

**FAYETTE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
AND VOTER REGISTRATION**

MINUTES

June 3, 2014 (MAY)

Board Members Present: Addison Lester, Chairman
Darryl Hicks
Marilyn Watts

Staff Present: Tom Sawyer, Elections Supervisor
April Crosby, Elections Officer
Beverly Westmoreland, Elections Clerk

Others in Attendance: Bill Ewing

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lester called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. with all members present.

B. APPROVAL OF RESCHEDULED MAY MEETING

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that the rescheduling of the May 27, 2014 Board of Elections meeting to June 3, 2014 had been posted in the newspaper. No action was necessary for approval of this rescheduling.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Sawyer said he had made 3 changes (which he explained to the Board) to the agenda he had previously emailed to the Board. The amendments were the addition of the item "Hearing – Deceased Fayette County Voters" and "Approval to Reassign Precinct #11 to vote at Precinct #20 for Runoff". Supervisor explained to the Board that Precinct #11 is having summer programs going on during July 22 and therefore needed to be relocated just for this one election. Chairman Lester made motion to approve the agenda as amended. Member Hicks seconded. **Motion carried.**

D. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF FAYETTE COUNTY ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION BOARD

Member Lester wanted to make comments and go on record that he does agree with the concept of rotating the position of Chairman. He does have issues with the controversy that the Fayette County Republican Party has against Chairman Watts. He said he feels like this will be controversial. He would like the Board to be “low profile” and non-confrontational. He said he hopes Chairman Watts respects that position.

Chairman Watts said this issue has been going on for a couple of years and it has not affected her performance on this Board. She further stated she believes this issue will be moot shortly.

Member Hicks made comments related to this issue. He said he agrees that rotating around the chair position is important. He said he is not suggesting that the minority party gets to play in that field. He said he believes the majority party board members should be rotated around unless there are some real reasons why they should not be rotated around. He said he does not know much about the issue with the Party and the lawsuit. He said this Board is governed by the three members and no one single person can control the outcome of elections in this county even if they sit as the chair of this Board. He further said he has the confidence that no matter who is the chair, that the three of them still have a working relationship to enable making the right decisions for this community and this election process.

Member Lester said he appreciated Member Hicks’ comments. He said he does not have a problem with the minority party being chair once the full board gets to know each other. Member Hicks said he appreciated Member Lester’s comments.

Member Hicks made motion to elect Member Watts as chairman. Member Watts seconded. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Watts thanked the Board for their confidence.

At this point, Member Watts assumed the position of Chairman of the Board of Elections.

E. HEARING – DECEASED FAYETTE COUNTY VOTERS

After perusal of the list of deceased voters as presented by Officer Crosby to the Board, Member Lester made motion to approve the list of deceased voters to be cancelled from voting records. Member Hicks seconded. **Motion carried.**

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING BOARD MINUTES: APRIL 22, 2014 (APRIL)

Member Hicks made motion to approve the Board Minutes from April 22, 2014. Member Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

G. NEW BUSINESS

2. REVIEW OF GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION RESULTS – OFFICIAL AND COMPLETE

Supervisor Sawyer spoke to the Board about the election results. He said the only local races that are going to be in the runoff are in the Republican Party. The races are State Senate District 16 with David Studdard and Marty Harbin and School Board District 4 with the John Kimball issue.

Supervisor Sawyer referenced the election results that have been posted on the county website and said when he removed John Kimball, it shows Diane Basham with 60.72%. He read an email to the Board that he received from John Hallman with the Election Division in the Secretary of State's office saying "Since John Kimball resigned after the election, his votes still count toward the total and no candidate received over 50% of the votes". The Board had previously been given a copy of this email. He further discussed with the Board what the Election Code mandates when a runoff candidate drops out of the race. Since the runoff candidate for the Board of Education in District 4, John Kimball, has withdrawn from the race, Jane Owens, who is the next runner-up, will face Diane Basham in the runoff.

Chairman Watts asked for the percentage of voter turnout in the Primary. Supervisor Sawyer said it was 22% and that nearly 16,000 people voted. He said there were 12 provisional voters and 3 UOCAVA voters and that was the only action taken on the meeting held to finalize the election on May 27, 2014.

Member Lester asked how many of the 16,000 voted early. Supervisor Sawyer said there were 4,050 of the 16,000 who voted early. There was discussion amongst the Board as to why the voter turnout was so low.

3. APPROVAL OF POLL WORKERS – JULY 22, 2014

A list of the poll workers was provided to the Board and discussion ensued. Supervisor Sawyer told the Board this was the same list of poll workers as the May 20, 2014 Primary Election. Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that the poll workers would be paid for this election, for budget purposes, in this fiscal year. The July 22, 2014 runoff payroll will be

paid separately after that election. He will provide the Board updates on this poll worker list as changes occur.

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board there would not be any additional training for the July 22, 2014 runoff.

It was agreed there would be more discussion of the list of poll workers at the next Board meeting on June 24, 2014. When the final list is determined, it will be sent to the Board members.

Member Lester asked Supervisor Sawyer how he was managing the poll workers for Precinct 11 and Precinct 20. (The facility for Precinct 11 is Glenloch Recreation Center and they are having summer camps during July 22 and will be unavailable for the runoff.) Supervisor Sawyer said the two precincts will be separate but just inside the same location at the Peachtree City United Methodist Church. He had spoken to the church and they were fine with this arrangement.

Chairman Watts asked how the voters would know about this change of location. Supervisor Sawyer said notices would be mailed to all registered voters in Precinct 11. Signs will be posted at the old location and the new location. Member Lester asked if one letter could be sent to each household where there are registered voters. Supervisor Sawyer said he would have to check with the Secretary of State's office to find out. He plans to send postcards. Chairman Watts suggested it be posted in the newspaper also and Supervisor Sawyer agreed.

4. REVIEW FY 2015 BUDGET – TO BE PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – BUDGET CALENDAR

There was discussion by the Board of the 2015 Budget. Supervisor Sawyer said the budget had been approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board effective July 1, 2014, the Board members will receive a raise of \$20.00. He also pointed out to the Board that \$28,000 had been added to the budget for workman's compensation insurance for the Elections Department. There was some discussion about this but it is not clear as to why this amount was added. (A copy of the budget was given to the Board members after the meeting.)

Supervisor Sawyer also told the Board there is a proposed 2% COLA increase to all salaries effective July 1, 2014. Also, there is a proposed 2% one-time compensation to be given to County employees later in the year. This makes a total of 4% and is pending approval by the Board of Commissioners. This proposal is not included in this budget. The Board of Commissioners will vote on the proposal on June 26, 2014 when the final budget for FY 2015 is approved.

5. EASY FILE APPROVAL – REQUEST TO GO AHEAD AND ACQUIRE – TO BE FUNDED IN NEW BUDGET YEAR

Chairman Watts asked if the Easy File software program had been approved. Supervisor Sawyer reported that the County Administrator has approved the cost of the program and it was forwarded to the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, June 5, 2015. The final decision by the Board of Commissioners will be made on June 26, 2014 when the final budget is approved.

Supervisor Sawyer said he would like this program to be in place before June 30 because that is the next reporting date. Member Lester indicated that perhaps training could occur before the actual approval of the funding for this purchase. There was discussion about training sessions for elected officials to be conducted by Ron Davis, who is the vendor of Sivad Business Solutions, and he is willing to start training before the actual budget approval. Chairman Watts asked that the Board be notified when these training sessions occur and Supervisor Sawyer said he will let the Board know.

Member Lester suggested that the program could be in place but not officially turned on until budget approval takes place. Supervisor Sawyer agreed.

6. LUNCH AND LEARN WITH MANAGERS TO REVIEW ELECTIONS EXCEPTIONS

Supervisor Sawyer spoke to the Board about some issues with poll managers. There was further discussion among the Board members about issues and procedures that occurred on the day of the election that need to be addressed.

Chairman Watts asked when a meeting with the managers will be held to go over concerns and issues. Supervisor Sawyer will work on this to get just the poll managers in for a luncheon to reiterate to them issues and concerns by him and the Board. He will advise the Board when this will occur.

7. STATUS OF BRENDA JONES

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board he does not have any information for the Board regarding Brenda Jones' temporary medical leave.

Member Hicks advised Supervisor Sawyer and the Board that since this is a personnel issue, it should be discussed in Executive Session. Chairman Watts said this can be addressed at a future time, possibly at the next Board meeting.

Member Lester asked Supervisor Sawyer if he felt he had the “function” of this position covered for the runoff. Supervisor Sawyer apprised the Board of how he and Officer Crosby are handling those duties. He also updated the Board regarding the temporary workers in the Absentee Department who will be handling mailing the ballots out to the UOCAVA voters by June 7, 2014.

8. GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION RUNOFF

- **CANDIDATES TO RUNOFF**

- **ADVANCED VOTING – RUNOFF:**

FAYETTE ELECTIONS OFFICE JUNE 30, 2014

PEACHTREE CITY LIBRARY JULY 14, 2014

TYRONE TOWN HALL JULY 14, 2014

- **APPROVAL TO REASSIGN PRECINCT #11 TO VOTE AT PRECINCT #20 FOR RUNOFF**

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board June 30, 2014 is the first day of advanced voting and will continue through July 18, 2014 in the Elections Office. In addition, advanced voting will be held for one week only at the Peachtree City Library and the Tyrone Town Hall beginning on July 14, 2014 through July 18, 2014.

Since Saturday voting is not required in accordance with State Election Code for runoff elections, Supervisor Sawyer asked for the Board’s approval to not have a Saturday voting day. Member Hicks made motion to approve that Saturday voting not be held. Member Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

Member Lester made motion to approve the early voting schedule for the Fayette, Peachtree City and Tyrone offices and the facilities set for the runoff. Member Hicks seconded. **Motion carried.**

9. STATE ELECTON BOARD – JUNE 10, 2014

Chairman Watts showed the Board a copy of an email she had received from Chris Harvey who is Chief Investigator for the State Election Board. The letter stated there was no evidence that she had committed a violation and therefore has not been cited for any violation.

Chairman Watts and Supervisor Sawyer plan to attend the State Election Board meeting on June 10, 2014. Chairman Watts asked that Supervisor Sawyer forward her the agenda for that meeting when he gets it and he said he would.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

Member Lester commented on training of poll workers that he had observed in the Public Meeting Room. He suggested that the screens could be utilized for the handouts to the poll workers and the technology was in place to help facilitate training of poll workers.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was none.

J. OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There was none.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Watts made motion to adjourn and Member Lester seconded at approximately 6:00 P.M. **Motion carried.**

The next Board meeting (JUNE) will be held June 24, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.