



Legislative Summary

CA-2-26

Expanding the Board of Supervisors of Elections

The City of Annapolis Office of Law created this summary for the use of Annapolis City Council members during their consideration of the legislation.

Note: This summary outlines the legislation as introduced and does not address any amendments.

Bill Summary

CA-2-26 is a Charter Amendment that expands the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSE) from three members to five members. It establishes a new membership structure based on voter registration by political party, creates a nomination process involving political parties, self-nomination, and mayoral supplemental nominations, and adds detailed procedures for filling vacancies. The amendment also moves the appointment deadline from the second Monday in March to the third Monday in March.

Background

The Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSE) is the body responsible for overseeing and administering municipal elections in the City of Annapolis. The BOSE is essentially Annapolis's equivalent of a local election commission, but scoped exclusively to *city* elections (Mayor and Aldermen/Alderwomen).

The Board currently consists of three members appointed by the City Council under Article II, Section 6 of the City Charter. Because any two of the three members constitute a quorum, one-on-one discussions among members are subject to open meeting rules, which limit the Board's ability to conduct informal coordination.



The City of Annapolis Charter Review Commission of 2020, in its September 13, 2021, final report (Position 2), recommended expanding the BOSE to five members to improve representation, distribute workload, and allow committee-based work.

Alderman Savidge introduced CA-2-26 to implement this recommendation and to modernize the nomination and vacancy-filling process.

Article II, Section 6 – Board of Supervisors of Elections

CA-2-26 repeals and reenacts Article II, Section 6 of the City Charter in its entirety, replacing the existing three-member board structure with a new five-member structure organized by subsections (a) through (d) as follows:

Subsection (a) – Membership

- Expands the BOSE to five members.
- Two seats go to the party with the most registered voters, one to the party with the second-most, one to the party with the third-most (if that party comprises at least 10% of registered voters; otherwise, any registered voter may fill the seat), and one to an unaffiliated voter.
- All members must be city residents and registered voters, may not hold or seek elective office during their term, and serve without compensation.

Subsection (b) – Determination of Political Parties

- Party rankings are determined by voter registration figures as of the most recent City General Election.
- Ties for the top party result in each tied party receiving only one guaranteed seat; ties for second or third place are resolved by random lot drawn within three months of the most recent General Election, with that result fixed for the four-year term regardless of subsequent vacancies.



Subsection (c) – Board Member Nomination

- The City Council requests nominations before making appointments.
- The party with the most registered voters must submit at least four eligible candidates; other parties with a guaranteed seat must submit at least three.
- Any registered voter may self-nominate. All applications are due by the second Monday in February.
- If a party falls short, the Mayor submits supplemental nominees by the first Monday in March.
- All nominees are forwarded to the City Council by the first Monday in March, and the City Council appoints by the third Monday in March.
- Party-designated seats must be filled from party or mayoral nominations; the unaffiliated seat is filled from self-nominations of unaffiliated voters (or, if none are available, from party nominees or self-nominated party members).

Subsection (d) – Board Member Appointment and Filling Vacancies

- Members serve four-year terms beginning and ending on the third Monday in March following a General City Election.
- Vacancies are filled only for the remainder of the term.
- If the vacancy is a party-designated seat, that party has two weeks to nominate three eligible candidates (with mayoral backup if the party falls short).
- If the seat is for an unaffiliated voter or an open seat, the city posts an open call with a two-week deadline; political parties may also submit up to three nominations.
- If no nominations are received, the Mayor submits a nominee.
- Members must be reappointed to serve beyond a four-year term.
- The BOSE chair is chosen annually by its members.