**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room**

**203 W. Broughton St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39819**

**December 13, 2016**

**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 6:30 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 Members Beverly Holmes and Keith Sellars had notified staff and board members that they couldn’t attend the meeting.

**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 Gina Burke Elections Staff Margaret Bryant

Poll workers Billy Ward and Edith Miller

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to accept the minutes from the November 14 2016, meeting, and Board Vice Chairman Willie Lamb seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

Chairman Wendell Cofer said the ideal percentage of the budget remaining is 50 percent and the Elections Office has 53 percent remaining. Heard said overtime, contract labor and operating supplies took a big hit from the General Election. She expressed concern with those categories with the expected Special Called Election on March 21 coming up. She said her and Clerk of Voter Registration Linda Walton are going to watch the overtime carefully.

**Old Business**

**(A) Overview of 2016 General Election.**

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said the General Election went extremely well. Heard discussed two graphs illustrating the preferences of voters during the advance voting period. One graph showed the hour-by-hour breakdown between the Fairgrounds and the Courthouse Annex, and the other graph showed the percentage of voters who voted where each day. Heard also pointed out that the Saturday voting didn’t bring out that many voters compared to the weekdays. Chairman Cofer said even though Saturday voting was required by law, the low Saturday voting numbers painted a picture that Sunday voting may not have been taken advantage of much at all.

**(B) Set hours for Early Voting.**

Special Called ESPLOST Election. Heard said setting the hours for the General Election from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day worked really well for consistency. Board Member Gina Burke asked what the legal requirements are for Saturday voting. Chairman Cofer requested a pie chart on the breakdown of voters at each precinct on Election Day. Heard said advance voting for the special election will begin Feb. 27 and proceed for 16 days with the Saturday voting on March 11. Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. said those hours worked well for this election, but Cofer said the Board could potentially save $780 by cutting one hour per day. Board Member Burke said contract labor costs will be reimbursed and she would hate to move it if people are used to those set hours. Cofer said to keep the weekday hours at 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Board members were in consensus that Saturday voting hours should be cut to the legal requirement, which is 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

As a side note, Heard said a voter and a county commission-elect expressed concern with a small number of voters having to vote in the Mount Pleasant polling location even though they are in the City of Bainbridge city limits and closer to the Fairgrounds polling location. Heard said this is something the board may want to look at before November as to redrawing the precinct lines for those voters in the Mount Pleasant precinct who are also in the Bainbridge city limits.

**New Business**

**(A) Decatur County Board of Education’s resolution for Special Called ESPLOST Election, March 21, 2017.**

Consideration of Decatur County Board of Education’s resolution and consideration of Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration issuing call for special election on March 21, 2017, for voters to consider ESPLOST renewal. Chairman Cofer offered a motion to administer the election the Board of Education is requesting the Board of Elections and Registration conduct. Board Member Gina Burke made the motion, Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. seconded. Motion passed unanimously, or 3-0.

**(B) Intergovernmental agreement with the Board of Education to hold Special Called ESPLOST Election, March 21, 2017.**

Chairman Wendell Cofer offered a motion that the board accept the intergovernmental agreement and that it authorizes the Board’s chairman to further execute the agreement to further its earlier motion to conduct the requested Board of Education’s request for a special called ESPLOST Election on March 21, 2017. Board Member Gina Burke made the motion, Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

**(C) Intergovernmental agreements with the Cities of Bainbridge and Climax, and the Town of Brinson. The City of Attapulgus does not have an election scheduled in 2017.**

Chairman Cofer said the agreements are just drafts until the new board is sworn in in January.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.