**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Elections Office, Courthouse Annex**

**122 W. Water St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**May 11, 2021**

**Call To Order**

**Administrative Notes and Announcements**

The regular meeting of the Decatur County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was called to order by Board Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes at 6:30 p.m., and stated that the meeting had been duly advertised in the newspaper, and on the appropriate building properly identifying the meeting date, time and location as required by governing laws. Board Chairman Keith Sellars said prior to the meeting that he was sick.

**Public Participation**: Edith Miller wished her husband, Billy Ward, a happy 71st birthday.

**Board Members present: Staff and others present:**

Board Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes Carol P. Heard, Chief Elections Official

Board Members Gina Burke, Johnny Tasia Porter, Clerk of Voter Registration

Brown and Dan Provence Margaret Bryant, office staff

Poll workers Melba Andrews, Edith Miller, Billy Ward,

Emma Sales, Becky Harrell, Evelyn Severson and Tracy Moten

Democratic Party state liaison Meghan Heckman and Decatur County Democratic Party Chairman Kelvin Bouie

**Approved Minutes**

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 23, 2021, regular meeting. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard reviewed the 2020-2021 budget. The current fiscal year that ends June 30, there is 1 percent left. The ideal remaining is about 30 percent. She noted that there was approximately $34,000 reimbursed to the county’s general fund for the March 16 Special EPLOST election that is not reflected in the Elections Office budget. She said those areas that were over, such as contract labor, elections supplies and operating supplies have been addressed in the next fiscal year’s budget.

The Elections Office has requested – and it’s been granted – a $111,000 increase in its budget. The proposed budget has been accepted as is.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

1. Presentation by Poll Manager Emma Sales on ActivePure Air Purification Technology.

Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes questioned if this presentation is for informational or promotional purposes. She said if it was promotional that she didn’t want to proceed since Ms. Sales is a poll manager for the Decatur County Elections Board. The presentation was tabled.

1. Senate Bill 202, new Election bill signed by Gov. Kemp.

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard outlined some of the highlights. One of the provisions is that an out-of-precinct provisional ballot cannot be counted unless it’s been cast after 5 p.m.

Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes asked if there is a plan to get the word out about the changes in SB 202. Heard said it will be up to the parties to get a lot of the information out. She said the Elections Office will have to begin working on public information as well, such as the need for a state-issued ID number in order to receive an absentee mail-in ballot.

Another important change are the timeframes for mailing out absentee ballots. Absentee ballots cannot be mailed during the week prior to an election. The dropbox will be moved inside the Elections Office and will have to be monitored by a poll worker during advanced voting hours only.

Board Member Gina Burke asked if we could start publicizing the major changes so voters can start understanding key elements of the new law.

1. Maintenance and redistricting updates

Chief Elections Official Heard said reapportionment numbers may be available in September and the Reapportionment Committee will work with counties as the process proceeds. Qualifying may be postponed for the 2022 Primary as reapportionment and redistricting finalizes. Tasia Porter and Margaret Bryant have completed voter file maintenance, and the street maintenance is continuing. The inventory and barcodes for that inventory is almost completed so the Elections Office can fully implement its EasyVote Inventory program.

Vice Chairman Holmes suggested board members attend poll worker training so they can become more knowledgeable about legislative changes.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.