

Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration

Decatur County Board of Elections Meeting Room

122 W. Water St.

Bainbridge, GA 39817

September 12, 2017

Call To Order

Administrative Notes

The monthly meeting of the Decatur County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was called to order by Board Chairman Wendell Cofer at 6:34 p.m. and stated that the meeting had been duly advertised in the newspaper and on the appropriate buildings properly identifying meeting date, time and location as required by governing laws. Chairman Cofer was assured by Chief Elections Official Carol Heard that the permanent change of the meeting place was advertised at the Board of County Commission's administrative building.

Public Participation: None

Board Members present:

Board Chairman Wendell Cofer

Board Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr.

Board Member Beverly Holmes

Board Member Gina Burke

Board Member Keith Sellars

Staff present:

Carol P. Heard, Chief Elections Official

Linda Walton, Clerk of Voter Registration

Office staffer Carla Robinson

IT Manager Roy Reynolds

Poll workers Melbah Andrews, Billy Ward, Evelyn Severson, Edith Miller, Brendia King and Emma Sales.

Approve Minutes

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to accept the minutes from the Aug. 8, 2017, meeting, and Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget

Chairman Wendell Cofer said at this point in the year the ideal remaining percentage is 81, and the Elections budget is 88 percent. He said he thinks staff does a really good job of staying on top of the budget and keeping everything in line.

Old Business

A. Discussion of computer security and worst-case scenario.

1. IT Manager Roy Reynolds discussed in-office computers and security. Board Member Keith Sellars had several questions on the office's vulnerability of ransomware and disaster recovery. Reynolds explained some of the software and hardware the office has. The office

doesn't have a disaster recovery plan dealing with the in-office computers because there are not a lot of mission-critical data on the local computers. Most all the mission-critical data are with the Secretary of State's webpage, eNet. Sellars suggested for disaster recovery that the office backs up its computers onto thumb or hard drives. Sellars suggested several software programs for ransomware. Chairman Cofer suggested Sellars and Reynolds come up with an action plan for the Elections Office and bring it back to the Board.

2. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard updated the board on recent added layers of security done by the Secretary of State's office concerning the web-based voter database. Among some of the changes are users must change their passwords every 60 days, odd-hour alerts and new forms of authenticity. There are also changes in the way voter data, such as for the ExpressPolls, will be transmitted and handled.

B. Consideration of mission statement, core values.

1. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said many jurisdictions have mission statements and post them on their polling locations' walls. She read it and asked Board members to provide feedback.

Chairman Wendell Cofer suggested the Board members take some time with it and offer some additions, suggestions or deletions.

C. Update on Student Ambassador Program, National Voter Registration Day, public outreach.

1. Board Member Gina Burke updated the Board on efforts at Bainbridge High School to participate in the program. She said the school didn't have time to select the limited number of students who were going to participate, and there wasn't a screening process in place to avoid conflicts. She said hopefully what the school establishes this year could be used to establish the program next year at BHS.

Chief Elections Official Heard said she has made repeated attempts to contact Bainbridge State College concerning National Voter Registration Day, but with no success. She said the office would welcome any suggestions on expanding public outreach.

Board Member Burke said there is a Café group and First National Bank has started a leadership group. She suggested we contact those two groups.

New Business

A. Resolution from Decatur County Board of Commissioners to hold Special Called Election on Transportation 1 percent sales and use tax.

a. Consideration of Board of County Commissioners resolution.

Chief Elections Official Heard said the Board of County Commissioners voted to call a special election on Nov. 7 for the Transportation Special Purpose Sales Tax.

Chairman Cofer said there is a copy of the resolution and the exhibits from the county and the four municipalities outlining their proposed transportation projects.

Vice Chairman Willie Lamb moved that the Board of Elections accept the county's resolution to hold a special called election on Nov. 7, 2017. Board Member Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration of holding Saturday, Oct. 28, advance voting.

Chairman Cofer suggested the Board hold its regular election schedule, including the Saturday voting even though the Board is not required to. Cofer and Board Member

Sellars wanted to stay consistent and run the same hours and days in all elections. Cofer offered a motion that the Board maintain its normal hours, days and locations for this election, which are the Fairgrounds and Annex, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday voting on Oct. 28 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Board Member Sellars moved the motion and Board Member Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Schedule of training and poll workers scheduled to work Election Day.

A tentative poll worker schedule was before the Board members, and CEO Heard said the most notable change was that the Coliseum manager will be Carla Robinson. Also, Audrey Howard, who is normally in the office on Election night, is off the schedule for this election because her brother is running for City Council.

B. VRAG Conference recap

1. Board Chairman Cofer said he felt the conference was a good conference and he learned quite a bit. He said based on his experience that part-time staffers Carla Robinson and Margaret Bryant should go to one. He said the training was extremely valuable. Heard said she was appreciative of board members attending the conferences and there are plans for the part-time staffers to attend the conference in March in Athens.

Executive session

1. Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to go into executive session. Board Member Keith Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Board members adjourned the regular session at 7:22 p.m.
2. The Board reconvened at 7:49 p.m. The Board discussed employee issues and it developed a motion, which is the following:

“The Board agrees to request from county administrative staff and Board staff that any concerns about the Board of Elections be sent directly to the Board and not be addressed to Board employees or administrative staff employees.”

Chairman Cofer said the board agrees that he will follow-up on that motion. The motion passed unanimously. It is now Board policy.

Cofer said Board Member Burke will draft the resolution language and he will sign the affidavit that states the item mentioned above was the only matter discussed.

Adjournment -- The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.