**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Board County Commissioners Meeting Room**

**203 W. Broughton St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**April 11, 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 6:35 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. Board Member Gina Burke notified staff that she was sick.

**Public Participation**: None

**Board Members present: Staff present:**

Board Chairman Wendell Cofer Carol P. Heard, Chief Elections Official

Board Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. Linda Walton, Clerk of Voter Registration

Board Member Beverly Holmes

Board Member Keith Sellars

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Willie Lamb made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 24, 2017, meeting, and Board Member Keith Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budgets**

1. **Status of fiscal year’s budget.** 
   1. The ideal budget is 22 percent and the current Elections Office budget is at 24 percent. Chairman Cofer said he estimates that the office may end up approximately 5 percent in the good this year.
   2. Board Member Keith Sellars asked what was the primary reason for going over budget on operating supplies. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said some was food from the July Runoff and ES&S was a little more than anticipated. Heard also said there were little things needed during the General Election and Special Called Election that may have contributed to the cost overrun in this area.
2. **Consideration of next fiscal year’s budget.**

Chairman Wendell Cofer said there is a $1,400 savings. He said the budget does include a pay raise for poll workers and making the hourly rate for managers, assistant managers and clerks be uniform for each polling location. The rate for advance voting will also go up 50 cents an hour.

Heard also said there are several items that are in the budget now that haven’t been in there before. These items, such as electricity, water and sewer, etc., were in the county’s main budget but are being allocated to the different departments to better reflect the overall county budget.

Board Member Keith Sellars asked about the retirement fund. Heard said in September she will reach her third-year anniversary and that’s when the county begins to make contributions to that fund even though employees aren’t vested until after their fifth-year anniversary.

**Old Business**

1. **Consideration of transferring City of Bainbridge residents who are in the Mount Pleasant Precinct into the Fairgrounds Precinct.**

Chairman Cofer said the Elections Board has advertised the proposed transfer, a letter explaining the transfer has been mailed to each voter impacted by the proposal and despite an invitation, there are no members of the public in attendance. Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion to finalize the transfer of those voters, and Board Member Willie Lamb seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

1. **Consideration of March 21 Special Called Election, costs to submit to the Decatur County Board of Education.**

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said she submitted to the Board of Education an estimate of $21,926.50; however, the cost she had developed came up to $15,445.19. Reimbursement for the cost of the election goes into the county’s general revenue fund and is not reflected in the Elections Board budget. Furthermore, the county administrator advocated for the Elections Board to submit the estimated budget.

Chairman Wendell Cofer said the Board should submit the actual expenses; however, the regular hours of staff were not factored into actual costs. Board Member Keith Sellars and Chairman Cofer said regular staff time should have been included in the original estimate. The board said to amend the budget to include two hours per day for each staff member of regular staff time to better reflect a truer cost of the special election.

1. **Consideration of thanking long time poll workers who have stepped down.**

Item was tabled by board.

**New Business**

There was no new business scheduled.

**Upcoming Events**

CEO Heard was asked to go over the upcoming events, which are enumerated below:

* May 9 – Board meeting canceled.
* May 7-10 – Georgia Election Officials Association conference in Savannah. CEO Heard, Clerk of Voter Registration Linda Walton and Board Vice Chairman Willie Lamb are scheduled to attend.
* May 11 - 17 – CEO Heard is taking comp time approved by Board to attend a wedding in Alaska. Chairman Cofer said Heard is using her last 40 hours of comp time she earned while on salary last year. Cofer and Heard said this will return the balance to zero. Furthermore, when Heard returns to salary in July that she understands that there is no accumulated comp time.
* June 13 – Scheduled board meeting.
* July 8 – 15 – CEO Heard scheduled to attend national Election Center training in Fort Myers, Fla.
* July 11 – Scheduled Board meeting.
* Aug. 8 – Scheduled Board meeting.
* Aug. 13-16 – Voter Registrars Association of Georgia conference in Augusta. Chairman Wendell Cofer said he is scheduling himself to attend this conference. CEO Heard added the date of March 25-28, 2018, as the combined conference in Athens.
* Aug. 21-25 – Municipal qualifying.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.