

Meeting Agenda:	Board of Elections Meeting		
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, January 20th, 2026	Time:	Start: 8:31 am End: 8:59 am
Meeting Facilitator:	Timothy A. Benyo, Chief Clerk	Location:	Lehigh County Government Center, Conference Rooms 43A & B

Attendance:	
Timothy Benyo	Chief Clerk of Elections
Brianna Nigrone-Souza	Deputy-Chief Clerk of Elections
Joshua Siegel	Lehigh County Executive, Election Board Chair
Michael O'Hare	Election Board Member
Dr. Jennifer Allen	Election Board Member
Sarah Murray, Esq.	Lehigh County Deputy Solicitor

The meeting is called to order by Executive Joshua Siegel at 8:31 am and announced that the meeting is being recorded for public record.

Oaths of Office

- Oaths of Office for the Board of Elections were administered by Jill Orosky.
- Oaths will be filed in the office of the Election and Registration Commission as required by the Lehigh County Home Rule Charter.

Approval of Minutes- November 19 & 24, 2025

- The motion to approve the minutes for both meetings was made by Mr. Michael O'Hare and 2nd by Dr. Allen. Motion passes 3-0.

Old Business

- N/A

New Business (Special Election Issues)

- Polling Places
 - The Elections Office is in the process of moving polling locations from Allentown School District (ASD) because the schools will be open for students and cannot be used as polling locations for the February 2026 Special Election.
 - Mr. Benyo stated there are 11 confirmed and 8 unconfirmed locations (the unconfirmed locations includes ASD and Big Brothers Big Sisters Lehigh Valley)
 - Many of the precincts that were originally at the schools will be combined with other confirmed locations and ASD has offered the use of their administration building.
 - Voters will be notified of the new locations in the newspaper and signs will be placed at the original locations.
 - Mr. O'Hare asked if there was a deadline to have the locations decided? Mr. Benyo said we hope to have the locations set as soon as possible but locations have had to be moved due to last minute emergencies in the past.
 - Due to the condensed timeline for the Special Election, letters cannot be sent to all of the registered voters in the 22nd District that use ASD schools as polling locations.
- Mr. Benyo explained the PERM letters for the 22nd District have a green stripe to differentiate them and the deadline to register to vote for the Special Election is February 9th.
- Mr. Benyo further explained that the Special Election candidates have not been certified by the Secretary of State due to a registered voter in Allentown 11th Ward 2nd District challenging the Democratic candidate. The hearing will be Friday January 23rd, 2026.
- Mr. O'Hare asked how the office is doing staffing Judges of Elections and poll workers for the 2026 Special Election?
 - Mr. Benyo said the office is good on staffing and has the trainings scheduled. He also added the office will not be having the high school students help on Special Election as many are from ASD.
- Mr. Benyo informed the Board that the Department of State will be reimbursing the County for Special Election costs, including paying staff.
 - He also explained how County part-time staff can work a maximum of 1,000 hours each year (based on their anniversary date) so a portion of their hours will be used for 3 elections in 2026 rather than 2, which may cause staffing issues.
- Drop Boxes
 - There is no drop box in the 22nd District since they are based on Commissioner Districts and not legislative districts.

- Deputy County Solicitor Sarah Murray added the closest drop box is at the Government Center which is a street away from the Hamilton St. line and, looking at the district, a logical place to add a drop box may be the Salisbury Township Building.
- Executive Siegel asked if a drop box could be placed at a school or district building, possibly Dieruff High School.
- Public attendee, Bob Elbich asked if a box could be placed at a Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) office.
- Mr. Benyo clarified with Executive Siegel if we are aiming for 3 drop boxes. Executive Siegel confirmed yes with aiming to have a drop box for the Eastern part of the 22nd District. Mr. Benyo confirmed that he will work on securing drop box locations and will update the Board as locations are secured.
- Dr. Allen asked where drop box locations would be advertised and Mr. Benyo and Sarah Murray said in the newspaper and on the County website.

Meeting Schedule

- Sarah Murray explained the typical certification schedule and asked the Board to approve an 11am meeting on Wednesday, March 4 to not interfere with the overseas and military ballot return deadline.
- Dr. Allen made a motion to approve the below 2026 meeting schedule, 2nd by Mr. O'Hare. Motion passes 3-0.

Wednesday, March 4 (1st cert)

Monday, March 9 (2nd cert)

Wednesday, April 1 (ballot approval)

Wednesday, June 3 (1st cert)

Monday, June 8 (2nd cert)

Wednesday, September 16 (ballot approval)

Wednesday, November 18 (1st cert)

Monday, November 23 (2nd cert)

Drop Box Placement/Schedule for February 24, 2026 Special Election

- Per the Board's Rules and Regulations, drop boxes must be available no later than 2 days after ballots are mailed.

2026 Special Election Ballot Approval

- The candidates cannot be approved yet based on the challenge but the Secretary of State has until January 25th.
- A motion to approve the ballot subject to the Secretary of State's confirmation of candidates was made by Mr. O'Hare and 2nd by Dr. Allen. Motion passes 3-0.

Public Comment

- Mr. Elbich made a request for the Board of Elections meeting minutes and recordings to be published on the County website. He said his request for this did not happen in the last Executive Administration and hopes it can now.
- Mr. Benyo explained him and his staff do not have the time to upload all of the records. Sarah Murray said she will reach out to IT and Executive Siegel said his administration will make sure they are uploaded.

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. O'Hare and 2nd by Dr. Allen, meeting adjourned at 8:59 am.