**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Board of Elections Meeting Room**

**122 W. Water Street**

**Bainbridge, Ga. 39819**

**November 6, 2015**

**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 5:30 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 Members present: Staff present:**

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

Gina Burke Linda Walton (Clerk of Voter Registration)

Beverly W. Holmes

Keith Sellars

IT Manager Roy Reynolds and Carol Reynolds

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2015, regular meeting as presented. Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

1. Budget. Cofer reported to the Board that Chief Elections Officer Carol Heard and he went to an impromptu budget meeting with County Accounting Manager Michelle West. Cofer said there was an attempt to pay for the Balotar Ballot on Demand machine with SPLOST money, but the SPLOST referendum didn’t include language in it for such election equipment. The money spent on the Balotar came back to the Elections budget and is a capital outlay item. Cofer said he went over personnel services because the Board had budgeted a full-time position but the line item didn’t seem to reflect that. When former Chief Elections Official Doris White resigned, she was entitled to half of her sick leave, all of her personal time off and other benefits. Those payments came to more than $14,000 of which about $1,000 was in last year’s fiscal budget and the remaining $13,000 was taken out of this year’s budget. Cofer said that item will gradually regain its funding. Cofer said the staff and board identified that poll managers need a lot more training. He asked the Board to think about instead of having a full-time position, have two part-time positions and turn it into a major precinct poll manager training program. As Cofer explained, have two 20-hour people work with the Elections Office every day and then on Election Days, work as poll managers for the two major precincts and help us train the smaller precincts. There was more conversation on instilling to poll managers that provisional ballots are a necessary part of their duties, and that communication needs to be improved. Cofer said we need to have training on dealing with difficult voters. He also said that poll workers should encourage voters to vote if they can and give them any and every means to exercise that right.

Cofer said there was $2,000 budgeted for Technical Premier. Cofer asked the Board’s permission to split that $2,000 with $1,000 going to travel and the other $1,000 going to education and training. Furthermore, under group insurance that the county move $7,200 budgeted for a third full-time person to personnel services to enable the office to pay for the two part-timers. Board Member Keith Sellars moved to instruct Chairman Wendell Cofer email Michelle West to move $1,000 from Technical Premier into travel, and $1,000 from Technical Premier into education and training, and to move $7,200 from group insurance into personnel services to cover the costs for two part-time persons instead of covering the insurance for a third full-time person. Board Member Gina Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business**

1. Consideration of Provisional Ballots.
* Tammie Yamada Smith-Shaw cast a provisional ballot at the Fairgrounds Precinct. Clerk of Voter Registration Linda Walton said her status is active but is registered in Ward B. Chairman Wendell Cofer said she was not an eligible elector in this election because she is not registered in Ward A. Board Member Keith Sellars moved to disqualify the ballot because she was out of the district. Board Member Gina seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Cofer instructed staff to prepare Ms. Smith-Shaw a letter indicating that the Board disqualified her ballot and the reason why.
* Carolyn Stepney cast a provisional ballot at the West Bainbridge Precinct. Walton said Ms. Stepney was an elector in Ward B. Walton also said her status was inactive. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard recommended that Ms. Stepney become active in the eNet system. Burke made motion to disqualify Ms. Stepney’s provisional ballot because she was an elector in Ward B and to list her as active in the eNet system. Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Staff will prepare Ms. Stepney a letter indicating the Board disqualified her ballot and the reason why.
* Donnie Belin cast a provisional ballot at the West Bainbridge Precinct. Walton said Belin was active elector in Ward B. Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to disqualify Belin’s provisional ballot because he was an elector in Ward B. Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Staff will prepare Mr. Belin a letter indicating the Board disqualified his ballot and the reason why.
* Ollie H. Mackey cast a provisional ballot in the Coliseum Precinct. Walton said Ms. Mackey was an active elector in Ward B. Sellars made a motion to disqualify the provisional ballot because she was an elector in Ward B. Holmes seconded it. Motion passed unanimously. Staff will prepare Ms. Mackey a letter indicating the Board disqualified her ballot and the reason why.
* Jonathan Evans cast a provisional ballot in the Coliseum Precinct. Walton said he was inactive and an elector outside the City of Bainbridge. Walton said he submitted a change of address and he is now active. Burke made a motion to disqualify Mr. Evans’ provisional ballot because he was not an elector in Ward A. Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Staff will prepare Mr. Evans a letter indicating the Board disqualified his ballot and the reason why.
* Sellars made a motion to certify the election with no provisional ballots being counted and close the election. Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Also, staff reported that the Elections Office received one of the three requested absentee by-mail ballots back but it was received the day after the Election. Elector Cleveland Burton mailed his ballot back, but the office didn’t receive it in the mail until Nov. 4.
1. Mandatory poll worker meeting scheduled for Dec. 8 and election night recap.

Cofer said he wanted staff to inform the poll workers of a poll worker meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 8, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the county administration meeting room. The purpose is to identify issues and lessons learned in this election. Burke made a motion to hold meeting on Dec. 8 to hold a mandatory meeting with all the poll workers to go over the refresher course in voting procedures. Holmes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Session was canceled.**

The Board adjourned by 5:55 p.m.