MORSEcode
SEPTEMBER 2026 Special Edition Precinct Election Officials (PEO) Division Newsletter
Franklin County BOARD OF ELECTIONS

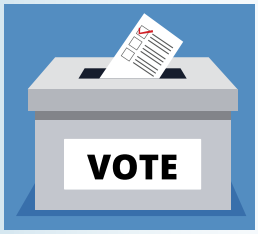
OUR MISSION

"To recruit, train, and place the best poll workers who are committed to serving voters with excellence and civic pride."

Decipher important Morse Code message hidden throughout newsletter; find answer on next page.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Whitehall Special Election: SPECIAL Indeed!



In an election on June 23, registered Whitehall voters could vote to keep or recall the Whitehall mayor and two council members. This "Special Election" lived up to its name for three *special* reasons:

1. Special Election Scheduled Twice

The Special Election was first scheduled for May 28 after a group of citizens submitted petitions to place the recall question before Whitehall voters. However, a Supreme Court of Ohio ruling halted the election because the City of Whitehall used an incorrect method to calculate the threshold of signatures required to initiate a recall election. Recall organizers submitted additional signatures, and a new date of June 23 was set for the election.

2. Provisional Ballots Determined Outcome in One Contest

Unofficial results on election night showed that one council member was recalled by 6 votes. However, unofficial results do not include votes cast by Provisional Voters, as their ballots are counted after the Franklin County BOE verifies each Provisional Voter's eligibility. Of the 24 Provisional Voters who voted, 19 of them voted against recalling the council member, thus reversing the unofficial results for that council member.

3. Automatic Recount Ordered for Close Contest

If the difference of the outcome within a specific contest is less than one-half of 1% of the total votes cast in the contest, the BOE must order an automatic recount. The difference in the council member recall contest that was reversed once provisional ballots were counted was 8 votes, which triggered a recount. To conduct a recount, a sample of at least 5% of the ballots cast is hand counted. The BOE randomly selected Precinct Whitehall 3-B from all the Whitehall precincts and hand counted all ballots cast in that precinct. If a hand count matches an electronic tally, then all ballots are recounted using the BOE's electronic ballot counters. In the Whitehall Special Election, the hand count matched the electronic tally. Consequently, the ballots were recounted using the BOE's electronic ballot counters, and when no changes were found, the official result remained.

.- / ... .--. . -.-. .. .- .-.. /

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PEO Division Updates



Join us in congratulating two people at the BOE whom you may already know! Chris Binder is now PEO Manager, and Laurie Gatton has succeeded him as PEO Training Coordinator.

Chris hails from New Orleans where much of his family still resides. His grandfathers influenced his early interest in storytelling, history, politics, and elections. After Chris graduated with a degree in political science from Southeastern Louisiana University, he worked on various political campaigns in the South, but by early 2018 found himself in Columbus, Ohio, where he "fell in love" with the changing seasons. In the summer of 2021, Chris chose to stay in Columbus and work as the PEO Training Coordinator at the BOE.

Laurie's familial roots are in Churubusco (northwest of Fort Wayne), Indiana, where relatives still live. In 1980 she graduated with a degree in education from Cedarville University in Ohio. Laurie's love of learning and support of a friend, whose son was entering kindergarten at the Indiana School for the Deaf in 1986, inspired Laurie to learn sign language alongside her friend. Laurie joined the BOE as a PEO Trainer in 2012. Next, she served as a PEO Placement Team Member and then as a Youth-At-The-Booth Coordinator. In 2021 she became a PEO Placement Coordinator, and in 2023 an Election Support Specialist Coordinator.

. .-.. . -.-. - .. --- -. / -.-. .- -.

PATRIOTIC CELEBRATIONS

Independence Day, the Semiquincentennial, and Remembering the Bicentennial

On July 4th, the United States of America not only celebrated Independence Day, but marked its 250th birthday with the Semiquincentennial. With this significant, historic, and bipartisan event, Americans are commemorating, all year, our nation's adoption—two and a half centuries ago—of the Declaration of Independence.



BOE staff celebrating Independence Day

Amidst the excitement of the Semiquincentennial, we, here at the Franklin County BOE, celebrated Independence Day by wearing red, white, and blue; enjoying traditional American summertime fare of hot dogs, baked beans, and coleslaw; and sharing our intended holiday plans, including national, state, and local American independence-themed events. Some of us recollected America's 200th anniversary in 1976 with stories about the American Freedom Train (a steam-powered locomotive museum that visited the 48 contiguous states); reenactments, parades, and celebrations across the country; patriotically-painted fire hydrants and mailboxes; and ceremonial coins and memorabilia.

Tell us on BOE's Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/FranklinCountyBoardofElections) about your Independence Day traditions, the Semiquincentennial events that hold special meaning for you, and what you (or your family) remember about the Bicentennial.

.... .- ...- . / -. ..- .- -. -.-. . ... .-.-.-

SOMETHING EDUCATIONAL

PLEJ Summer 2026 Convening


Attendees at PLEJ Summer 2026 Convening

Have you heard of PLEJ? PLEJ, or Partnership for Large Election Jurisdictions, is a national, nonpartisan, and nonprofit organization that provides support, best practices, and peer engagement for large election jurisdictions by working closely with election leaders throughout the country, and with programs that strengthen election operations, communications, preparedness, and democracy. PLEJ is open to election professionals who represent jurisdictions of 250,000 people or more, or the four largest jurisdictions in a state, and who share core values, including that election administrators should uphold common standards; conduct elections accurately, securely, and impartially; facilitate eligible voter participation; and be responsive to their community.


From left: Adam, Director White, and Carla at PLEJ Summer 2026 Convening

In July, Franklin County BOE Director Antone White, Elections Operations Manager Carla Patton, and Ballot Processing and Scanning Coordinator Adam Slane joined other election professionals from around the country, in attending the PLEJ Summer 2026 Convening in Atlanta for candid conversations, hands-on scenario planning, and peer-led problem-solving with the goal of implementing safe, secure, and fair elections.


Director White as a featured panelist for breakout session "When the Rules Move"

During the Convening, Director White served as a featured panelist in a breakout session, "When the Rules Move," and shared how Franklin County translates new election laws, court decisions, and policy changes into practical election operations. Discussion focused on implementation strategies, legal preparedness, and maintaining voter confidence during periods of change.

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE A POLL WORKER?

If so, please have that person call us at 614-525-5393 or go to the Franklin County BOE website for the online application:

https://electionwork.franklincountyohio.gov/TED/ElectionForcePortal/Landing.aspx

Or scan the QR code here with your smartphone camera for the online application.

DATES TO REMEMBER 2026

Sept. 28 – Oct. 29
In-person PEO Training Occurs

Oct. 5
Last Day to Register to Vote

BOE Open Until 9 pm

Oct. 6
Absentee Voting by Mail Begins

Early In-person Voting Begins at BOE

Oct. 27
Absentee Ballot Applications Must Be Received by BOE by 8:30 pm

Oct. 31 – Nov. 1
Practice Makes Perfect For VLMs and VLDs

Nov. 1
Early In-person Voting Ends at BOE

Nov. 3
General Election Day

Absentee Ballots Must Be Received by BOE by 7:30 pm

Franklin County (as of Sept. 3, 2026):
32nd largest county in the U.S.;
896,372 registered voters.

Morse Code hidden in banner: PEO; Morse Code hidden in newsletter: A SPECIAL ELECTION CAN HAVE NUANCES.