**Decatur County Board of Elections and Registration**

**Decatur County Elections Office, Courthouse Annex**

**122 W. Water St.**

**Bainbridge, GA 39817**

**March 10, 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 6:31 p.m., and stated that the meeting had been duly advertised in the newspaper, and on the appropriate building properly identifying the meeting date, time and location as required by governing laws. Board Member Gina Burke had informed staff that her parents were ill and she couldn’t come to the meeting.

**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 Dan Provence Poll workers: Suzan Yates, Melba Andrews, Larry Ware,

Edith Miller, Beth Loyd, Patricia Williams and Billy Ward.

State Democratic Party Representative Meghan Hickman.

**Approved Minutes**

Board Member Dan Provence made a motion to accept the minutes from the Feb. 11, 2020, regular meeting. Board Member Beverly Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

1. Review of the current budget as of December 2019, or 50 percent of fiscal year. Chairman Keith Sellars said he will keep pressing to get more current numbers.
2. Review of proposed salaries for 2020-21. Chairman Sellars requested the board vote to go into executive session to discuss the compensation for staff. Board Member Beverly Holmes forwarded the motion and Board Member Johnny Brown seconded. The motion passed unanimously to go into executive session at 6:34 p.m.
3. The Board returned at 6:52 p.m. Board Chairman Keith Sellars said the purpose of the executive session was to discuss salaries that were presented to the board as part of its proposed budget. Board Member Beverly Holmes proposed the board accept the proposed salaries in the budget. Board Member Johnny Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Board Chairman Keith Sellars asked Chief Elections Official about specific budget items. The garbage line item was added for to this budget, which wasn’t there before but needed to be, Heard said. Election supplies were not enumerated from office supplies, but they should be and it will be in the future. Board Member Dan Provence asked about the increase in contract labor from $40,500 to $69,364. CEO Heard said the increase is due to increases in poll workers hourly rates and the possibility of a state/local runoff election in December and a federal runoff in January 2021.
5. Chairman Sellars asked about the increase in software support line-item that increased from $2,000 to $5,250. CEO Heard said the increase was for the purchase of the Easy/Vote inventory program, which would assist the Elections Office with maintenance and deployment of the new equipment. She encouraged a demonstration from Easy/Vote prior to its purchase.
6. Chairman Sellars asked about the new line-item of $2,500 for legal fees, which was at the suggestion of County Administrator Alan Thomas. Mr. Thomas said those fees should not be a supplement to other portions of the budget.
7. Board Member Beverly Holmes made a motion to accept the proposed budget for 2020/2021. Board Member Dan Provence seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

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

Chief Elections Official Carol Heard said the board members have the courthouse listing of all the candidates that qualified for county races.

**New Business**

1. **March Presidential Preference Primary.**

CEO Heard summarized advanced voting up to that point.

1. **Coronavirus Concerns**

Chairman Sellars raised the concern of the virus. Board Member Provence asked how often poll workers get a break. Heard said the office doesn’t have any formalized breaks, but there are bottles of hand sanitizer on the tables. Poll Manager Margaret Bryant said poll workers may take breaks as they are needed. Board Member Provence asked about absentee mail-in ballots and if there’s a good gauge to predict how many may come in. CEO Heard said the applications are the first indication, and setting that process into motion takes the most time. However, Heard said she is encouraging voters to request a ballot now not knowing what the future holds with the virus.

**Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.