

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Gary Rower, Chairman
Zach Livsey, Vice Chairman
Sharlene Alexander

FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Brianna Garrett, Director
Beverly Daniel, Registrar
Margaret Johnson, Elections Supervisor

175 Johnson Ave., Suite B
Fayetteville, GA 30214



APPROVED MINUTES

February 25, 2025

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.

1. CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander to accept the January 28, 2025 Agenda for the Regular Board meeting. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Speakers will be given a five (5) minute maximum time limit to speak before the Board of Elections about various topics, issues, and concerns. Speakers must direct comments to the Board. Responses are reserved at the direction of the Board.

No Public Comments.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

No New Business

5. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Voter Challenge Policy Review

Board Member Alexander expressed the idea of tabling the motion for a couple of months.

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey, to table the Voter Challenge Policy Review until the April 22, 2025 Board meeting. Motion carried.

B. Municipal Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Approval

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve IGA for the City of Fayetteville. Motion carried.

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve IGA for the Town of Tyrone. Motion carried.

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve IGA for the City of Peachtree City. Motion carried.

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve IGA for the Town of Brooks. Motion carried.

C. Polling Location Consolidation (Co-Location) Review

Chairman Rower opened the floor by informing attendees that the staff developed a plan for co-locating polling locations. However, after discussions with Attorney Stough, it was determined that there are legal limitations on co-locating polling places due to the way the statute is written. The most viable legal option is to combine precincts, with the exception of one location.

Director Garrett confirmed to the Board that no precincts will be moved at this time. Any directives regarding precinct changes are proposed for implementation in the November 2025 General Election, in accordance with the 90-day statute. This timeline will also allow staff additional time to educate voters and send out notifications

Director Garrett reviewed each of the eight items in the polling place location proposal with the Board.

Director Garrett recommended that Kenwood and Europe be considered for combining due to voter turnout and the proximity of the two locations.

Board Member Alexander requested clarification on the difference between co-locating and merging the two locations.

Chairman Rower suggested discussing only the precincts being considered for co-location to avoid confusion with precinct mergers.

Chairman Rower reviewed the history and challenges of the Braelinn and Oak Grove precincts. Due to the structure of Braelinn Elementary, security procedures limit voter access. The Board researched alternative locations within Precinct 22 and found only one option—a church—which declined to allow the county to use its facility.

Director Garrett requested Board approval to co-locate the Braelinn and Oak Grove precincts.

Attorney Stough informed the Board that O.C.G.A. 21-2-265 governs the location of polling places. The Board may establish a polling place outside of a precinct if no suitable facility is available, provided this is done at least 90 days before the election. Additionally, a notice must be published once per week for two weeks to meet the legal requirements for moving a polling location.

Director Garrett stated that she is requesting the move early to allow for voter education during the June election, ensuring voters are well aware of the change before November.

Chairman Rower suggested making the polling location change after the summer primaries for the fall election.

Board Member Alexander expressed support for the change, noting that many consider Braelinn a significant security risk as a polling location.

Vice-Chair Livsey acknowledged public concerns about Braelinn's security risks and proposed taking a month to seek input from school leadership before making a final decision.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander to submit notice for a hearing for the April 22, 2025 meeting for the moving of precinct Braelinn to Oak Grove after communication with the leadership of the facility. Motion carried.

Director Garrett requested Board approval to merge the Camp Creek and Windgate precincts into a single precinct, as they are already co-located. She noted that this would be a straightforward merger since all voters are within the same district. Additionally, both locations have experienced a decline in Election Day turnout, with an increase in early voting participation.

Vice-Chair Livsey raised a concern about a small portion of Camp Creek being outside the municipality and asked whether this would create any issues with the consolidation.

Director Garrett clarified that the lines on the map pertain to the city of Peachtree, and there would be no issues with the consolidation.

Board Member Alexander inquired whether the consolidation would reduce the number of poll workers.

Director Garrett confirmed that the merged precinct would have a single team of poll workers at the facility.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander for staff to initiate the process to merge Precinct 20 & Precinct 33 into one precinct for the November 2025 Election. Motion carried.

Director Garrett recommended that the staff prepare for a full merger of the Kenwood precinct, combining it with Europe to form a single precinct instead of maintaining them as separate co-located locations.

Attorney Stough advised that the Board must meet the legal requirement of demonstrating that no suitable facility is available within the precinct before moving the polling place outside its boundaries. While he supports the merger, he cautioned that, based on historical patterns of precinct consolidations, there may be opposition.

Chairman Rower noted that the two precincts combined have approximately 7,000 voters.

Director Garrett informed Board Member Alexander that the report in her packet contains all relevant numbers, including voter turnout history.

Director Garrett clarified that a decision does not need to be made today, allowing the Board time to review the report, as the changes would impact the November Election rather than the June Election.

Attorney Stough advised the Board to be thoroughly prepared for any decision they make, considering potential political implications.

Chairman Rower raised concerns about significant real estate development following the precinct consolidation. He emphasized that the decision should not only focus on the 2025 voting cycle but also consider long-term implications.

Attorney Stough advised the Board to consider Chairman Rower's concerns, including potential convenience issues for voters.

Chairman Rower noted that the cost savings from the consolidation would be minimal, approximately three to four percent. He questioned whether the change would provide a meaningful benefit to voters.

Vice-Chair Livsey stated that he would like to see a more detailed analysis of both the voter benefits and cost implications before making a decision.

Motion made by Chair Rower, seconded by Board member Alexander to table proposals 2025-1 through 2025-6 until the March 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

D. Update for the 2025 Elections Calendar

Chairman Rower informed the Board that staff is recommending an amendment to the June and July meeting dates to accommodate election certification. This change would move the meetings from the fourth Tuesday to the Friday following each election.

Board Member Alexander asked whether the Board would still be required to hold the 3:00 PM Special Called Meeting.

Attorney Stough confirmed that the Special Called Meeting would still be required.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander to approve the update for the 2025 Elections Calendar. Motion carried.

6. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 28, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve the January 28, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

7. PUBLIC HEARING:

- A. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as Deceased. **(Deceased List)**

Motion made by Board Member Alexander, seconded by Vice-Chair Livsey to approve, to remove the listed electors who are deceased. Motion carried.

- B. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as Felons. **(Felons List)**

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander, to remove the listed electors who are Felons. Motion carried.

- C. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as Mentally Incompetent. **(Mentally Incompetent)**

No Mentally Incompetent

- D. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as Cancelled.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey, seconded by Board Member Alexander, to remove the listed electors who are cancelled. Motion carried.

8. DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Garrett reported that as of February 21, 2025, Fayette County has 103,217 registered voters. A Special Primary for the Public Service Commission is scheduled for June 17, 2025, followed by a Special General Election on November 4, 2025.

Director Garrett informed the Board that GAVREO will host a conference in Savannah, Georgia, from August 10-13, 2025, which includes the Board's attendance. Additional details will be released in the second week of March 2025.

Director Garrett informed the Board that while there have been discussions regarding the Advance Voting location in Tyrone, there is no intention to remove it as long as the building remains viable. The goal is to stay informed of any potential changes, and research is underway to identify a backup location if needed.

Director Garrett informed the Board that the office will be closed on March 6, 2025, for Staff Development.

9. ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

Attorney Stough updated the Board and staff on the pending case in Spalding County regarding the Garland Favorito lawsuit challenging the Secretary of State in 2022. The case had been delayed due to the absence of an assigned judge. A judge has now been assigned and has agreed to dismiss the case against all counties. An order is still pending.

10. BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

Board Member Alexander expressed appreciation for the Board's progress and action, particularly regarding the Braelinn precinct.

Vice-Chairman Livsey commended the Board for completing the IGAs and maintaining strong relationships with municipal partners.

Chairman Rower thanked the staff for their hard work and encouraged Board members to direct any questions regarding the additional precinct proposals to the Director.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (as necessary for litigation and personnel)

No Executive Session.

12. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Vice-Chair Livsey to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:21 P.M.

Brianna Garrett, Director

Zach Livsey, Vice-Chair

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Elections of Fayette County Georgia, held on the 25th day of March 2025.

Referenced attachments are available upon request in the Board of Elections' Office.