**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Elections Office, Courthouse Annex**

**122 W. Water St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**June 11, 2019**

**Call To Order**

**Administrative Notes and Announcements**

The regular meeting of the Decatur County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was called to order by Board Chairman Keith Sellars at 6:30 p.m., and stated that the meeting had been duly advertised in the newspaper and on the appropriate building properly identifying meeting date, time and location as required by governing laws. Board Member Dan Provence had notified staff prior to the meeting that he could not attend for medical reasons.

**Public Participation**: State Democratic Party representative James Conger asked about the two West Bainbridge precinct polling locations, which that precinct polling location is forced to move. Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said the old location was the former West Bainbridge Middle School on Dothan Road that was damaged by Hurricane Michael and will be renovated to accommodate the Board of Education’s plans for an administrative campus. The new location is a former West Bainbridge elementary school at 507 Martin St. that presently serves as the Board of Education’s meeting location.

**Board Members present: Staff present:**

Board Chairman Keith Sellars Carol P. Heard, Chief Elections Official

Board Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes Tasia Porter, Clerk of Voter Registration

Board Member Johnny Brown Margaret Bryant and Carla Robinson, office staff

Board Member Gina Burke Billy Ward and Melba Andrews, poll workers

James Conger, representative of the state Democratic Party

**Approve Minutes**

Board Member Johnny Brown made a motion to accept the minutes from the April 9, 2019, regular meeting. Board Member Gina Burke seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

The ideal remaining percentage is 7 percent. The current percentage remaining is 18 percent. The Board also reviewed the recently passed 2019-2010 budget. CEO Heard said the Elections Office budget was reduced by the Board of County Commissioners from $263,453 to $256,202, with some of the $7,251 in reductions coming from such line items as personnel, building and grounds, advertising, contract labor, and education and training.

Board Member Beverly Holmes asked about the 55 percent over budget for operating supplies. Because operating supplies includes election-related items such as printing costs for ES&S, it is hard to determine what exactly those expenses went to as far as general operating supplies versus election-related supplies. Chairman Keith Sellars said we will be able to track the Board’s spending better with the two separate categories.

Chairman Keith Sellars asked to add an executive session to the agenda to discuss personnel. Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to amend the agenda. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Keith Sellars asked for a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel. Board Member Beverly Holmes offered the motion, Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Board members went into executive session at 6:43 p.m.

At 6:52 p.m., the Board returned from executive session. Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to raise Clerk of Voter Registration Tasia Porter’s hourly rate by 43 cents an hour as it was discussed by the Board when Ms. Porter was hired. After successful completion of probation and proper certifications, Ms. Burke’s motion instructed the Chief Elections Official to complete the paperwork and submit it to the county administrator for the hourly pay rate increase. Board member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

1. **Consideration of changing West Bainbridge precinct polling location from the Old West Bainbridge Middle School to the School Support Center at 507 Martin St.**

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said according to § 21-2-265, the proposed change of the polling site from the Old West Bainbridge Middle School on Dothan Road to the School Support Center on 507 Martin Street was advertised in *The Post-Searchlight* for two consecutive weeks, and the Elections Office will begin educating the public on the change with signs, news releases, etc. CEO Heard said she will order new precinct cards within the week as well. Heard also expressed gratitude to the Board of Education for working with the Board of Elections in offering the School Support Center as an alternative to the old middle school.

Board Member Gina Burke asked what the long-term plans are for that building since all the support staff will eventually be at the West Bainbridge campus. CEO Heard said they will still use it possibly for training. Even if the building is vacated within the next couple of years, it will give the Elections Office time to re-evaluate all the precincts following the 2020 Census. The main objective was to have a set place through the 2020 election cycle.

Board Chairman Keith Sellars said the board tried to stay at the same address, but it wasn’t possible. He said he appreciated the school board working with the Elections Board. He said the board needs to start thinking long term with all the polling places to map out a plan for reapportionment and the viability of all the polling places. He said signs need to be very visible and navigation to the new polling location needs to be easy for voters.

Board Member Gina Burke moved to change the polling location from the Old West Bainbridge Middle School on Dothan Road to the new polling location at the School Support Center at 507 Martin St. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business**

1. **Consideration of resolutions from the City of Bainbridge to hold a special called election on Nov. 5, 2019, for two questions.**

CEO Heard said the City of Bainbridge approved a resolution requesting the Decatur County Board of Elections to hold a special called election on two questions:

“Shall the governing authority of the City of Bainbridge be authorized to permit and regulate Sunday sales of distilled spirits or alcoholic beverages for beverage purposes by the drink from 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.?” and,

“Shall the governing authority of the City of Bainbridge be authorized to permit and regulate package sales by retailers of malt beverages, wine, and distilled spirits on Sundays between the hours of 12:30 P.M. and 11:30 P.M.?”

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to place the two questions on the Nov. 5, 2019, City of Bainbridge ballot. Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

1. **Consideration of bids for security system in Annex.**

Board Chairman Keith Sellars said the board has a spreadsheet breaking down the three separate bids submitted by three different companies. Each company was asked to submit a bid for a security system for just the rooms housing the election equipment to the upstairs, a bid for a security system for the entire building as well as a partitioned alarm for the upstairs equipment storage areas, and a third bid for an access control system for the rooms the GEMS is stored in and where the new election equipment will be stored.

Following discussion on the bids and their costs, Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to award Camilla Alarm to do security for the entire building and for access control for the GEMS room and for the equipment storage room. Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1. **Meeting schedule for the rest of the year.**

CEO Heard said she would like the Board to lay out its meeting schedule for the rest of year. She suggested to the Board to cancel the July meeting, but pick up a monthly meeting schedule in August since that is when qualifying starts and there will be more information coming out on the new voting machines.

Board Chairman Keith Sellars said he agreed with Heard’s recommendation.

Board Member Gina Burke made a motion to not having the July meeting and then pick up the monthly meetings in August. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The next meeting will be Aug. 13.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.