





April 17, 2024

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Ingrid S. Watson, Chair  
Government Operations and Fiscal Policy (GOFP) Committee

THRU: Joseph R. Hamlin   
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: Andrew Stover   
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Board of Elections  
Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Review

**Budget Overview**

- The FY 2025 Proposed Budget for the Board of Elections is \$13,110,700. This represents an increase of \$1,401,800 above the FY 2024 Approved Budget, or 12%. Much of this increase is attributable to a rise in compensation costs as a result of increased temporary staffing needs for the 2024 General Election and an increase in overtime funding to align with historical costs. Funding for Fringe Benefits and Operating Expenses sees a net decrease.
- The Board will submit a supplemental funding request for \$717,000 to cover additional overtime and staffing costs.

**Expenditures Overview**

Fund	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2024 Estimated	% Change Est vs App	FY 2025 Proposed	\$ Change, Prop vs App	% Change
General Fund	\$10,854,026	\$11,708,900	\$12,425,900	6.12%	\$13,110,700	\$1,401,800	11.97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,854,026</b>	<b>\$11,708,900</b>	<b>\$12,425,900</b>	<b>6.12%</b>	<b>\$13,110,700</b>	<b>\$1,401,800</b>	<b>11.97%</b>

## Expenditures by Category

Approved Fiscal Year 2024 to Proposed Fiscal Year 2025

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2024 Estimated	% Change - Est vs App	FY 2025 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Compensation	\$7,098,057	\$5,956,700	\$7,412,000	24.43%	\$7,924,700	\$1,968,000	33.0%
Fringe Benefits	830,185	1,370,000	889,100	-35.10%	1,028,800	-341,200	-24.9%
Operating Expenses	2,925,784	4,382,200	4,124,800	-5.87%	4,157,200	-225,000	-5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,854,026</b>	<b>\$11,708,900</b>	<b>\$12,425,900</b>	<b>6.12%</b>	<b>\$13,110,700</b>	<b>\$1,401,800</b>	<b>12.0%</b>

## Supplemental Budget Request

- The Board expects to submit a supplemental FY 2024 budget request of \$717,000. These funds will be used to cover increased overtime costs and additional costs associated with paying returning election judges. The costs for returning election judges were higher than budgeted as a result of the passage of HB1200 (2023) in the General Assembly, which required returning judges to be paid \$100 more per day than first-time judges, with the County covering \$50 of that increase. The County estimates the Fiscal Impact of this law to the FY 2024 Budget to be \$940,000.

## Staffing Changes and Compensation

Authorized Staffing Count - General Fund				
	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2025 Proposed	Change Amount	% Change
Full-Time	33	33	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

- The FY 2024 Proposed Budget includes authorization for 33 full-time General Fund positions, with no increases from the previous fiscal year.
- As of March 2024, the Board reported that it had two (2) vacancies. A hire has already been made for the Citizen Services Specialist 3G and interviews are scheduled for the Budget Management Analyst 1G role.
- Compensation is proposed to increase by \$1,968,000, or 33% above the FY 2024 approved level. This increase is driven primarily by increases in temporary staffing to support the 2024 Presidential General Election plus increased payments as a result of HB1200 (+\$1,188,800), increase in overtime funding (+\$500,000), and the recategorization of funds from training to compensation for election judge training (\$250,000).

- The Board has not seen any attrition in FY 2024.
- The following table compares the FY 2023 actual, FY 2024 estimated, and the FY 2025 projected number of Election Day temporary employees anticipated:

Election Temporary Employees			
Descriptions	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2025 Projected
Early Voting Election Judges (eight days)	22	22	22
Election Day Election Judges	3,326	4,000	3,800
Closing Judges	250	250	250
Election Day Recruiters	8	8	8
Election Day Technicians	121	150	300
Election Day Telephone Operators	25	25	25
General Clerks, Voter Registration, Absentee Ballot Data Entry, Data Coordinators, & Voting Unit Programmers	80	80	80
Department of Environment Staff Drivers	15	30	25
Deputy Sheriffs	6	6	2
Police Department	24		
Canvass Workers	45	95	95
Board of Canvass	17	17	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,939</b>	<b>4,683</b>	<b>4,624</b>
<i>First Round Response, q. 7, pg. 4</i>			

- The Board consists of five (5) members and three (3) alternate 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 term for members of the Board is from June 2023 to June 2027. The current members are as follows:

#### **Board Members**

- Beatrice P. Tignor (D), President
- Roberta B. Deegan (R), Vice President
- Faye M. Howell (D)
- Felicia N. V. Pratt (D)
- Terri L. Williams (D)

#### **Alternate Board Members**

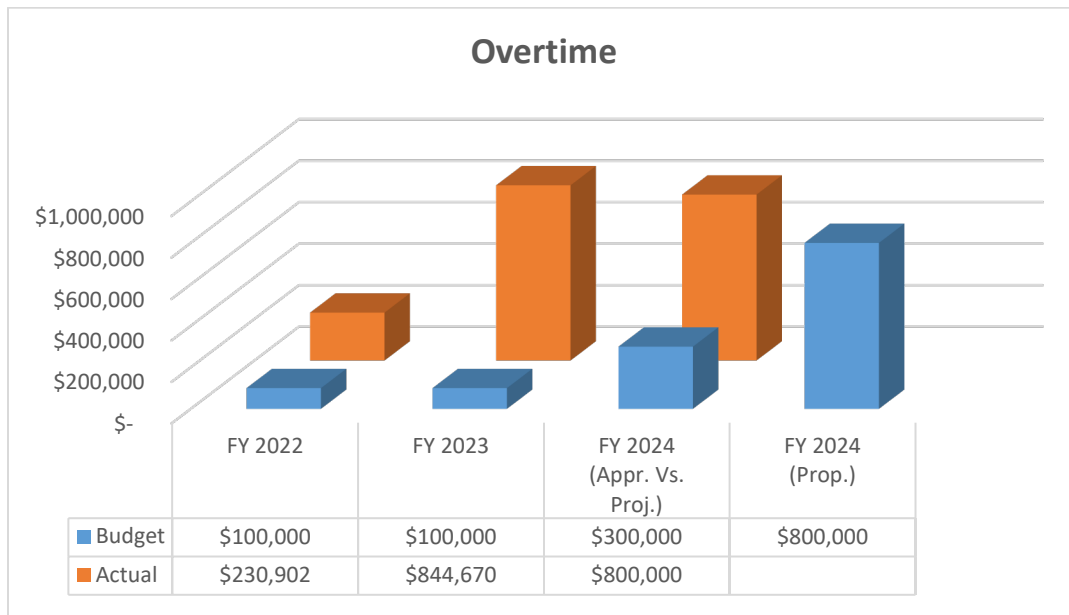
- Michael M. Gorman (R)
- Carlette L. Lundy (D)
- LaVerne Poteat Scott (D)

#### **Overtime**

- The Board projects overtime expenses will total \$800,000 for FY 2024, far exceeding the budget amount of \$300,000 by 167%. As is shown in the chart below, overtime spending has consistently been over budget in the past few years. Part of the reason for this is the fact that

State requirements mandate that training is offered for election judges and technicians both during the day and the evenings and Saturdays. Additionally, in the run up to the election, Board of Election staff typically work 10-12 hours daily to ensure they are complying with all deadline and election requirements. On election day, Board staff works 18-20 hours.

- The proposed amount for FY 2025 is \$800,000. This is a \$500,000 increase over the FY 2024 approved amount but aligns with the actual historical spending for overtime over the past few years.



### **Fringe Benefits**

- FY 2025 Fringe Benefits are proposed at \$1,028,800 a decrease of \$341,200, or 25%, under the FY 2024 approved level. This decrease is due to a decrease in the fringe benefit rate from 23% to 13%.
- A five-year trend of fringe benefit expenditures is included below:

Fringe Benefits Historical Trend					
	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimated	FY 2024 Proposed
Compensation	\$ 4,644,206	\$ 2,861,977	\$ 7,098,057	\$ 7,412,000	\$ 7,924,700
Fringe Benefit Expenditures	\$ 703,715	\$ 671,396	\$ 830,185	\$ 889,100	\$ 1,028,800
As a % of Compensation	15.2%	23.5%	11.7%	12.0%	13.0%

## **Operating Expenses**

- The FY 2025 operating expenses are proposed at \$4,157,200, a decrease of \$225,000 from the FY 2024 approved level, or 5.16%. Some of the major line items in the operating budget include:
  - Operating Contracts- \$1,809,200
  - Printing- \$831,500
  - Office Automation- \$407,500
  - General and Administrative Contracts- \$300,000
  - Office/Building Rental/Lease- \$205,000
  
- The accompanying table compares the FY 2025 Proposed Budget operating expenditures with the FY 2024 Approved Budget operating expenditures and the FY 2023 Actual Budget expenditures:

Operating Objects	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2025 Proposed	FY 2024 - FY 2025	
				\$ Change	% Change
Telephone	\$ 166,393	\$ 165,500	\$ 165,500	\$ -	0.0%
Printing	\$ 230,522	\$ 831,500	\$ 831,500	\$ -	0.0%
Periodicals	\$ 1,698	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	0.0%
Data-Voice	\$ 7,908	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,100	\$ -	0.0%
Office Automation	\$ 376,200	\$ 380,900	\$ 407,500	\$ 26,600	7.0%
Training	\$ 39,807	\$ 274,000	\$ 24,000	\$ (250,000)	-91.2%
Advertising	\$ 37,110	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	0.0%
Membership Fees	\$ 1,020	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ -	0.0%
Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 41,847	\$ 38,000	\$ 38,000	\$ -	0.0%
General & Administrative Contracts	\$ 49,161	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	0.0%
Operating Contracts	\$ 1,534,078	\$ 1,809,200	\$ 1,809,200	\$ -	0.0%
General Office Supplies	\$ 124,748	\$ 97,000	\$ 97,000	\$ -	0.0%
Office and Operating Equipment Non-Capital	\$ 15,120	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ -	0.0%
Other Operating Equipment	\$ -	\$ 1,600		\$ (1,600)	-100.0%
Equipment Lease	\$ 61,612	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ -	0.0%
Office/Building Rental/Lease	\$ 238,561	\$ 205,000	\$ 205,000	\$ -	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,925,785</b>	<b>\$ 4,382,200</b>	<b>\$ 4,157,200</b>	<b>\$ (225,000)</b>	<b>-5.13%</b>

- The only increase from the FY 2024 Budget is a \$26,600 increase for Office Automation due to an increase in Office of Information Technology (OIT) technology allocation charges.

- The \$250,000 decrease shown in the Training category is a transfer to the Compensation section of the budget to pay election judges for attending election judge training, as listed earlier in the report.

### **Workload and Program Key Points**

- The Board continues to make efforts to meet the needs of the non-English speaking community. As of March 2024, the Board was in the process of hiring a Citizen Services Specialist 3G to assist with outreach to bilingual election judges. Additionally, the Board is in the process of procuring a multi-language line program that can assist non-English speaking and hearing-impaired voters during early voting or election day.
- During the 2022 Primary Elections, the Board saw unprecedented numbers of election judges drop out. Election judge recruiting is ongoing, and the Board has made efforts to account for increased dropouts by training more judges than will be deployed to polling places. As of March 2024, 4,164 people had registered as election judges and 1,908 had been trained.
- The Board is currently working to secure additional suites at 1100 Mercantile Lane that would give them the necessary space they need to have a permanent location for canvassing ballots and provide additional space in their Warehouse.
- The County has budgeted \$1,600,000 in the FY 2025 Budget to help pay for the new e-pollbook system that the State Board of Elections procured during FY 2023. This funding is located in Non-Departmental.