

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

Action Agenda

April 25, 2017
5:00 p.m.

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Elections. Your participation is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman to Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Hicks called the April 25, 2017 Board of Elections meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Wright moved to approve the Agenda. Mr. Lester seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No one spoke during Public Comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the March 24, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Lester moved to approve the March 24, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting Minutes. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

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.

No one spoke during Public Hearing on this item.

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. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

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.

No one spoke during Public Hearing on this item.

Chairman Hicks moved to approve 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, as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no Consent Agenda items.

OLD BUSINESS:

There were no Old Business items.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Consideration of staff's research pertaining to the question of consolidating precincts in Fayette County.

Chairman Hicks provided opening comments pertaining to this item. He stated that Fayette County has 36 precincts that requires a certain number of staff. He stated the 36 precincts were enacted in 1998 and since that time there have been a number of changes to how voting takes place including the ability to vote early. He stated that the Board charged staff with coming up with information to determine if it is the time to reduce the precincts to potentially 19 precincts. He said everyone is consistently focused on understanding what is the voter count of those coming to vote, the distance of travel, and the associated costs. He said the questions under consideration involved the impact to the voter, the adequacy of the polling locations, and the issues of those having to vote in two separate locations for municipal and county elections.

Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones then gave a 25-minute PowerPoint presentation on staff's findings. The following items were addressed: dual voting for those having to vote in two separate locations for municipal and county elections, current distances to polling locations, current and estimated distances to polling places; a projection into how the proposed precincts would have looked had they been in place for the 2016 Presidential General Election, estimated financial savings that could be realized by consolidating precincts, legal authorization and requirements for consolidating precincts; and the "pros" and "cons" associated with consolidating precincts. At the beginning of his presentation, Mr. Jones stated that these findings were subject to change as the work continued. Mr. Jones then answered questions from the Board.

The Board listened to and replied to comments provided by Commissioner Steve Brown, Bob Ross, Terry Williamson; Ogechi Oparah, Tyrone Jones, Greg Clifton; Charles Bennett, Leonard Presberg, and Carol Buleski.

Carol Buleski: Ms. Buleski, from the Rareover Precinct, said she was mildly concerned with the 2020 Census and she asked if there are any "best practices" in order to gauge or semi-accurately gauge what the results are. Mr. Jones replied that the U.S. Census Bureau has information that provides predictions and that even the voter registration records could provide some input into where people are moving to and from. Mr. Wright added that the proposed map has voter registration data baked into it. He suspected that Ms. Buleski was concerned of any upcoming major changes and he did not believe there would be major changes after the 2020 Census. (*Note: the speaker's last name may be incorrect.*)

Chairman Hicks stated that a decision would not be made and that the staff needs to continue to explore and refine the information. He stated that the critical decision is the GIS information in order to help determine the impact on voters. Mr. Jones replied that he hoped there would be a map available in the coming weeks and that the next meeting will be a follow up to determine if the matter proceeds.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:

GEOA Conference in Savannah: Mr. Jones announced that the Board and staff will attend the Georgia Election Officials Association (GEOA) Conference from Sunday, May 7 through Wednesday, May 10. He stated that itineraries for travel will be provided within the next week.

Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Election: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones stated that it had been mentioned several times in the meeting, but there is a potential dual election to be held for the Education SPLOST. He stated that if there is no consolidation of precincts there would be approximately 15,500 voters who would have to vote in two different locations for both early election and Election Day.

Staffing for the November Election: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones stated that staff recommended opening the Fayetteville Public Meeting Room for three weeks for the upcoming November elections and further recommended opening the Tyrone and Peachtree City locations for two weeks. He stated the recommendation was based on lower voter turnout and would result in cost savings.

Voting Machine Security: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones stated that this matter was based on an email received from Commissioner Brown. He stated he was at home when he learned of election machines being stolen from Cobb County. He stated that an email received from Commissioner Brown the next day asking about voting machine security. Mr. Jones explained the historic practices and spoke about the changes being made to secure the machines.

GEMS Server Room Renovation: Elections Supervisor Floyd Jones reported that the GEMS Server Room is being renovated and for the machines to be secured.

ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

There was no Attorney's Report.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

Addison Lester: Mr. Lester commented to Commissioner Brown's recommendation about early voting. He stated that over time people have interpreted early voting to only visit an early polling place. He said many people forget about the ability to get a ballot 45 days in advance. He stated that there needs to be a campaign to educate people about how to access a ballot without going to early voting locations.

Aaron Wright: Mr. Wright stated if you look at what has happened in the Elections Department over the course of the last year, there have been a lot of really good changes. He said he was exceedingly grateful to work with Chairman Hicks, Mr. Lester, Dennis Davenport, and the staff. He said there was a lot of really positive changes in terms of efficiencies, security, and overall thinking outside of the box in ways to improve what is going on up there. He said he was very pleased with Mr. Jones' work and that he is the captain of the ship. He said was proud of Leigh Combs, April Crosby, Karen Hunter and Beverly Westmoreland for their work. He specifically thanked Mrs. Crosby for working with him in generating a report for a citizen. He stated that everyone is invited to come to the office at any time to see the renovation and the changes going on. He added that the Board of Education will make a decision on when they want to hold the Education SPLOST election, and he encouraged everyone to go to the Board and make their opinions heard.

Chairman Darryl Hicks: Chairman Hicks echoed his appreciation for staff and he thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting. He said any time these decisions are made it is important for the people's voices to be heard. He said there is not one person who is not paying attention to what is being said, particularly as it relates to consolidating precincts. Chairman Hicks closed saying he and the Board appreciated hearing from the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Wright moved to adjourn the April 25, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting. Mr. Lester seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

The April 25, 2017 Board of Elections Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Floyd L. Jones, Elections Supervisor