**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Board of Commissioners Meeting Room**

**203 W. Broughton Street**

**Bainbridge, Ga. 39819**

**January 12, 2016**

**Call To Order**

**Administrative Notes**

The monthly meeting of the Decatur County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was called to order by Chairman Wendell Cofer at 6:32 p.m. and stated that the meeting has been duly advertised in the newspaper and on the buildings properly identifying meeting date, time and location as required by governing laws.

**Board Members present: Staff present:**

Chairman Wendell Cofer Carol P. Heard (Chief Elections Official)

Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr.

Beverly W. Holmes

Keith Sellars

Gina Burke

**Guests:**

County IT manager Roy Reynolds. Poll managers and workers Janelle Nelson, Margaret Bryant and Carla Robinson.

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 6, 2015, regular meeting as presented. Board Member Willie Lamb Jr. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

Budget. Board Chairman Wendell Cofer said the board had approved at its November 6, 2016, meeting the transfer of $2,000 budgeted for Technical Premier to split be with $1,000 going to travel and the other $1,000 going to education and training. Furthermore, that $7,200 for group insurance be moved to personnel services to enable the office to pay for the two part-timers. Cofer said in reviewing the budget that those transfers have not occurred yet. Cofer said he would do a follow-up to ensure those transfers are completed. Cofer also noted that the Board’s bottom-line percentage remaining is 58 percent, which means the Board is 8 percent ahead of projected expenditures. Areas that need attention in next year’s budget so those items are properly allocated are retirement contributions, buildings and grounds, dues and fees, contract labor and overtime.

In the Board members’ meeting packet was a letter to City of Bainbridge Director of Administration Lisa Taylor requesting reimbursement of the Board’s agreement to conduct the municipal elections. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard told the Board the City of Bainbridge did reimburse the county $10,555 for conducting the elections. Those funds were deposited into the county’s general revenue fund.

**New Business**

1. Mediacom internet service at the Fairgrounds.

Decatur County information technician Roy Reynolds furnished Cofer a proposed contract with Mediacom to supply internet service to the Fairgrounds advance voting location. Cofer said Mediacom offered to furnish the service for free with the stipulation that the Board post a banner saying that the internet service was provided by Mediacom. Cofer said he declined that offer on behalf of the Board. The agreement quote was for $69.95 a month for three years, or for $99.95 a month for one year for the 10/1 speed. For 5/1 speed, the quote was $59.95 for three years and $79.95 for one year. Reynolds told the Board that this proposed agreement was precipitated during the November 2015 election there were issues of unreliable service with the present internet service provider. Board Member Keith Sellars asked Reynolds if he had approached AT&T. Reynolds didn’t approach AT&T because Mediacom seemed willing to work with the Board. Reynolds said Mediacom’s speed is significantly better than Turner Broadband. Sellars made a motion to contact Mediacom to see if they would still comp services to the Board with no commercial advertisement, and if they say no to go ahead and enter into an agreement for $69.96 a month for three years. Board member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Early tabulation for March 1 Presidential Preference Primary.

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said there was some confusion on whether the early tabulation was open to the public or not. But after asking for clarification from State Director of Elections Chris Harvey, early tabulation is closed to the public and cannot be monitored. The Grand Jury room will work. Heard said the public just needs to be notified. Cofer asked for written legal standing on early tabulation. Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to try early tabulation for the March 1 Presidential Preference Primary. Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Cofer directed staff to come up with the code language on early tabulation procedures and that he would coordinate with staff on setting up early tabulation. Staff was also directed to come up with Board member duties for Election Night, and to come up with a list of office workers on Election and their potential duties.

1. Poll workers shirts and/or pins.

Cofer said he received an email on poll worker pins and he liked them for the poll workers. Board Member Gina Burke said she liked the generic pins that could be worn at any election. Burke and Sellars said they like the one with bars. Cofer said get a better estimate for the pins with the bars, and get a quote for generic pins. Sellars and Burke said they were OK with staff proceeding to get the pins if the price range is about $1.75 per pin for a quantity of 100.

Cofer wanted feedback on shirts for staff. Board Member Holmes said she liked the idea especially after seeing some counties wearing shirts with their logos on them. Sellars said it would help make the staff more professional and identifiable. Cofer said he would stick with pins on poll workers. Heard said two shirts would work with Election Days or special events. Cofer recommended three shirts. Burke wanted staff to check on a Cairo T-shirt provider, saying she thinks poll workers need a shirt. Burke then suggested a lanyard with the pin.

The Board directed staff to order the generic poll worker pins, order three shirts for staff and explore and ratify by email the lanyards.

1. Voting machine inventory and future of those machines.

Cofer said this was just for the Board’s information. The county originally received approximately 70 touchscreen voting machines several years ago. There has not been any replacements. Cofer said the office has at least nine machines that are in need of repair or are in total disrepair. Board Member Keith Sellars said he didn’t think it was adventurous to keep repairing machines and that the Board needs to have some type of change-out schedule.

Heard said it was her understanding from Michael Burns with the Center for Elections at Kennesaw State University, there are no machines to be replaced with and that there are no machines in the pipeline. She said it was told at the conference that these are the machines we have to use until the Legislature decides on how it will address the issue of the aging voting machines.

Cofer said the nine or so machines that are not functioning properly to just shelve them and store them for the time being.

1. Letter to Democratic and Republican Parties to appoint early tabulation and duplication teams, and poll watchers.

Cofer said the Board wants to be open, transparent and inclusive, so it might be a good idea to send a letter to the Democratic and Republican Party chairmen encouraging them to appoint representatives to help monitor the elections and invite them to be present during all phrases, especially early tabulation, of the election process.

Cofer directed staff to write the letter. Heard said she needed contact information for the Republican Party, and asked if Kelvin Bouie is still the contact for the Democratic Party. Board member Keith Sellars said he would provide Heard the contact information for the Republican Party. Board Members Holmes and Lamb said Bouie is the correct contact.

1. Training for Democratic and Republican Party representatives for candidate qualifying.

Heard said there was information from the Secretary of State’s Office on training for party officials in candidate qualifying.

Heard also mentioned an item not on the agenda dealing with election night duties and list of major responsibility. Cofer said he would like the Board to have a list of election night duties with information on what all workers and Board members may need to do.

Heard said if Board members could be on hand during the day of Election Day in order to check on the progress of the election and on precincts.

**Executive Session**

Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion to go into executive session, and Board Member Willie Lamb Jr. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The Board went into executive session at 7:06 p.m. The Board returned from executive session at 7:33 p.m.

1. Two part-time employment for upcoming elections.

The Board Members want to do applicant reviews and interviews of the four candidates. Cofer instructed Chief Elections Officials Heard to contact each applicant and request a resume, list of skills and any references they wish to provide. The Board set interviews for Tuesday, Jan. 19, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

1. Personnel

The second matter was referred to the County Administrator.

The Board adjourned by 7:37 p.m.