the same return envelope;
- Reviewing, and as necessary, revising or drafting standard operating procedures;
- Providing ballot tracking, including an Excel spreadsheet showing whose voted ballots had been received and processed;
- Stationing Spanish and, for the first time, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) translators at the vote centers on Election Day to assist Spanish and Chinese speakers;
- Canvassing and accurately tabulating the more than 12,000 votes cast;
- Releasing unofficial election results to the public approximately five hours after the vote centers closed;
- Canvassing and tabulating the provisional ballots cast;
- Certifying the official election results within seven calendar days, as required by the Rockville City Code;
- Investigating possible violations of Rockville’s campaign finance laws and, where it concluded that those laws had been violated, issuing municipal infraction citations;
- Issuing a memorandum to all candidates and treasurers on the obligation to include disclaimers in text messages and robocalls;
- Conducting two post-election forums; and
- Preparing this election report.

WHY VBM?

Before reviewing the 2023 election, it may be useful to review the reasons the Mayor and council amended the City Code to require VBM elections.

Voter turnout in City elections had been declining over many election cycles. In the three elections before the 2019 election, voter turnout went from 16.94% in 2011, to 16.51% in 2013, and 15.87% in 2015, the last election before the City changed to a four-year election cycle.

After the 2015 election, the BSE investigated several options to increase turnout. Those options included increasing outreach activities and adding early voting days, both of which had been tried without success. Two other options rose to the top of our list. One was to hold Rockville elections in even years so our ballot could be included on the Montgomery County ballot. The second was VBM.

The first option has been considered many times in many venues, including the BSE. The arguments against this option remained consistent across time and across venues. The identity/uniqueness of City contests would likely be lost if they were listed at the bottom of a ballot after the national, state, and county contests. Data show that votes decrease the further down a ballot a contest is listed. Therefore, although the national, state, and county contests draw a larger number of voters, there would be no guarantee that Rockville residents would vote in City elections in larger numbers. Another concern was that City candidates would compete with all ballot candidates for voter attention, making it more difficult and much more expensive for City candidates to reach and influence their audience. Perhaps an even more significant reason for the reluctance to move to the larger ballot is that City elections are required to be non-partisan. Placing City contests on a predominantly party-oriented ballot did not seem to be appropriate.

Low voter turnout was only one concern the BSE addressed in the interval between the 2015 and 2019 elections. Another was the perennial problem of inaccurate voter lists. Moving elections to even-numbered years would do nothing to address this issue.

Voting data compiled by independent organizations showed that VBM significantly increases voter turnout. As a bonus, the VBM process itself helps update and correct voter databases. Specifically, VBM includes several mailings prior to each election. Boards of Elections work closely with the United States Postal Service to ensure any mail that cannot be delivered is returned to elections officials who research the reason for non-delivery and adjust their databases accordingly.

Therefore, on November 7, 2017, after a nearly year-long study (January–October 2017), the BSE proposed that the Mayor and council amend the City Code to require a VBM election in 2019. That proposal included a detailed rationale for the change. Specifically, the presentation to the Mayor and Council described how VBM could address the problem of low voter turnout.

The BSE reported that a study of jurisdictions similar in population and the number of registered voters to the City demonstrated that VBM was a viable means to significantly increase voter turnout.

Over the next few months, the BSE responded to questions and addressed concerns of the Mayor & Council, which approved VBM on February 26, 2018, and approved necessary changes to the City Code on April 9, 2018.

As reported in the “November 5, 2019, Election Report,” submitted to the Mayor and Council on April 6, 2020, a copy of which may be found on the BSE’s website, that election exceeded expectations by almost doubling voter turnout from 15.87% in 2015 to 31.18% in 2019.

We were not alone in our enthusiasm for VBM. In 2019, few states and only slightly more municipalities held VBM elections. To the best of our knowledge, Rockville was the first municipality east of the Mississippi River to do so. Virtually all states (and municipalities), however, had some procedures to allow registered voters to request an absentee ballot that could be submitted by mail. It should be noted that many of those states required a reason to vote absentee, and many limited what constituted a valid reason.

By 2024, in large part as a result of the covid pandemic, eight states (California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington) and the District of Columbia allowed all elections to be conducted entirely by mail. Two states (Nebraska and North Dakota) allowed counties to opt to conduct VBM elections. Nine others (Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming) allowed “specific small elections” to be conducted by mail. And four (Idaho, Minnesota, New Jersey, and New Mexico) permitted mostly mail-in elections for certain small jurisdictions (<https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/table-18-states-with-all-mail-elections>).

Some 30 states, including many of the ones mentioned above, allow no-excuse absentee voting. It has been estimated that some 84% of voters had relatively easy access to mail-in voting. Note that absentee/mail-in voting is not the same as VBM. The primary difference is that to vote absentee, a voter must be proactive; that is, a voter must request an absentee ballot. In a VBM election, ballots are automatically mailed to all registered voters.

The data presented to the Mayor and Council from jurisdictions that held VBM elections prior to 2019 showed that voter turnout increased significantly the first time VBM was offered. That same data showed that turnout tended to go down after that first VBM experience—but remained higher than in pre-VBM elections.

In Rockville, however, voter turnout for the 2023 remained virtually unchanged: 31.18% in 2019 and 31.16% in 2023. This success did not “just happen.” First, of course, VBM would not have happened at all without the support of the Mayor & Council, which changed the City Code while acknowledging that VBM might be more expensive than a traditional election.

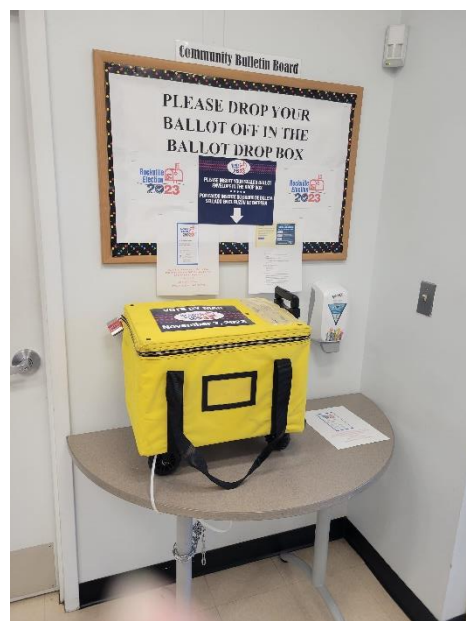
The City Clerk and her staff, including personnel provided under contract from the Montgomery County Board of Elections (MCBOE), provided exceptional support to prepare for and conduct the 2023 City election. And the BSE not only had to plan and oversee the election but also had to address other issues.

CONDUCTING THE ELECTION

The BSE conducted the 2023 Rockville City election using the VBM process first implemented in 2019. Intelligent mail barcodes were again used so that ballots could be tracked both outbound and inbound. Ballots were mailed 28 days before Election Day by the Taylor Company (the vendor used by the State) to all voters registered at least 45 days before the election. Voters who registered 44–21 days before Election Day, were able to request that a ballot be mailed to them. On Election Day, unregistered voters could register at City Hall and cast a provisional ballot.

Voters who received ballots by mail were instructed to mark their ballots and return them in time to be received at City Hall no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Voters were informed and repeatedly reminded that postmarks did not count. A voter could:

- Return the completed ballot by mail in the signed, sealed postage-paid return envelope included in the ballot packet.
- Drop the completed ballot in the signed, sealed return envelope in either outdoor ballot drop box at any time until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- Drop the completed ballot in the signed, sealed return envelope in any indoor ballot drop box during normal business hours or until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.



Updating the Voter Database

A properly conducted election requires a voter list that is as complete and accurate as possible. An accurate voter list is also important for candidates. The City does not maintain its own voter database; it depends on MDVoters, the voter database maintained by the State. The City does not have direct access to MDVoters; it provides updated voter information to the State through the MCBOE. The City uses mailings, discussed below as a community outreach activity, to obtain information with which to update MDVoters.

After the first mailing, postcards returned to the Office of the City Clerk as undeliverable were sent to the MCBOE. The MCBOE researched the voter to whom each returned postcard was sent. Based on that research, MDVoters was updated to reflect any changes required by, for example, a voter moving to another jurisdiction or the unreported death of a voter. The BSE used the updated database to create the mailing list for its next mailing. This process was repeated for each subsequent mailing. After each of the four mailings, the number of postcards returned decreased. MDVoters, updated after each mailing, was used to create a final mailing list of residents to whom ballots were sent. An interim updated voter list was used by candidates for their mailings and other campaign activities.

As a result of this process, the number of ballot packets returned as undeliverable declined from 2,319 in 2019 to 509 in 2023.

Conducting Community Outreach

The BSE and City Clerk's office worked closely with the City's Office of Communications and Public Relations and Office of Information Technology to conduct a community outreach program for the 2023 election that included participation in community events, mailings, election website, and targeted outreach, among other activities.

Community Events

The BSE and personnel from the City Clerk's office staffed tables at many City events: Lunar New Year program at Wootton High School, Rockville Lantern Festival, International Night event at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Hometown Holidays, Juneteenth celebration in Lincoln Park, and the Rockville Pride Day and National Voter Registration Day events held in Rockville Town Square.

At each of these community events, BSE members and City Clerk's office staff worked at a table where they registered voters, answered questions about VBM, and gave out fans, refrigerator magnets, pens, and other small items to remind potential voters of the upcoming election.

Mailings

The BSE initiated a series of mailings within the City's corporate limits. The BSE's first mailing, which was sent to all households in Rockville, was an oversized (14" x 7") postcard mailed on March 1, 2023. The postcard informed recipients that the 2023 election would be conducted

using VBM and encouraged recipients to visit our Election website, www.rockvillemd.gov/election, to check and update their voter information and to register to vote if necessary.

The City sent subsequent mailings in July, September, and October to all registered voters. Those mailings repeated the information on the March 1 postcard and added information such as how to mark a ballot, how to return ballots, and where in-person voting would be held on Election Day.

Rockville Reports printed a “Voter Guide” in its October issue mailed to all residents of Rockville. The City organized a door-hanger campaign that was conducted in many Rockville neighborhoods in early October to again remind residents of the upcoming November election.

Language Access

All information on all mailings was provided in English and Spanish as required by applicable law. In addition, the City included text in simplified Chinese and added a QR code to the mailings to allow residents to obtain additional language translation services. As we have in previous City elections, we also provided access to Language Line, a service that provides over-the-phone interpreter services in some 240 languages.

Working with the Human Rights Commission and the Asian Pacific American Task Force, the BSE prepared posters – in English, Spanish, and Chinese (with a QR code for other languages) – which it placed in all three Rockville high schools so that students could remind parents of their right to register and vote.

Website

The BSE, Office of Communications and Public Relations, and Office of Information Technology designed an Elections website. Continually updated, the website provided information on the VBM process and on how to register to vote, how to update voter information, how to complete a ballot, how to submit a ballot, where to vote in person on Election Day, and much more. The website included FAQs and links to related information and videos.

Targeted Community Outreach

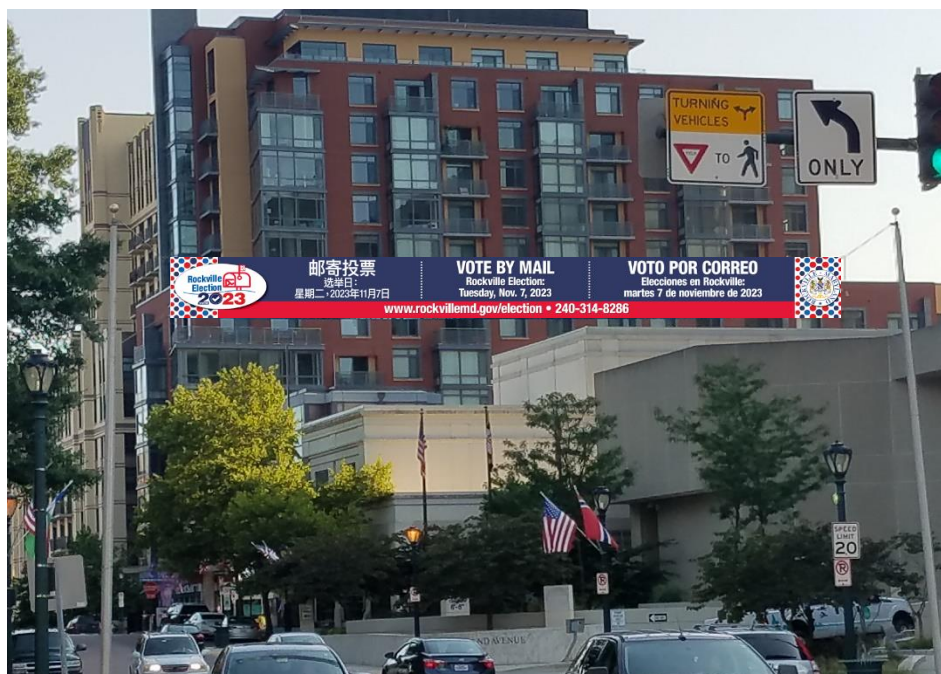
The BSE identified and sent email messages to the many Asian language schools and Asian churches serving the Rockville community to obtain information on events/activities at which the BSE could participate and distribute voter information and register voters.

The BSE conducted voter registration drives and voter balloting assistance efforts for residents of Rockville’s eleven assisted living and nursing home communities. The Office of the City Clerk’s staff contacted the eleven nursing homes (including the nursing home associated with continuing care communities) and encouraged them to participate in the nursing home program in which BSE members and City Clerk’s office staff would first visit to conduct voter registration efforts and revisit to distribute ballots to residents and, if necessary, help residents complete the ballots. All eleven nursing homes participated in the program. Ballot packets for residents

were prepared in the same manner as all other ballot packets but were delivered to the City, which distributed them on scheduled nursing home visits.

Other Outreach Methods

Other methods used to promote VBM included social media blasts, text alerts, a video that ran on the City's television channel, *Rockville Reports*, press releases, a dedicated phone line to respond to voter inquiries, moveable electronic message boards at strategic road intersections, a live Facebook Q&A, and a banner spread across an intersection leading to Town Center.



Pre-Election Day Ballot Process

Ballots, unvoted and voted, are received (and distributed) at City Hall throughout the election process. Every aspect of ballot handling, whether discussed in this report or not, is addressed by a standard operating procedure that ensures the safety, security, and privacy of all ballots and maintains the integrity of the election process.

All ballots from the USPS delivered to City Hall before election day were counted, batched into groups of 50, logged in, and locked in a secure ballot transfer bin. All ballots from indoor and outdoor ballot drop boxes were removed according to schedule, counted, logged in, locked in a secure ballot transfer bin, and placed in the secure storage cart until delivery to the secure processing center. From the time ballots were received in the Office of the City Clerk, every change of ballot location or custody was documented on a chain of custody form.

A delivery team comprising City staff and/or a BSE member and a police officer delivered the ballot transfer bins to the secure processing center located at the MCBOE facility. MCBOE officials received the secure ballot transfer bins and executed the Chain of Custody form. The MCBOE retained the original Chain of Custody form; the City kept the copy. This procedure allowed each batch to be tracked through the process.

Vote Centers

At the suggestion of the BSE, the Mayor and Council established a second vote center at the Thomas Farm Community Center. Services available at both vote centers included in-person voting, ballot replacement, provisional voting, on-site language assistance in both Spanish and Chinese, and Language Line access. Same-day registration was available, but only at City Hall. The City contracted with the MCBOE to provide assistance at the Vote Centers on Election Day, especially on-site support for equipment and assistance with voter check-in.

Canvassing Ballots

Canvass is the process by which ballots are reviewed to ensure their eligibility and readiness for tabulation.

A ballot may not be eligible for tabulation for any of a number of reasons, including an unsigned Voter Oath or inclusion of more than one ballot in a single envelope. Some ballots may not be ready to be tabulated because of stains, tears, cross-outs, or identifying marks (e.g., voter signature). Such ballots must be duplicated to ensure they can be processed by the tabulating equipment. Note that ballots submitted during the early voting period are canvassed, but not tabulated, before Election Day. Canvassing was conducted by sworn and trained MCBOE election workers and supervised by the Rockville BSE. BSE members, working in teams of two duplicated those ballots that needed to be duplicated.

During canvassing, all provisional and questionable ballots were reviewed and adjudicated by the BSE. When possible, ballots that the BSE could not accept were referred to the MCBOE for curing, a process the City added in 2023. Curing is a process that allows a voter to correct a mistake, such as not signing the Voter Oath or enclosing two ballots in one return envelope. Note that not all mistakes are curable (e.g., overvoting). Voters notified of the need to cure their ballots were given a limited time to respond so that all reporting deadlines could be met. All accepted non-provisional ballots were scanned before tabulation.

Tabulating Ballots

Although many ballots were canvassed before Election Day, no ballots were tabulated until the final canvass, which was held after 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Tabulation of all accepted ballots was performed by sworn and trained MCBOE personnel on State-provided equipment. The BSE, in accordance with the City Code, announced the unofficial results, which were posted at City Hall and at the MCBOE and announced on cable television and on the City website. Tabulation was overseen by the BSE, which reviewed and accepted the results.

The tabulation of results in the 2023 election was extremely accurate, as shown by an audit of ballots conducted by Citizens Oversight Projects. Of the 74,590 separate votes cast, 14 (.018%) were deemed questionable.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING THE 2023 ELECTION

Before discussing issues that arose during the election, it is important to take note of those parts of the election process that fall outside the BSE's jurisdiction. For example, the City Manager, and not the BSE, administers laws and policies regarding campaign signs (e.g., size and placement) the number, location, and rules of candidate debates; use of the City seal; and the annual Hometown Holidays parade. The BSE has not control over those issues, which are not discussed in this report.

Bainbridge residential complex not included in Rockville

Residents of the Bainbridge residential complex did not receive mail-in ballots for Rockville's 2023 election. This mistake arose from the State's 2020 redistricting of Rockville's District 10, which resulted in the exclusion of that property. On Election Day, a Bainbridge resident requested a ballot at City Hall, thereby making election officials aware of the problem. Given the emphasis on the part of the BSE and City officials to ensure voter participation and fair and equal opportunity for residents to cast ballots, this unforeseen error was among the most significant encountered. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that it was not discovered until Election Day.

The City Clerk and her staff immediately contacted the management company of the Bainbridge and asked it to send an email blast to all residents informing them that they could vote in person at either of the two vote centers.

It is worth noting that the voting database, including mailing addresses, is generated and maintained by the State. Indeed, Rockville does not even see the database that the State sends to the contractor, Taylor Company (Taylor), which the City must use in return for authorization to use State equipment (e.g., scanners and tabulators).

After the election, the City Clerk and the chair of the BSE interviewed several Bainbridge residents, some of whom had voter registration cards, issued by the MCBOE, stating that they were residents of Derwood, rather than Rockville, an error that likely compounded the problem.

The BSE has met with the Rockville Office of Information Technology, which demonstrated its ability to compare a map of all Rockville addresses with a map of all registered voters provided by MDVoters. In the future, that comparison should allow the BSE to identify properties improperly excluded from the database of Rockville voters.

Delayed ballot delivery

In the most recent national and statewide elections, Maryland residents were given the option of receiving their ballots electronically. Voters could choose to receive an electronic copy of the ballot, print it, complete it, and mail it to the State. During County-run canvasses, the printed ballots are duplicated; that is, two-person teams copy the votes shown on the printed ballots onto an official, machine-readable ballot. As the Mayor and Council are aware, Rockville does not offer this option. When the State generated and sent the database for Rockville elections to Taylor, the contractor responsible for printing, mailing, and tracking ballots, the mailing addresses of those individuals opting for electronic delivery were not included.

The Clerk's office and the BSE did not learn until mid- to late October that approximately 960 individuals, who had opted for electronic delivery of State ballots in 2022, had not been sent ballots by mail. As soon as this problem was discovered, the City Clerk's office obtained the mailing addresses for those individuals and mailed them ballot packets from Rockville on October 27, in time to permit those voters to complete and mail in their ballots if they chose to do so. This tranche of ballots arrived at voters' homes later than others, and later than they should have, but in sufficient time to be cast, canvassed, and tabulated.

The Maryland Board of Elections (BOE) has informed the BSE that, in future election, data will be sent to the vendor in that same way it was sent in 2023, without the mailing addresses of those voters that have chosen web delivery. The BSE will thus have to obtain its own copy of that database and either provide those mailing addresses to the vendor or mail the ballots itself from Rockville, as it did in 2023. If necessary, the BSE may call upon the Mayor and Council for assistance in obtaining a copy of that database.

Flawed contractor ballot tracking system

Taylor offered a service that allowed Rockville voters to track their ballots from the vendor to their homes. Unfortunately, Taylor sent voters several emails with incorrect information about the status of their ballot packets. Some voters, for example, received emails stating that their ballots had been voted even though the voters themselves had not yet received their ballot packets.

Ballot tracking is not a necessary component of VBM; it is an added feature that can be helpful, but only if implemented accurately. When the problem came to light, the City Clerk instructed Taylor immediately to stop using its ballot-tracking software, to remove and disable the link to that function, and to stop sending any ballot tracking updates to Rockville voters.

The city, with the help of the MCBOE, has its own procedure to record the receipt of ballots at the processing center. During the election, despite the failure of Taylor's ballot tracking, voters were able to access this system to confirm that their voted ballots had been received and processed.

Taylor was never able to explain adequately the cause of the malfunction. The Maryland BOE, however, has stated that it intends to continue to use Taylor and its ballot tracking system. The

BSE will confirm that the ballot tracking system works correctly in the 2024 and 2026 elections before agreeing to use that system in our 2027 election.

A late ballot sweep that was not comprehensive

A VBM campaign, by definition, depends on the mail service. The BSE worked closely with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to ensure both the BSE and USPS could meet their obligations. We worked with the USPS to ensure our mailings and ballot packets—outgoing and incoming—were appropriately sized and marked. We informed them of our needs (e.g., do not forward undeliverable mail), and they informed us of theirs. For the most part, this partnership worked well.

One thing we stressed from the start of our talks with postal authorities was the need to do a sweep on Election Day of Rockville mail boxes and the mail processing center. Unlike other jurisdictions, Rockville requires a ballot to be at City Hall no later than the close of polls (8:00 p.m.) on Election Day; we do not recognize a postmark as proof of a timely vote. Despite USPS' assurance that it would do a late sweep, the last ballot sweep did not appear to be as comprehensive as that conducted in 2019. As a result, some ballots that were postmarked on, or the day before, Election Day were not delivered in time to be tabulated.

In our VBM elections, we will continue to work closely with the USPS. But, on Election Day in 2027, we will likely arrange to have BSE members and City Staff pick up the voted ballots from post office and processing center, rather than relying on the USPS to deliver those ballots.

ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Chapter 8 of the Rockville City Code requires all candidates and their treasurers to file periodic Campaign Finance Reports with the BSE listing, among other things, contributions and expenditures. (Sec. 8-81) The Code prohibits contributions greater than \$1,000 to any single candidate or campaign committee. (Sec. 8-78(d)) There are no limits on independent expenditures, but any individual who makes an independent expenditure of more than \$25 or any committee that makes independent expenditures of more than \$500 must report them either to the BSE or the candidate supported. (Secs. 8-73(b), 8-78(c)(2)).

Section 8-101(7) requires campaign materials to include certain disclaimers. Those disclaimers must state, among other things, who paid for the materials and whether they were authorized by a candidate or a candidate's committee.

Section 8-111(b) makes any violation of Chapter 8, not otherwise designated as a misdemeanor, a municipal infraction. That section authorizes the BSE to issue municipal infraction citations against violators and provides that such citations "shall be prosecuted by the City Attorney."

It appeared that some of the participants in the 2023 election may not have complied with these requirements. After investigating as best it could, the BSE determined that in some

instances the City Code had been violated and in others it had not. Where it concluded that the Code had been violated, the BSE issued municipal infraction citations against the violators. Where it concluded that the Code had not been violated, it notified the affected individuals and organizations of that finding.

We summarize our findings below.

- Municipal infraction citations were issued in the following instances:

Citizens Helping Elect Cheryl Kagan

During the campaign, Senator Cheryl Kagan and her campaign committee, Citizens Helping Elect Cheryl Kagan (CHECK), distributed a flyer in which Senator Kagan announced her endorsement of five candidates for City Council and her positions on the four ballot questions. The flyer included photos of Senator Kagan posing with four of the candidates endorsed but did not include the disclaimer required by Section 8-101(7) of the City Code. After neither CHECK nor Senator Kagan responded to a request to address issues raised by the flyer, the BSE initially concluded that the flyer had not only unlawfully omitted the required disclaimer but also that cost of the flyer constituted an unlawful contribution to four of the candidates endorsed. Subsequent interviews with the endorsed candidates, however, showed that the cost of the flyer was an independent expenditure, not a contribution. After CHECK treasurer Neil Burka acknowledged, at a BSE meeting on January 16, 2024 (at 1:39:52) that the required disclaimer had not been included, the BSE voted to issue a municipal infraction citation against CHECK for its failure to include the required disclaimer.

Harold Hodges and Diane Lee

Harold Hodges was certified as a candidate for City Council. He appeared on the ballot and received votes but failed to file any of the required CFRs. The BSE sent Mr. Hodges and his treasurer, Diane Lee, a notice to show cause why they should not be charged with a municipal infraction—and offered a thirty-day grace period to file the required reports and pay the mandatory late fees. Neither Mr. Hodges nor Ms. Lee filed the reports or paid the late fees. The BSE therefore issued municipal infraction citations against Mr. Hodges and Ms. Lee.

Our Revolution

During the election campaign, Our Revolution distributed text messages urging voters to support then-candidate Izola Shaw. The BSE sent a letter to the chair of Our Revolution calling to his attention the obligation to file a CFR. The BSE sent a second letter to the chair and treasurer of Our Revolution explaining that they owed a late fee for failing to file that report and requesting that they show cause why they should not be charged with a municipal infraction. Neither responded. The report was not filed, and the late fee

was not paid. The BSE issued a municipal infraction citation against Ed Fischman and James Tarlau, the chair and treasurer of Our Revolution.¹

- Municipal infraction citations were not issued in the following instances:

Affordable Maryland PAC

During the election, Affordable Maryland PAC distributed a flyer in which it endorsed several candidates. Affordable Maryland PAC filed a CFR characterizing the cost of that flyer as an independent expenditure. The BSE interviewed the candidates endorsed and concluded that the cost was in fact an independent expenditure, which Affordable Maryland PAC had properly reported. As a result, no action was taken.

Progressive Maryland

Progressive Maryland distributed text messages during the election endorsing then-candidate Izola Shaw. In response to an inquiry from the BSE, Progressive Maryland filed a CFR reporting the cost of those text messages as an independent expenditure. Because the BSE had no information showing that characterization to be incorrect, the BSE accepted that report and took no further action.

Rockville for Democracy

Rockville for Democracy, an organization associated with CASA of Maryland, distributed flyers and engaged in other activities during the election in support of one or more of the ballot questions. After receiving several letters and a notice to show cause from the BSE, Rockville for Democracy filed the CFRs required by the Rockville City Code. Because Rockville for Democracy filed those reports well after their due dates, the BSE imposed late fees totaling \$720. The officers of Rockville for Democracy paid the late fees owed.

- Other Enforcement Actions

Disclaimers on Text Messages and Robocalls

Candidates and various organization distributed text messages and robocalls during the election. In most instances, those communications did not include the disclaimers required by Section 8-101(7) of the City Code. The BSE received questions and complaints about the absence of those disclaimers. After seeking advice from the City Attorney, the BSE concluded that text messages (exceeding 160 characters) and robocalls should include disclaimers stating who had paid for them and whether they had been authorized by a candidate. Because, however, the issue was not entirely clear, the BSE voted not to issue municipal infractions against violators and instead sent a

¹ On May 17, 2024, Ed Fischman sent an email denying that Our Revolution had made any expenditures in connection with the election. Additional investigation may be required. Mr. Fishman also attended a BSE meeting on May 29, 2024 and answered questions about the text messages sent by Our Revolution. He promised to send additional information in support of his position.

memorandum to candidates and treasurers clarifying the issue and stating that the requirement would be strictly enforced in future elections.

Candidate Interviews

The BSE does not have (and does not seek) subpoena power and cannot compel candidates or organizations to respond to its questions. It necessarily relies on voluntary cooperation. In the period following the election, the BSE, as part of its enforcement efforts, asked the Mayor and members of the City Council to meet with two members of the BSE to discuss and explain events that had occurred during the election. The Mayor and every member of the City Council graciously agreed to meet and provide that explanation. The BSE expresses its sincere thanks to the Mayor and Council.

LESSONS LEARNED

In the weeks ahead, the BSE will be presenting the Mayor and Council with a series of specific recommendations. In this section, the BSE offers some broad conclusions about what worked and what did not in the 2023 election and how the election process could be improved. This list is based, in part, on the suggestions and comments made at the two post-election forums conducted by the BSE on January 25 and February 24, 2024, and of course, on a preliminary assessment of the 2023 election.

1. VBM remains an effective way of maximizing voter participation. Voter turnout in the 2023 election remained at 31%, the same as in 2019, and significantly higher than in previous elections.
2. The tabulation of results in the 2023 election was extremely accurate, as shown by the pilot audit of ballots conducted by Citizens Oversight Projects. (Of the 74,590 separate votes cast, 14 (.018%) were deemed questionable.)
3. Rockville's Code should include provisions on independent expenditures similar to those in Maryland's campaign finance laws, requiring immediate registration and reporting by persons and organizations making independent expenditures.
4. Rockville needs more effective and more streamlined enforcement procedures, particularly for those who do not file timely CFRs.
5. A third vote center on the east side of Rockville Pike would likely increase voter participation in Districts 3, 4 and 5, where voter participation decreased in 2023.
6. Rockville should adjust its election calendar, and amend the City Charter, to require candidates to submit their nominating petitions at an earlier date.
7. The first pre-election CFR should be due earlier than current law requires.

8. The BSE should have the discretion, based on experience in the previous election, to determine the location of ballot drop boxes in the following election.
9. On Election Day, the BSE should itself retrieve voted ballots from local postal facilities, rather than relying on the USPS.
10. The BSE should be aware of changes to the election environment (e.g., new County or State election districts, new personnel in key positions, change of contractors), identify potential negative effects of those changes, and proactively work to avoid or mitigate those negative effects.
11. A campaign financing handbook or, perhaps a list of “dos and don’ts,” to supplement the two campaign finance trainings (held in this election cycle on June 29 and September 9) might avoid some common mistakes and issues.
12. The City Attorney should be more involved in the election process. At the very least, a City attorney, familiar with election law, should regularly attend BSE meetings in the months preceding the election and be physically present on Election Day to address the myriad legal issues that arise.
13. The BSE should increase its efforts to ensure that everyone participating in the election process is aware of the requirement to include disclaimers on text messages and robocalls and strictly enforce that requirement.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 8 OF THE CITY CODE

The BSE recommends that the City redraft the entirety of Chapter 8 – Elections prior to the 2027 election. That chapter currently includes provisions that are unclear, inconsistent, or contradictory. Some provisions need to be added and others deleted. In its present form, the chapter simply does not provide the clear guidance that it should. If the chapter is not redrafted, the Mayor and Council should at a minimum consider making the following changes:

Section	Change	Explanation
8-1	Expand the definition of “campaign material” to include robocalls, pre-recorded messages, and communications with audio components.	To make clear that non-tangible campaign materials must include the disclaimers required by Section 8-101(7).
8-1	Insert a definition of “committee.”	Because one organization argued, with supporting authority, that without a definition of “committee” Rockville’s campaign finance laws were unconstitutionally vague.

8-1	Delete the definition of “absentee ballot.”	Because VBM eliminates the need for absentee ballots.
8-1	Insert definitions of “contribution” and “expenditure” with exceptions for those items not deemed reportable (e.g., volunteer activity, candidate personal expenses).	Because virtually every other campaign finance law in the U.S., including the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA), follows this pattern.
8-6(a)	Close registration to vote in a City election 60, rather than 45, days before the election.	To allow additional time to check the voter information provided by the State to the vendor for errors and omissions.
8-41(a)	Allow the BSE to determine the number and location of vote centers and ballot drop boxes.	Based on experience in the prior election.
8-41(c)	Reduce the number of mailings (notices and reminders) from four to three.	To reduce costs and because the last mailer goes out after voter information has been sent to the vendor and, therefore, cannot be used to update the voter database.
8-42(a)	Delete provisions on absentee voting.	Because VBM eliminates the need for absentee voting.
8-44(a)(1)	Eliminate Certification of Person Assisting Voter.	Because certification serves no purpose and the need for the certification cannot be verified.
8-71(a)(1)	Clarify when one becomes a “candidate.”	To eliminate confusion caused by conflicting provisions of the chapter.
8-72	Require slates to disband after each election cycle.	So slates cannot collect contributions in support of one group of candidates and use those funds four years later to support a different group of candidates.
8-73	Adopt provisions on independent expenditures that would: 1) require persons to register within 48 hours of making independent expenditures of at least \$X; 2) file a report within 48 hours of making independent expenditures of at least \$Y; and 3) disclose in those reports the identities of their largest contributors.	This provision would be consistent with the treatment of independent expenditures under Maryland Code, Election Law, Section 13-306, although presumably with lower amounts triggering the obligation to register and report.

8-74(b)	Eliminate the requirement to maintain a petty cash ledger.	Because campaign committees do not actually maintain, or need to maintain, petty cash ledgers.
8-81(a)(1)	Require committees to file their first pre-election campaign finance reports 45, rather than 30, days before the election.	Because committees begin collecting contributions and making expenditures earlier in the election cycle.
8-81(a)(4)	Change the due date for annual campaign finance reports from November 8 to January 15 or 31.	Because virtually every other campaign finance law in the U.S., including the FECA, follows this pattern.
8-83(a)	Increase the maximum late fee for filing campaign finance reports from the current maximum of \$360.	Because a maximum penalty of \$360 does not provide an adequate incentive to file timely reports.
8-83(c)	Create a more streamlined and rational procedure for imposing and collecting late fees from those that do not file timely campaign finance reports.	Because the current system essentially requires the BSE to wait at least 60 days, which allows candidates and others to avoid disclosure prior to the election.
	Add a provision making it a crime to threaten an election official or an election worker, or an immediate family member of an election official or election worker, because of that official's or worker's role in administering the election process.	This provision would mimic the Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024, Maryland Code, Election Law, Section 16-904, enacted by the state of Maryland.

In addition to these proposed changes, the Board would appreciate the opportunity to provide input into any changes to the City Code related to elections.

CONCLUSIONS

The 2023 Rockville City election was successful.

- The number of registered voters increased despite the fact that the population decreased.
- The number of eligible residents who voted increased.
- The percentage of eligible residents who voted remained at the same high level as in the 2019 election.
- The vote was accurate as measured by an independent audit.

This success came despite some bumps in the road, specifically the exclusion of the Bainbridge from MDVoters; the State BOE's failure to include the street addresses of Rockville residents who had opted to receive ballots electronically in the State's 2022 elections; the malfunctioning of Taylor's ballot-tracking software; and the USPS failure to conduct a comprehensive late-afternoon sweep of mail boxes on Election Day. The BSE will continue to review these issues and will take appropriate action to minimize the possibility that they will recur.

The BSE made a concerted effort to reach City election districts that traditionally have a low turnout in City elections, including those living in nursing homes and continuing care communities.

The BSE offered voters new services, including on-site Spanish and Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) translators at vote centers on Election Day. A QR code linking to other languages was available at both vote centers. Another new service was the opportunity to cure ballots.

The 2023 City election was marked by an unprecedented influx of outside money and an increased use of technology to reach voters. Each presented problems. The BSE has already begun to address some of them by, for example, developing a policy regarding disclaimers on robocalls and text messages. In the weeks ahead, we will make recommendations to the Mayor and Council for continuing to improve the election process.

As we noted earlier, planning for one election begins as soon as the previous is over. We have already begun to plan for the 2027 City of Rockville elections. With the continued help and support of the Mayor and Council (and, of course, the Office of the City Clerk), we are confident that the 2027 election will also be successful.

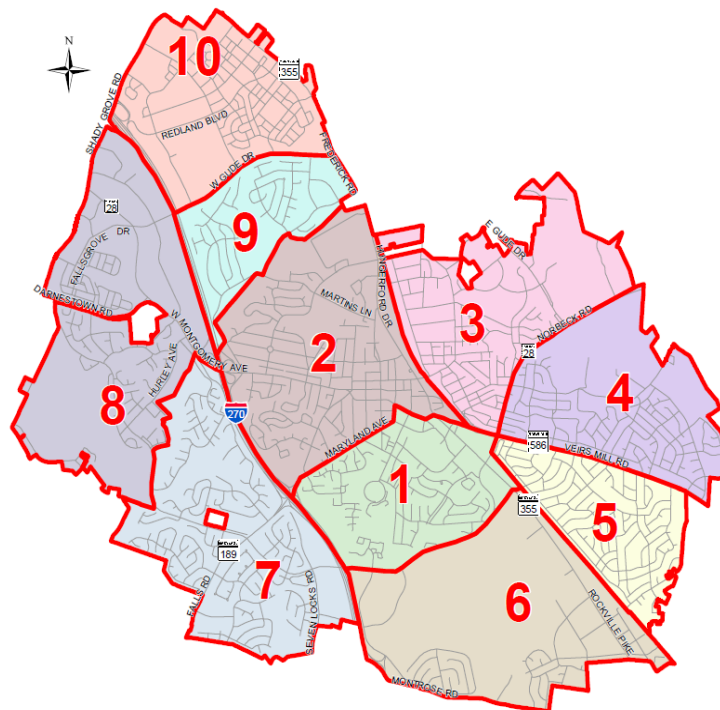
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Voter Participation in City of Rockville Election 2011-2023

Election Year	Estimated Population	Registered Voters	Voter Percent
2011	62,102	36,840	6,240 / 16.94
2013	63,736	40,494	6,685 / 16.51
2015	66,673	40,749	6,468 / 15.87
2019	68,268	39,395	12,287 / 31.18
2023	67,117	40,975	12,770 / 31.16

Appendix B: Ballots Cast by District 2019 and 2023

District	2019			2023		
	Ballots Cast	Reg. Voters	%	Ballots Cast	Reg. Voters	%
District 1	1,193	3,541	34	1,142	3,540	32
District 2	2,327	6,343	37	2,481	6,627	37
District 3	793	2,633	30	743	2,708	27
District 4	1,090	3,491	31	949	3,463	27
District 5	1,077	3,723	29	1,052	3,851	27
District 6	711	3,405	21	877	4,105	21
District 7	1,554	4,374	36	1,565	4,431	35
District 8	1,118	4,030	28	1,203	4,117	29
District 9	968	2,285	42	1,011	2,353	43
District 10	1,456	5,570	26	1,747	5,780	30
TOTAL	12,287	39,395	31.18	12,770	40,975	31.16
Data from Official Election Report dated 11/9/23 and October 2023 Voter Database File						



Appendix C: All District Turnout 2011–2023

District 1 – Elwood Smith Rec. Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	3,262	606	19
2013	3,691	641	17
2015	3,772	602	16
2019	3,589	1,193	33
2023	3,540	1,142	32

District 2 – Rockville Town Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	5,583	1,144	20
2013	6,356	1,277	20
2015	6,414	958	15
2019	6,405	2,327	36
2023	6,627	2,481	37

District 3 – Lincoln Park Community Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	2,468	382	15
2013	2,770	428	15
2015	2,801	385	14
2019	2,651	793	30
2023	2,708	743	27

District 4 – F. Scott Fitzgerald Hall			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	3,448	473	14
2013	3,695	511	14
2015	3,746	463	12
2019	3,531	1,090	31
2023	3,463	949	27

District 5 – Twinbrook Community Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	3,164	518	16
2013	3,640	521	14
2015	3,770	473	13
2019	3,775	1,077	29
2023	3,851	1,052	27

District 6 – Montrose Community Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	3,178	254	8
2013	3,417	264	8
2015	3,288	221	7
2019	3,473	711	20
2023	4,105	877	21

District 7 – Richie Park			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	4,453	756	17
2013	4,574	819	18
2015	4,550	717	16
2019	4,394	1,554	35
2023	4,431	1,565	35

District 8 – Thomas Farm Community Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	4,265	457	11
2013	4,369	417	10
2015	4,372	397	9
2019	4,062	1,118	28
2023	4,117	1,203	29

District 9 – Rockville Senior Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	2,410	562	23
2013	2,530	640	25
2015	2,502	552	22
2019	2,307	968	42
2023	2,353	1,011	43

District 10 – King Farm Community Center			
Year	Registered	Voters	%
2011	4,608	658	14
2013	5,452	702	13
2015	5,534	746	13
2019	5,660	1456	26
2023	5,780	1747	30

Appendix D: How Voted Ballots Were Cast

Ballots Cast	#	%
City Hall Outdoor and Indoor Ballot Drop Boxes	4,978	38.7
Montrose Outdoor Ballot Drop Box	221	1.7
Lincoln Park Indoor Ballot Drop Box	57	0.4
Thomas Farm Indoor Ballot Drop Box	379	2.9
Twinbrook Indoor Ballot Drop Box	339	2.6
Senior Center Indoor Ballot Drop Box	448	3.5
Total Deposited in Ballot Drop Boxes	6,422	49.9*
Mail	5,517	42.9
Nursing Home	60	0.5
Obtained at Vote Centers on Election Day	863	6.7
TOTAL BALLOTS RECEIVED BEFORE POLLS CLOSED	12,862	100
Ballots Rejected (some of which were cured)	-92 [†]	
Ballots Scanned November 8, 2023 (Non-Provisional)	12,637	
Ballots Scanned November 9, 2023 (Provisional)	133	
TOTAL SCANNED BALLOTS	12,770	
*The Total Deposited is slightly higher than the subtotals due to rounding.		
†Ballots received before polls close may be rejected or several reasons; the most frequent are 1) not signing the voter oath, 2) moving away from Rockville before Election Day, and 3) enclosing two ballots in the same return envelope.		

Appendix E: Ballot Delivery

Ballot Delivery	
Ballots mailed to voters by Taylor	39,190
Ballots issued to voters by City of Rockville*	1,181
Voters Receiving Ballots at Vote Centers	863
TOTAL	41,234
*This total includes 964 ballots sent to voters who opted for web delivery in State elections. The voter file sent from the State MDVoters did not provided mailing addresses to the Taylor (vendor). The City does not offer web delivery as a voting method, the City is an all Vote by Mail election.	

Appendix F: Comparison of 2019 and 2023 Election Costs

Rockville Election Cost 2019 and 2023		
	2019	2023
VOTE		
Total Cost of election	\$193,540	\$208,214
Number of ballots cast	12,287	12,770
Cost per ballot (voter)	\$15.75	\$16.53
BALLOT		
Number of Candidates	15	14
Turnout - number of ballots cast	12,287	12,770
Number of candidates per contest:		
Mayor	2	2
Council	13	12
Ballot Referenda Questions	0	4

UNIQUENESS		
Drop Boxes	2	8
Polling Place for Early Voting – 2days)		
Vote Center	1	2
Method Touch Screen Voting Unit		
Pilot for County & State equipment (no cost)		
BMD and scanner (no cost)		
Early Voting and BMD		
(VBM)	✓	✓
Election Cycle change from 2 to 4 years	✓	✓

OUTREACH/MAILING		
Number of mailings:	39,499	40,154
Postcard Mailers	4	4

Appendix G: Comparison of 2019 and 2023 Election Costs

2023 Rockville Election Cost	Cost (\$)
Advertising newspaper notices (Elections)	5,184
Postcard #1 and #2 (Printing)	11,849
Postcard mail #1 and #2 (Postage)	17,875
Postcard mail #3 and #4 (Printing)	12,616
Postcard mail #3 and #4 (Postage)	25,554
USPS Postal fees: maintenance on return (ballot packets)	4,227
USPS Postal fees: renewal and maintenance	5,810
Equipment (Transportation)	0
Equipment dropboxes	0
Equipment dropboxes install	0
Ballot Marking Device (DMV) audio and software (vendor) Election Systems & Software (ES&S) as the sole source vendor of production for ballots, design of ballot layout, printing of ballots, setup, coding and tabulation of voting machines, ADA compliant ballot marking stations, language and ballot translation.	7,638
Vendor (Taylor) ballot packet and mailing of ballots. Taylor prints and prepares the complete inserts for ballot packets for mailing, which includes, the ballot, instructions, vote sticker, voter assistance card, and in and outbound envelopes with the printed signed oath.	61,710
Montgomery County BSOE & State Services (election cycle)	26,563
Personnel Dropbox Attendees (2) (election cycle)	3,912
Personnel Canvassers/Election Day Judges (election cycle)	6,712
Voter Guides (Printing and Mailing)	17,538
Material (ballot bag, supplies, giveaway)	890
Election Day (Food)	1,428
Translation Services (Election Outreach Materials)	3,019
Election Supplies (Banner Bugs & Street Banner, Window Clingers, Door hangers)	4,689
Total	<u>208,214</u>

Appendix H: Votes Cast for Mayoral Candidates by District in 2023

District	Monique Ashton	Percent	Mark Pierzchala	Percent	Write-In	Percent
1	689	61.85	424	38.06	1	0.09
2	1,565	64.54	851	35.09	9	0.37
3	475	66.16	239	33.29	4	0.56
4	532	57.58	385	41.67	7	0.76
5	606	59.53	407	39.98	5	0.49
6	498	58.59	349	41.06	3	0.35
7	776	51.32	728	48.15	8	0.53
8	643	55.72	507	43.93	4	0.35
9	456	45.6	542	54.2	2	0.2
10	1,058	63.66	596	35.86	8	0.48
TOTAL	7,298		5,028		51	

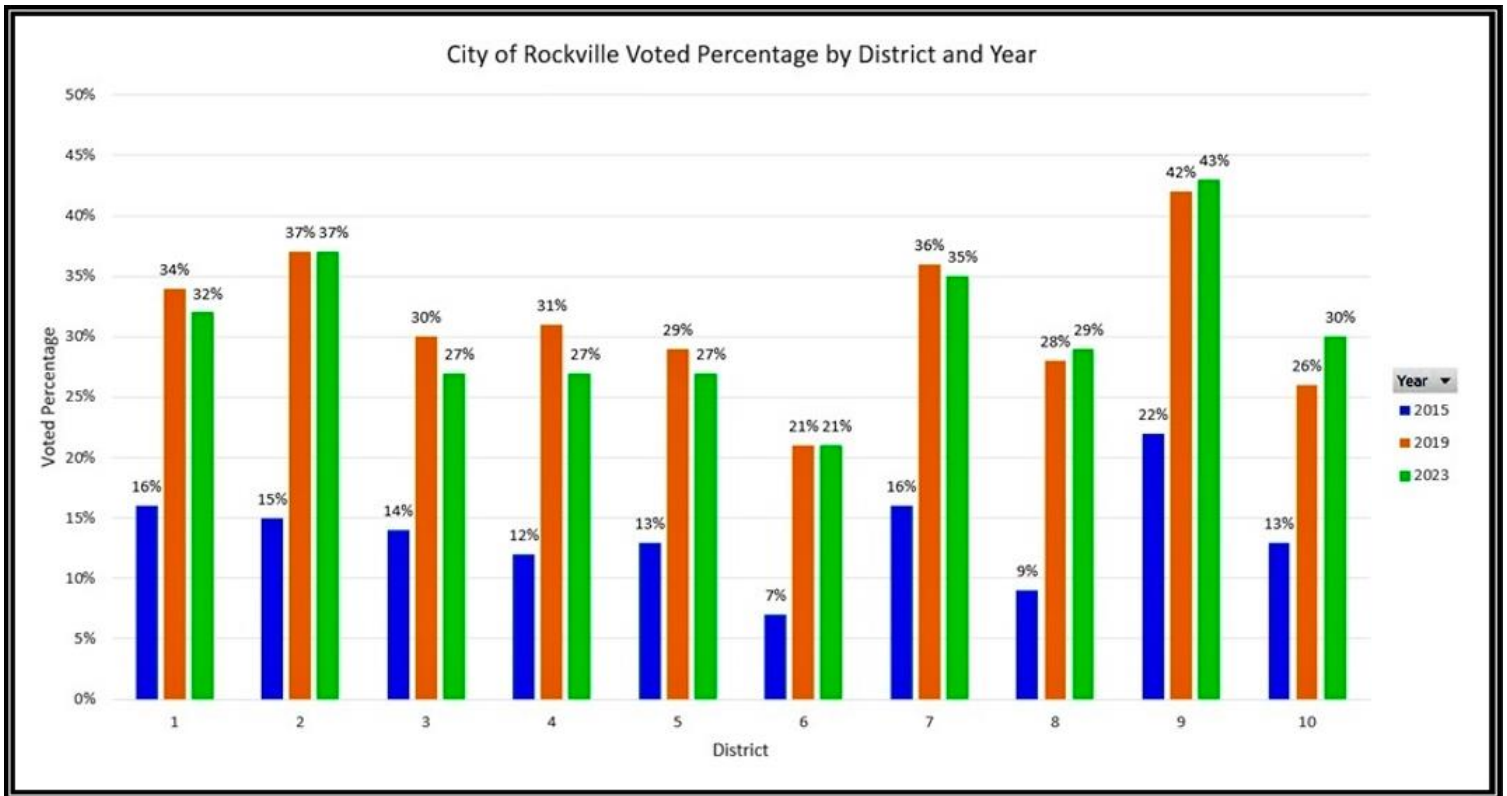
Data from Official Election Report dated 11/9/23

Appendix I: Votes Cast for Councilmanic Candidates by District 2023

Dist	Danniel Belay	Kate Fulton	Richard Gottfried	Harold Hodges	Barry Jackson	Ricky F. Mui	David Myles	Anita Neal Powell	Paul Scott	Izola Shaw	Marissa Valeri	Adam Van Grack	Write-In
1	189	853	346	49	470	250	581	323	468	751	597	741	16
2	405	1,822	787	152	1,042	713	1,093	792	960	1,578	1,164	1512	64
3	126	528	199	43	281	181	377	291	335	499	408	395	26
4	145	673	311	48	413	254	452	327	356	622	552	574	27
5	179	683	357	61	385	264	563	376	388	678	682	578	19
6	160	603	308	60	393	225	434	233	325	482	386	569	14
7	203	1,097	545	63	766	358	807	362	548	835	581	1241	28
8	201	777	482	57	561	340	608	358	425	615	450	766	32
9	123	752	254	39	481	233	488	346	342	609	436	664	21
10	270	1,160	513	69	1,170	378	760	421	960	943	739	1032	23
TOTAL	2,001	8,948	4,102	641	5,962	3,196	6,163	3,829	5,107	7,612	5,995	8,072	270

Data from Official Election Report dated 11/9/23

Appendix J: Voted Percentage by District and Year



Appendix K: Votes on Ballot Questions

Question	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	No Opinion	Percent
Question 1 - Voting Age: Currently you must be 18 years old to vote. Should Rockville allow 16-17 year olds to vote in City elections?	3,601	28.77	8,665	69.23	250	2%
Question 2 - Non-Citizen Voting: Currently only U.S. citizens who live in Rockville can vote in City elections. Should Rockville allow residents who are not U.S. citizens to vote in City elections?	4,208	33.89	7,926	63.84	281	2.26%
Question 3 - Term Limits: Currently there are no term limits for Mayor and City Council members. Should Rockville limit the Mayor and Council members to 3 consecutive terms?	9,267	74.09	2,786	22.27	455	3.64%
Question 4 - Representative Districts: Currently, City Council members are elected at large. That means the entire city votes for all 6 members. Should some or all of the 6 council members be elected by representative districts?	5,090	40.84	6,378	51.18	995	7.98%