

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

**MINUTES
(final)**

August 26, 2014

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

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

Others in Attendance: none

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Watts called the meeting to order at approximately 5:05 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Lester moved to approve the agenda; Member Hicks seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

C. HEARING – DECEASED FAYETTE COUNTY VOTERS

Officer Crosby gave the Board a list of deceased voters who have been deleted from the Voters' List. After perusal of the list, Member Hicks made a motion to approve the list of deceased voters. Member Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

D. HEARING – FELON FAYETTE COUNTY VOTERS

Officer Crosby told the Board there is not a current list of felon voters and there will be an updated list in September. No action taken.

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING BOARD MINUTES: July 25, 2014 (JULY)

Chairman Watts asked if there were any corrections or changes that needed to be made. There were none. Member Lester made motion to approve the July 25, 2014 Board of Election minutes. Member Hicks seconded. **Motion carried.**

F. NEW BUSINESS

2. VRAG & GEOAC – UPCOMING CONFERENCE DATES

Supervisor Sawyer gave the Board a list of the dates planned for the next upcoming conferences for 2015 and 2016.

The next GEOA (Georgia Election Officials Association) Conference will be held May 3-6, 2015 at the Marriott Riverfront in Savannah, GA. The next VRAG (Voter Registrars Association of Georgia) Conference will be August 2-5, 2015 at the Marriott Riverfront in Savannah.

In 2015 or 2016, the two conferences (GEOA & VRAG) will again be combined. Dates are tentatively set for December 13-16, 2015 or March 20-23, 2016 and will be held at the Classic Center in Athens, GA.

3. UPCOMING ELECTIONS DATES – GENERAL ELECTION - NOVEMBER 4, 2014

Supervisor Sawyer passed out a list of Event Dates for the Election Cycle ending this year, 2014.

He told the Board he will provide a list of poll workers for approval to the Board via email prior to the next Board meeting. Poll worker training will begin October 14, 2014.

He further updated the Board that we have now received ballots to be proofed. The proofing will be completed in time to meet the deadline date of September 16th to begin mailing out UOCAVA ballots. September 20, 2014 is the deadline for these ballots to be completely mailed out. He also mentioned that October 6, 2014 is the deadline for voter registration.

Supervisor Sawyer mentioned to the Board a new program called “Ballotar”. This is a system for printing ballots on demand. If the system is purchased, the system will save on the number of ballots that are ordered and will pay for itself within 2-3 elections. He further told the Board the cost of the system would be between \$25,000.00 and

\$30,000.00. Supervisor Sawyer said he will arrange a demo for the Board to attend. He will also get more details on the cost of the system for Fayette County. Several other counties in the State are now using the system and it has proven very cost effective. Supervisor Sawyer will investigate the possibility of purchasing this system further.

G. OTHER BUSINESS

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that he and Officer Crosby are planning to visit Paulding County on Wednesday, August 27, 2014 to study and consider their system for Absentee Voting. They also plan to visit Carroll County to observe how their "Ballotar" system works.

Chairman Watts passed out a copy of "The Open Meetings Act" and asked the Board members to read this document. She asked the Board to particularly note Item 5C as it relates to how minutes are kept during Executive Session. Her understanding is that you do keep minutes of executive session; they are confidential and not distributed to the public. This topic was discussed amongst the Board.

Chairman Watts said she had recently spoken to Dennis Davenport, Fayette County Attorney, and sought counsel relating to Agendas, Board Meeting Minutes and Executive Sessions. She said her understanding is that Minutes should to be distributed and then approved at the the next Board Meeting and then made public. Also, Chairman Watts asked Supervisor Sawyer to distribute the Agenda no later than the Friday before the Tuesday that the Board meeting is held.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

I. OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Member Hicks asked if the office had received a complaint from a voter saying a deputy sheriff had stood over their shoulder while they were voting in the July 22, 2014 runoff election. Supervisor Sawyer said that he has not heard of that complaint. Supervisor Sawyer said he had asked that deputy sheriffs go to the precincts during the election. Member Hicks had asked that the person who had complained put the complaint in writing so that Supervisor Sawyer could look into the problem. Member Hicks will follow up on that complaint and ask that the issue be put into writing.

The Board and staff agreed that this issue needs to be brought up during poll worker training. Further discussion followed relating to poll worker training and the improvements that need to be made. Officer Crosby mentioned that using some of the

poll managers to assist in the training might be beneficial. Chairman Watts agreed this would be good.

Supervisor Sawyer brought up the subject of downsizing precincts again and asked for the Board's direction on this. He asked if the office should tackle this issue again in January 2015. It was agreed to look into this matter early in 2015. The issue was delayed because of the redistricting that has taken place this year. Discussion of the cost analysis of downsizing the number of precincts in the County followed. More in-depth study of voter turn-out, size of precincts, and many other factors will be considered before any recommendation is decided upon.

It was decided that if next year only has municipal elections, and there are no other issues up for election, it would be a good year to implement any precinct changes. The Board of Commissioners and representatives from the cities in Fayette County would be contacted for their input. In addition, a public hearing would be held for input only if a decision is made to go forward with precinct changes.

J. PERSONNEL MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Watts said that since there were no other items up for consideration, the Board would go into Executive Session. Member Hicks made motion to go into Executive Session; Member Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Watts asked that Officer Crosby please leave the room and only the Board and Supervisor Sawyer meet behind closed doors.

The Board of Elections went into Executive Session.

After the Board had met for Executive Session, Member Lester made motion to return back to the regular Board of Elections meeting. Member Hicks seconded. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Watts asked for a motion to approve a recommendation for Officer Crosby's salary to be increased. Member Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

Supervisor Sawyer said he will speak to the County Administrator regarding this issue.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Since there was no other business to discuss, Chairman Watts announced that the meeting would adjourn at approximately 6:00 p.m.

The next Board meeting (SEPTEMBER) will be held September 23, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.