**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Elections Office, Courthouse Annex**

**122 W. Water St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**January 14, 2020**

**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.

**Public Participation**: None

**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, office staff

Board Member Gina Burke Poll workers: Suzan Yates, Melba Andrews, Larry Ware,

Board Member Dan Provence Evelyn Severson, Tracy, Moten, Edith Miller, Billy Ward,

 Sharon Jackson, Tequila Rogers and Emma Sales.

 Dominion Voting Technician Dominic Olomo

 Democratic Party representative Jim Conger

**Approved Minutes**

Board Vice Chairman Beverly Holmes made a motion to accept the minutes from the Nov. 12, 2019, regular meeting. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

Chairman Keith Sellars said the Board is unable to review the latest budget because the county office was unable to produce a copy of it due to the county transferring computer programs. Chairman Keith Sellars said he is not happy with not having a budget to review for the past several months.

**Old Business**

**A. Recap of the 2020 GAVREO Conference in Savannah**

Chairman Keith Sellars, who said this was the first conference he has attended, said he was impressed with the conference, the information presented and how the state’s election administration will go from one of the worst systems to one of the best systems.

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said Decatur County was recognized at the conference’s banquet for being one of the seven pilot counties. She cited the great work the poll workers and staff did for the pilot, but also the tremendous support the Elections Board has toward the election office and its employees.

Tasia Porter said she enjoyed the sessions and talking with other counties on the new equipment, letting them know that the new equipment is easier to use.

Board Member Johnny Brown said it was a good conference and great learning experience. He complimented the staff, poll workers and fellow board members in having the positive mindset for a successful pilot project.

**New Business**

1. **January 28 Special Election for House District 171**
	1. **Poll Worker assignments**

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard presented the poll worker assignments for the five polling locations that will be open.

* 1. **When to schedule meeting to certify election**

Board members agreed to have the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 31. (The board later stated they would prefer to have the meeting at 5 p.m. on that Friday.)

* 1. **Discussion on logistics of equipment deployment, election night, etc.**

CEO Heard said poll workers Charles Murphy and Billy Ward agreed that we would have to use inmates to pick up and deliver equipment. There was discussion on delivery and pick-up of the equipment. Chairman Sellars said he would not like to leave the equipment out overnight.

Board Member Dan Provence asked about the maintenance of the equipment and if the equipment is damaged. CEO Heard clarified later with the Secretary of State’s Office that the state has a maintenance agreement through at least 2020. However, it is the county’s responsibility for damaged equipment, such as if a piece of equipment is damaged or destroyed in transport, etc. We would need to inquire about insuring the new equipment and plan for that in the next fiscal year’s budget for insurance as well as maintenance agreements in the coming years.

1. **Notice of Qualifications for local offices.**

CEO Heard said the Elections Office is only going to qualify non-partisan candidates, and the Republican Party has decided to qualify all of its candidates, as well as the Democratic Party continuing its practice.

Chairman Sellars explained the incentives for political parties to qualify their own candidates.

1. **Grant money from Secretary of State’s Office and proposed and completed purchases of election equipment.**

CEO Heard explained a packet handed out to each county at the conference outlining each county’s equipment and software costs that the state has funded. It also has a grant application and opportunity for counties to be reimbursed for implementation, security and accessibility funds spent by the counties. Heard recommended that the elections office proceeds with the access control of areas where the equipment is stored so the county may take advantage of the state grant monies. Heard mentioned lockable cages where the equipment would be stored and the poll workers would set up the BMDs and perhaps the printers. Chairman Sellars liked that idea and is more comfortable with that idea. Heard said there will have to be a deployment team.

1. **Poll worker pins for those who worked during the Pilot Program and 2020.**

CEO Heard said several years ago, the Elections Office gave each poll worker a pin that some poll workers continue to wear. There’s an idea to have a special pin for those poll workers who worked during the pilot project. Then maybe have another poll worker pin for those working the 2020 elections because of its historical significance.

Chairman Sellars said it’s important to mark the significance of the pilot and 2020 elections. He suggested the board members look over the pins and possible designs. He said he would like to have pins for all the poll workers, staff and board members.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.