

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Darryl Hicks, Chairman
Addison Lester
Aaron Wright

FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Floyd L. Jones, Elections Supervisor
Leigh Combs, Elections Officer
April Crosby, Elections Officer



140 Stonewall Avenue West
Public Meeting Room
Fayetteville, GA 30214

MINUTES

February 21, 2017

Chairman to Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Hicks called the February 21, 2017 Board of Elections meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Aaron Wright was not present for the meeting but was able to participate via Skype.

It is noted that all present in the meeting room were able to see and hear Mr. Wright via Skype, but that Mr. Wright was only able to hear the meeting. Mr. Wright did not vote during this meeting due to not being physically present at the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Lester moved to approve the Agenda as published. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There was no member of the public in the meeting, therefore, no one spoke during Public Comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the January 17, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Lester moved to approve the January 17, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting Minutes. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

2. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Elector's List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased.

There was no member of the public in attendance for the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lester noted that the deceased list was long.

Mr. Lester moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Elector's List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 1," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

3. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Elector's List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons.

There was no member of the public in attendance for the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lester moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Elector's List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 2," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no Consent Agenda items.

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Continued discussion concerning the wearing of political attire and campaigning at polling locations. This item was last discussed during the January 17, 2017 Board of Elections meeting.

Assistant County Attorney Patrick Stough stated that during the previous meeting there was mention of a video that aired on Channel Eleven. He said at the time he had not seen the video but he has now seen the video. He explained there was a segment of the video talking about what could be worn to a polling place and that it was clear campaign attire could not be worn to the polling place. He stated that the reporter stated a person could wear Minnie Mouse clothing since Minnie Mouse is not on the ballot. Mr. Stough explained that the statement was made by the reporter and it could be assumed it was made after discussions with the Secretary of State's Office even though it was not made clear by the video. He said there are conversations with the Secretary of State's Office in the video, but it is not certain that the comment about Minnie Mouse was derived from the Secretary of State's Office. Mr. Stough also pointed out that Minnie Mouse is not the head of a political party, therefore, he did not necessarily agree with the distinction that was made in the video. He advocated that someone wearing a t-shirt with a candidate who is readily identified with a political party is in violation of state law.

Chairman Hicks asked if someone were wearing a Bob Dole t-shirt would that be a violation. Mr. Stough replied that Bob Dole could be associated with the Republican Party to the extent that it would be a violation. He stated that the prohibition is on soliciting votes for a political party and, particularly with regard to the presidency, Mr. Dole could be associated with the Republican Party. Mr. Lester agreed with that assessment.

Chairman Hicks thanked Mr. Stough for providing the clarity.

Mr. Lester pointed out that Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones sent legislative updates to the Board that included changes to the campaigning law. He stated that it would be hard to enforce bumper stickers, but he asked if there were any ideas on how other counties address that issue. Mr. Jones replied that he had not reached out to the other counties so he did not want to speculate on how they are handling it, but he assumed they had the same issues facing Fayette County since they have polling places with parking in close proximity. Mr. Jones replied he could reach out to the various counties to get an answer on that. Mr. Lester reminded the Board and staff that Mr. Wright had asked if the state needed to change the law and he asked if feedback needed to be provided. Mr. Jones replied that the reason County Administrator Steve Rapson sent the email containing the legislative changes was in order to get feedback. He said information could be provided to Mr. Rapson to see if he would take it through the channels at the Association of County Commissioners Georgia (ACCG). Mr. Lester pointed out that last month there was no idea if some type of legislative action was in the works that would allow the opportunity to address. Mr. Jones replied he would take the issue to Mr. Rapson and would reach out to some counties.

Chairman Hicks noted that Mr. Stough had only received the legislative changes earlier in the day. Mr. Stough replied that he had only a short amount of time to review the changes. Chairman Hicks stated he did not see any issues with the changes and asked if there was anything from a legal perspective to be aware of. It was agreed that the changes were cleaning up language.

The Board did not provide additional direction. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 3," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 5. Consideration of Resolution 2017-A establishing a referendum to be held on March 21, 2017 to submit to the voters of Fayette County the question of whether or not to impose a special local option sales tax of one percent within the special district encompassing Fayette County, pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Commissioners.**

Mr. Lester moved to adopt Resolution 2017-A establishing a referendum to be held on March 21, 2017 to submit to the voters of Fayette County the question of whether or not to impose a special local option sales tax of one percent within the special district encompassing Fayette County, pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0. Copies of the request and Resolution 2017-A, identified as "Attachment 4," follow these minutes and are made an official part hereof.

- 6. Consideration of staff's request to appoint poll workers to the county's polling locations for the March 21, 2017 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Referendum.**

Election Supervisor Floyd Jones stated that it is required that the Board approve the poll workers for the March 21, 2017 Special Election.

Mr. Lester asked if there were four poll workers at each location. Mr. Jones replied that was correct since it is mandatory to have a poll manager and two assistant poll managers at each precinct. He added that each precinct would have an additional clerk. Mr. Jones added that the only difference would be during early election in the Commissioner's Public Meeting Room since either he or Elections Officer April Crosby could step in an assist.

Mr. Lester asked if there would be a Saturday vote. Mr. Jones replied that Saturday voting is only required for federal elections so there would be no Saturday voting.

Mr. Lester moved to approve staff's request to appoint poll workers to the county's polling locations for the March 21, 2017 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Referendum. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 5," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:

Fayette County Face to Face: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones informed the Board that Saturday, April 22, 2017 is Earth Day and is also a day designated for Fayette Face-to-Face. He explained that Fayette Face-to-Face has occurred for about the past four years and it is an opportunity for the various county departments to go outside of their respective offices in an effort to meet the public and inform the public of their operations. He stated that both he and Elections Officer Leigh Combs would attend the event, which would take place in the County Administrative Complex's parking lot, and that this would be a great time to register voters. Chairman Hicks asked if this was an all-day event. Mr. Jones replied it was not an all-day event but that it would likely begin around 10 a.m. and conclude around 2 or 3 p.m. (Note: It has been confirmed that the event begins at 10 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m., however, set-up for the event will begin between 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.)

GEMS Room: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reminded the Board that Elections has approval from the Secretary of State's Office to move the GEMS Server from its current location into his office. He stated that it requires the support of Buildings and Grounds, and that Buildings and Grounds has given their support. He explained part of the support includes research from Building and Grounds to determine the budget to knock down walls, change doors, and other work. He said the department is also involved with other county projects while being short staffed, meaning that the work is dragging. Mr. Jones stated he attended training at Kennesaw State University last week and while there he met with an Information Technology member of the university. He reported that they agreed, based on the proximity of election and given drag from the Buildings and Grounds Department, to move the GEMS Server after the election is over. Mr. Wright stated that made sense.

Comp and Class Study: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that the Board had a chance to look at and review the Comp and Class Study. He stated that he incorporated the remarks made by the Board and that the study was turned into Human Resources earlier in the week.

Training the Knights of Columbus: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that the Knights of Columbus were scheduled to receive training in order to become deputy registrars, and that the training would take place on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. He reported that the Knights would then go to all the high schools to conduct voter registration drives, however, their effort would have to have the approval of the Superintendent of the Fayette County Board of Education.

Voter Registration: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that since the November 2016 Presidential Election, Elections Officer Leigh Combs and staff have received approximately 3,000 applications for voter registration. He explained that each application has to be evaluated due to people who are applying who are already registered, but as they are evaluated there are approximately 1,200 newly registered voters in Fayette County- averaging about 400 voters a month.

Poll Worker Training: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that at 6:00 p.m. following this meeting there would be a poll working training class.

Early Voting: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that the early election would begin on Monday, February 27, 2017.

ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

There was no Attorney's Report.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

Potential Changes to the Elections Laws: Mr. Wright acknowledged that he may have missed Mr. Stough's report on potential bills in the Georgia General Assembly. Mr. Stough replied that he was able to review the changes and found that the majority was housekeeping. Mr. Wright replied it seemed like housekeeping to him as well. It was discussed that there were changes on how to update voter registration. Elections Officer Leigh Combs gave clarity on current voter registration procedures. Mr. Stough briefed the Board on additional changes and offered to return at the March meeting to provide better detail to the Board. The Board agreed to that recommendation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Lester moved to adjourn the February 21, 2017 Board of Elections meeting. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0.

The February 21, 2017 Board of Elections meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Floyd L. Jones, Elections Supervisor

Darryl Hicks, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Elections of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 24th day of March 2017. Referenced attachments are available upon request in the Board of Elections' Office.

Floyd L. Jones, Elections Supervisor