

AGENDA

BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION BOARD MEETING

December 14, 2023 at 5:00 PM

Board members present: Myesha Good, Maurice Hurry, Kevin Evans, and Chad Word.

Staff present: Milton Kidd, Cameron Fairley, Heather James, and Malcolm Unvala

Legal counsel present: Roy Hadley and Leslie Suson

Approval of Agenda

Mrs. Good requested a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Hurry made the motion and Mr. Word seconded. The agenda was approved unopposed.

Approval of Minutes

- November 9, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
- November 13, 2023 Certification of Returns
- November 21, 2023 Special Meeting
- December 5, 2023 Special Meeting
- December 8, 2023 Certification of Returns

Mrs. Good requested a motion to approve the listed minutes. Mr. Hurry made the motion and Mr. Word seconded. The minutes were approved unopposed.

Citizen Comment

There were no citizen comments.

Felon Hearings

Mr. Kidd explained that there are no felon notifications at the time as the office is awaiting clearance from the Secretary of State's office that all counties have certified their run off elections. Douglas County turned its results over to the Secretary of State on Monday so he anticipated being able to process the backlog on December 15th.

Office Operations

Mr. Kidd began by thanking all poll workers and office staff for successfully conducting the run off election for Villa Rica. He asked Mr. Unvala to provide an update concerning the election results.

Mr. Unvala noted that results are published on the county website and explained that between Carroll and Douglas Counties, Leslie McPherson won the mayoral race for Villa Rica, gathering around 2/3rds of the vote. He added that Douglas County's portion of the city had a turnout of around 9% with 65% of that being on Election Day at Mirror Lake Elementary.

Absentee Processing Report

Mrs. James introduced herself, explaining that she oversees the team that receives, processes, and mails out Absentee Ballots. She explained that she provided members a brief outline of the absentee balloting process and explained that beginning on December 25th, applications for the March 12 PPP/Special Election may be accepted by the office. Applications will continue to be accepted until the deadline which is March 1st. She noted that her team continues updating voter records as new information is processed to ensure that voter records are current and accurate. She noted that the deadline to update your voter registration record is February 12, 2024.

Mr. Kidd explained that updates will continue to be provided to the board regarding office operations and procedures.

Mr. Hurry asked if these were Secretary of State procedures.

Mr. Kidd explained that these are Douglas County operations.

Mr. Word asked for clarification regarding dates.

Mrs. James restated that the final day to accept absentee ballot applications is March 1 and the deadline to register for the Presidential Preference Primary is February 12th.

Redistricting Report

Mr. Unvala explained that redistricting has been discussed during these meetings several times concerning Villa Rica, and he noted that Douglas County will be performing redistricting again. No concrete timeframe has been provided concerning the new maps and that this process will not affect the 2024 Presidential Preference Primary, but he explained that the process will need to be complete by March 4th in time for qualifying for the May General Primary.

Mr. Unvala noted that a brief report outlining the redistricting process has been disseminated to board members and the office will be working closely with the county's GIS department in order to ensure all Douglas County voters are represented correctly.

He explained that these changes affect the US House, Georgia House, and Georgia Senate representatives for Douglas County voters. He explained that voters' representation is determined by their physical residential address and how it fits in the maps drawn by the legislature. These will generate combinations of representation which appear on voters' ballots.

Mr. Evans asked if this is an ongoing process particularly concerning new developments. Mr. Kidd explained that it is an ongoing process with GIS to ensure new residential address points are added to the voter registration system and are districted correctly.

Mr. Word asked if this is done in conjunction with the census every 10 years.

Mr. Kidd explained the original redistricting was done in conjunction with the census but noted that there is a new order to redistrict certain areas of the state to be in compliance with the Voting Rights Act, and Douglas County is one of a handful of counties in Georgia affected by this.

Mr. Word asked if voters would be informed about any changes.

Mr. Kidd explained that precinct cards will be mailed to all affected voters and it will likely affect nearly every voter in Douglas County.

Mr. Evans asked if there were other options to inform voters who may not be looking out for mail.

Mr. Kidd explained that the mailing of precinct cards is stipulated by election code but he would entertain any motion by the board to relay any recommendations to the state legislature. He added that the office will be conducting concentrated voter outreach and education activities to inform Douglas County citizens of this process,

Old Business

Code of Conduct Review with Counsel

Mrs. Suson noted that a proposed code of conduct was discussed during the last meeting and legal counsel has since received questions and comments. She explained that counsel is currently conducting research in order to provide an updated draft to address those concerns.

Mrs. Good requested a motion to table the discussion concerning the possible code of conduct until the January meeting and an updated draft is provided to the Board. Mr. Evans made a motion and Mr. Hurry seconded. The motion was approved unopposed.

Letters Concerning Vital Records

Mr. Kidd explained that the Board tasked legal counsel to draft letters to concerned departments involved in Vital Records and as it relates to deceased voters.

Mrs. Good noted that the dates of the letters would require updating to the date they are issued.

Mr. Hurry and Mr. Word explained that neither have had the chance to review the letters.

Mrs. Good requested a motion to table the discussion until all members have had the chance to review the letters and submit any additional corrections. Mr. Hurry made the motion and Mr. Evans seconded. Mr. Word voted against, noting that these letters should be mailed as soon as possible. The motion was passed 3-1.

New Business

Consultation with External Counsel

Mr. Kidd noted that external counsel has advised moving into Executive Session in order to discuss a pending matter concerning judicial action. Mr. Evans made the motion, Mr. Word seconded. The meeting moved into Executive Session at 5:29.

The meeting returned at 5:46PM. No votes were taken. Mrs. Good requested a motion to table the discussion concerning the pending judicial action until January's meeting. Mr. Hurry made the motion and Mr. Evans seconded. The motion was passed unopposed.

Director's Concerns

Mr. Kidd explained that this would be a new agenda item added to future board meetings. He explained that moving into a busy election year in 2024, he has asked legal counsel to review all requirements for the Board of Elections prior to beginning partisan qualifications to ensure our office is following all state and federal laws as it relates to political parties.

Board Member Concerns

There were no board member concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49PM

Next Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 5:00pm