**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Elections Office, Courthouse Annex**

**122 W. Water St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**July 27, 2018**

**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 5:30 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.

**Public Participation**: None

**Board Members present: Staff present:**

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

Board Member Beverly Holmes Linda Walton, Clerk of Voter Registration

Board Member Gina Burke Office staff Margaret Bryant and Carla Robinson

Board Vice Chairman Willie Lamb (arrived 5:40) IT Manager Roy Reynolds

Guests: Poll workers Melbah Andrews, Billy Ward, Suzan Yates, Sammie Battle, Megan Phillips,

LaShawn Close, Patty Napier and Diane Gibson.

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 12, 2018, meeting, and Board Member Keith Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

Chairman Cofer said the current budget is about 1 percent over because of having to pay out from items at one time such as insurance. Last fiscal year budget, prior to audit, shows the Elections Board returned approximately $27,291, or 11 percent, of its budget back to the county.

**New Business**

1. **July 24th Runoff Election**
   1. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard asked the Board members to sign the certification of results prior to leaving for the night. She said there may be a recount for Republican lieutenant governor’s race, but word won’t come down from the Secretary of State’s office until the state has certified its results. CEO Heard also said the procedures implemented last month concerning provisional ballots and checking off all research of that voter worked very well.
   2. CEO Heard said there were 20 provisional ballots, 16 were out of precinct and those voters were given credit for voting; one ballot that was accepted and counted was the voter received a Democratic ballot in the primary, did not vote that ballot, and had requested a Republican ballot. The state had given credit for the Democratic ballot, but after research and the Recovery precinct poll workers remembering her, she could vote a Republican provisional ballot. The numbered list of voters proved them right. Three provisional ballots were not accepted nor counted because of the following reasons: One voter had voted a Democratic ballot in the primary and insisted on voting a Republican ballot in the Runoff; one voter had forgot she voted in the Runoff’s Advance Voting period; and, one voter was not registered in Decatur County.
   3. Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to certify the Runoff Election. Board Member Gina Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consideration of resolution from the City of Climax for Special Called Election on Nov. 6**

Chairman Cofer said the City of Climax passed a resolution for voters within the city limits to allow the sale of package beers and wine on Sundays from 12:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to accept the City of Climax’s resolution and to put the question on the Nov. 6th ballot. Board Member Keith Sellars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Cofer instructed CEO Heard to inform the City of Climax that the question will be on the Nov. 6 ballot.

1. **Consideration of new website**

CEO Heard said the Elections Board has a page on the county’s website and considering all the possible changes coming up in 2019 and 2020, Heard thought it would be advantageous to explore developing its own website. Heard said a company in Tallahassee, VRTower, has done all the websites for the State of Florida’s Election Supervisors’ sites. She said there is a webinar scheduled for Friday, Aug. 3, beginning at 11 a.m.

Board Member Keith Sellars would like to know how sensitive to cybersecurity the website will be and what the circumstances will be for abiding to Section 503 that mandates the website be accessible to the visually impaired.

Chairman Cofer said he would expect a report during the next meeting.

1. **Courthouse Annex**

Chairman Cofer told the Board that the District Attorney, which has leased about three-fourths of the building for several years, is moving out sometime in August. The county administrator told Chairman Cofer that the whole building will be the Elections Office. Cofer said the trend has been for voters to use the Courthouse Annex for advancing voting more than the Fairgrounds. He also said there may be some savings in just using the Annex for advance voting and to save the budgeted repairs for the Fairgrounds and turning it over to the Annex.

Chairman Cofer said he would like to have a working group on how to most efficiently and effectively organize the Annex for Advance Voting and to perhaps dovetail with the idea of merging some of the smaller precincts into the larger precincts. Cofer suggested Board Member CEO Heard, Linda Walton and Board Member Beverly Holmes are the basic formation of the working group. After the meeting, Suzan Yates, Melbah Andrews, Diane Gibson, Patty Napier and LaShawn Close also volunteered to serve on the group.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.