**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Board of Commissioners Meeting Room**

**203 W. Broughton Street**

**Bainbridge, GA 39819**

**February 9, 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 6:34 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 member Gina Burke notified the board she would be absent.

**Board Members present: Staff present:**

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

Vice Chairman Willie Lamb Jr. (late) Linda Walton (Clerk of Voter Registration)

Beverly W. Holmes

Keith Sellars

**Guests:**

Poll manager Janelle Nelson and Basil Lucas.

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 12, 2016, regular meeting with minor changes. Board Member Keith Sellars seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

Budget. Board Chairman Wendell Cofer said the budget is in good shape, especially considering there are 2 ½ elections left in the budget year.

**New Business**

1. Mediacom internet service at the Fairgrounds.

Board Chairman Wendell Cofer said the board had voted at its last meeting to a contract with Mediacom for $69.96 a month for three years to provide internet service to the Fairgrounds. The board was also told that the installation would be free. However, when the contract arrived for signatures, there was a $99 installation fee attached to it. Cofer said he did not feel comfortable signing the contract with that unauthorized addition. In the meantime, IT Manager Roy Reynolds found a way to bridge the internet connection from the county’s Agriculture Building to the Fairgrounds for approximately $130. This arrangement appears to be working more reliable.

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

Cofer said staff sent a draft to board members encouraging the two local political parties to appoint representatives to help monitor the elections and invite them to be present during all phrases, especially early tabulation, of the election process. Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion that the draft be sent out to the Republican and Democratic parties with the changes suggested. Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1. Security of voting machines prior to and following elections at Board of Education facilities.

Chief Elections Officials Carol Heard said West Bainbridge Poll Manager Margaret Bryant told her that during last November’s municipal election that it looked like several people had come in and out of the location where the voting machines had been placed and that a seal had been cut, but not tampered with. Heard said she send a letter to all the contacts of the polling locations. Her concern was a call from the Board of Education’s Jerry Mills, who was very dismissive of what her concerns were. Cofer said the Board can put security anywhere we need it to protect the voting machines. The Coliseum is not so much an issue because Holmes said those doors are normally locked. The West Bainbridge precinct is a concern. Board authorized CEO to make contact with Dr. Fred Rayfield.

1. Early tabulation for March 1 Presidential Preference Primary and job duties on Election night

Board Chairman Wendell Cofer wanted Election night job duties to be more specific, especially since the Board is going ahead with early tabulation. Cofer said he would be taking a leave of absence in May from the elections board if there is a contested sheriff election. Board Member Keith Sellars would assist IT Manager Roy Reynolds with downloading memory cards. Board members suggested Clerk of Voter Registration Linda Walton take the lead on early tabulation of mail-in absentee ballots. There was more discussion on the timeframes and logistics of collecting and uploading election results. Board Members Sellars and Holmes wanted more information on a banner to announce elections with interchangeable dates, and to get a quote from a new sign company in town.

The Board adjourned by 7:25 p.m.