



## MANHATTAN BEACH CIVIC ASSOCIATION

### 2025 Ballot Vote Results & Summary

**RESULTS:** 180 **AFFIRM** (85%) , 33 **REJECT** (15%), Total Ballot votes: 213

The MBCA Board of Directors conducted a ballot vote from October 7 through November 18, 2025. The purpose of this notice is to document the process and results and to ensure a proper record of this significant event.

On October 7<sup>th</sup> at an MBCA General Meeting, the Board of Directors proposed to amend the Bylaws, increase the annual member tax assessment and approve the FY 2027 budget. Per the 2008 Bylaws in effect at the time of this meeting, a Ballot vote is required to amend the Bylaws. The day after this meeting, a webpage was created within the MBCA website containing the following documents related to the Ballot vote:

- 2008 Bylaws
- Proposed Bylaws
- Change Log showing key changes to the Bylaws.
- PowerPoint Presentation detailing what we are changing and why.
- Proposed FY2027 Budget with a per-tax account increase from \$150 to \$200 per year.
- Voting Ballot for download

As Ballot were received they were recorded in a spreadsheet and filed according to "Affirm" or "Reject". The method of delivery of the ballot was also recorded (USPS, Email, handed to a Board member and Ballots received at the Nov 18 meeting) The spreadsheet was provided by the Anne Arundel County SCBD office and contained every tax account property within the borders of Manhattan Beach. Every Ballot was verified against the county data for the name of the owner and the address. There were roughly 20 Ballots that required additional research using SDAT and other county resources to validate.

A total of 4 of the roughly 600 mailers containing the budget, newsletter and ballot were returned to sender (MBCA) as they either could not be delivered or were refused by the current occupant. One owner was out of the country on military assignment, another is the abandoned home on Gordon ave, and the other 2 appeared to have moved. We will be engaging the county SCBD office to determine why those 2 have not been updated to the new owner.

We also ensured that no duplicate Ballots were allowed. Only one duplicate occurred when we received a ballot twice via USPS several weeks apart. We assume the resident forgot they had already sent it.

I can confirm that I personally counted all physical Ballots along with our Secretary Jeremy Merril, and we have secured them should there ever be any question about the validity of the vote. We will be archiving them as well, converting to a PDF document containing all 213 Ballots received along with the tracking spreadsheet. For privacy reasons, the ballots and the tracker will not be posted to the website,

however should any concern be brought to the board, accommodations can be made to allow a resident to count the votes without exposing personal information about each voter, assuming there is reasonable evidence for the concern.

It is important to note that the last Ballot vote was 17 years ago in 2008 when the Bylaws were amended, but the format and structure of the majority of the Bylaws was created 30 years earlier in 1995. (Before the Internet and email were prevalent). The Board felt it was important to engage as many community members as possible for this important vote, and as a result allowed for residents to download the Ballot from our website and submit it via email, USPS to our MBCA PO Box, turn it in to an MBCA board member, or bring it to the November 18 General meeting where the votes were counted and results announced.

During the November 18 General Meeting, a resident raised the concern that the Bylaws don't allow for Ballots to be handed to a Board member. Their concern was that this method of collection could add an element of fraud by way of compelling people to vote a certain way. I would like to address this in detail as it is of utmost importance to me and to the entire Board, that the membership have confidence and trust in the Board.

1. Roughly 90% of all votes labelled as "handed to the Board", were handed to me personally. Every vote handed to me had already been emailed to the official [MBCASevernaPark@gmail.com](mailto:MBCASevernaPark@gmail.com) account during the voting period. Shortly after the October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, I became concerned that a resident who had been very aggressive in the weeks leading up to the vote, might try and invalidate votes that were emailed because email was not mentioned in our 30-year-old Bylaws. I replied to every email asking that they allow me to come get their original ballot or bring it to me at my home. I did this for almost 60 ballots that were originally emailed and was able to collect all but 4 before the Nov 18 meeting.
2. The other 10% were collected by Jeremy Merrill, our Secretary, Jed Kling, our Treasurer and Michele Kendus a long-time Board member and co-chair of our Environment committee. The ballots they collected were handed to them by neighbors/friends who lived on their block that thought it would be easier to just hand it to the board rather than mail it in.
3. As described earlier in this document, the Board took great care to ensure all Ballots were legitimate and were handled with care. No Board member attempted to coerce any one and we accepted Ballots regardless of whether they affirmed or rejected the vote.
4. The Board understands the importance of following the Bylaws, however we also understand the importance of participation as this is something every SCBD association or HOA struggles with. Our decision to allow Ballots that were handed to a Board member or emailed was an exercise in common sense and the acknowledgement that if someone wanted to commit voter fraud, they could just as easily do so with a mailed in Ballot. That is why we took measures to verify and validate every Ballot regardless of how it was received.
5. To address the concern of voter influence or fraud by way of handing ballots to Board members, we agreed to look at the results of only those Ballots submitted via USPS or at the Nov meeting. The result was the same – a supermajority, two-thirds vote to Affirm.
  - a. All Votes: 180 **AFFIRM** (85%) , 33 **REJECT** (15%) , Total Ballot votes: 213
  - b. USPS/Meeting Votes: 110 **AFFIRM** (79%) , 30 **REJECT** (21%) , Total Ballot votes: 140
  - c. All Votes minus Email: 176 **AFFIRM** (85%) , 31 **REJECT** (15%) , Total Ballot votes: 207