**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Administrative Offices’ Meeting Room**

**203 W. Broughton Street**

**Bainbridge, Ga. 39819**

**October 13, 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 6:30 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

Poll Managers: Janelle Nelson and Margaret Bryant.

Assistant Poll Managers: Ethel G. Fuller and Anna R. Washington.

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Keith Sellars made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 15, 2015, regular meeting as presented. Member Beverly Holmes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

1. Budget. Chairman Wendell Cofer said the ideal remaining balance is 67 percent, and the Elections Office is at 69 percent. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard mentioned that one of the air-conditioner units at the Fairgrounds needs to be replaced or have major work done to it, which could cost more than $2,500, according to James Coddington, director of buildings and maintenance for the county. County Administrator Alan Thomas said if the malfunctioning air-condition unit can wait to be repaired after the March 1 election, he would prefer that. Do contract laborers get overtime, Heard asked on behalf of poll workers. (An answer of no was later determined.) Poll Manager Janelle Nelson wanted to know if she is considered contract labor even though she helps out occasionally in the office. Chairman Wendell Cofer said she is considered contract labor and the county eliminated two permanent part-time staff in the Elections Office to accommodate a full-time third person in the office. Cofer also noticed that under machine and equipment budget line, the $14,675 spent on the Balotar is listed twice. Heard speculated that they added the line to the budget to account for spending SPLOST money for the Balotar.

**New Business**

1. Candidate Module on eNet. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard recapped the training by the Secretary of State’s Office on the new candidate module that will be available next year to qualify candidates. Heard said she wanted to bring it up and have members of the board see if the political parties would like the Elections Office handle the qualifying or if the parties would like to receive more information on the new module. Heard also mentioned that Clerk of Voter Registration Linda Walton and herself completed in-person state Ethics training. Board member Keith Sellars said the parties may be reluctant to turn-over qualifying duties because the political parties receive a portion of the qualifying fees. Sellars asked if the candidate module would be available to the other parties. Heard said no.
2. Election Night Assignments. Chief Elections Officials Carol Heard outlined the tentative schedule for poll workers on Election Day. After Heard’s compliment on Aaron Cofer’s work last year, Chairman Cofer asked if we needed Aaron to assist with Election Night chores such as downloading ExpressPoll lists. Cofer said he would see if Aaron would be willing to assist on Election night. There was some discussion on the logistics for Election night as to who did what and if the board members had ideas. Chairman Cofer asked board members if they are OK with changing the board meeting to Friday, Nov. 6, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Board of Elections office to finalize the election and to act on any provisional ballots. The regularly scheduled meeting on Nov. 10 would be conducted at the Nov. 6 meeting. Cofer wanted to go over the logistics on early tabulation, but it was later determined that early tabulation cannot occur during municipal elections. A motion was made by Member Keith Sellars and seconded by Board Member Beverly Holmes to cancel the Dec. 8 Elections Board meeting. That motion passed unanimously. Chairman Cofer added comments on an issue brought to his attention from County Clerk Beverly King on the chain of command in the Elections Office. Cofer told King that Carol Heard is chief elections official and everything is her responsibility – how the precincts are set up, who works at which precincts, etc., is her decision. Board Members Gina Burke and Keith Sellars didn’t see a problem, and Chairman Cofer said everybody working for her as to whatever assignments Heard put them in need to adhere to those assignments unless there’s a problem the Board must address.

**Executive Session**

Chairman Wendell Cofer said with the board members permission, he would like to cancel the executive session until some answers on the budget are received. It was agreed to.

The Board adjourned by 7 p.m.