

12 January 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

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

Staff present: Milton Kidd, Tesha Green, Philbert Smith, Heather James and Malcolm Unvala

Legal Counsel present: Leslie Suson

Call to Order

Director Milton Kidd called the meeting to order at 5:01PM.

Approval of Agenda

Director Kidd requested a vote from the board members to approve the meeting's agenda. All board members voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Introduction of the Election Board.

Director Kidd announced that this is the first meeting of the current incarnation of the Douglas County Board of Elections and Registration and requested each board member to introduce themselves.

Mrs. Myesha Good introduced herself, noting that this is her second term on the Douglas County Board of Elections and Registration.

Mr. Kevin Evans announced that he has begun serving his second term on the Board.

Mrs. Michele Crochetiere introduced herself and explained that she is serving her first term on the Board and almost first full year.

Mr. Maurice Hurry introduced himself and explained that he is serving his first term on the Board.

Mr. Chad Word introduced himself and expressed his excitement to serve on the Board and announced that he is two days into his first term.

Citizen Comment

There were no citizen comments.

Approval of Minutes for 8 December 2022 Monthly Board Meeting and 12 December 2022 Runoff Election Certification

Director Kidd requested a motion to approve the minutes from the 8 December 2022 Monthly Board Meeting as well as the minutes from the 12 December 2022 Runoff Election Certification. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mrs. Good seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Board of Elections Leadership Vote

Director Kidd announced that a new Chair and Vice-Chair must be elected and opened the floor for nominations for those positions. Mr. Evans nominated Myesha Good for Chair of the Board and Mr. Hurry seconded. There were no other nominations for Chair. Mrs. Good received five votes for and was elected as Chair of the Board of Elections and Registration.

Director Kidd requested nominations for Vice-Chair of the Board. Mr. Evans nominated Maurice Hurry and Mrs. Good seconded. Mr. Hurry received four votes. Mr. Word abstained from voting. Mr. Hurry was elected as Vice-Chair of the Douglas County Board of Elections and Registration.

Director Kidd turned the meeting over to Mrs. Good.

Mrs. Good thanked the rest of the Board for their cooperation and partnership and expressed her excitement moving forward.

Felon Hearings

Mrs. Green announced that the State of Georgia is currently in the process of changing Voter Registration Systems and that monthly “list maintenance activities,” including the mailing of Felon Letters, will not be sent to counties until the transition is completed on 6 February

Office Operations report

Mr. Unvala informed the Board that members of the election staff attended training on the new voter registration system (GARViS) from 3 January until 6 January in Athens, GA. He announced that the rest of the office staff will be attending local trainings throughout the state in Late January and Early February. Mr. Unvala went on to explain that the office has processed its entire backlog of applications and registration activities in preparation for the transition to GARViS.

Mrs. Crochetiere asked Mr. Unvala for any feedback from the new system and training.

Mr. Unvala noted that the current system has been in use since 2012 and has caused problems for the voting process in the past. Director Kidd noted that this new system is primarily the voter registration system even though it includes election history and credit for voters.

Mrs. Good asked if this system will be ready for the upcoming Municipal Election. Director Kidd confirmed that it will be used in November and that it is going live on 6 February.

Mrs. Good asked how any outdated information in the current system would be incorporated into the new system. Director Kidd explained that list maintenance activities occur during odd election years and noted that these activities have been ongoing in preparation for the transition to GaRVIS and these activities will continue throughout the year.

Director Kidd announced that the Elections office has been communicating with the cities of Douglasville and Villa Rica in order to ensure compliance with election law that stipulates that qualifying fees for municipal elections be publicly posted by 1 February. He informed the Board that the city of Douglasville has invited the Elections Director and staff to attend the next City Council meeting to give an update regarding the plans for this municipal election season. He noted that Douglas County has a standing intergovernmental agreement with Douglasville and Villa Rica to conduct their elections.

Director Kidd announced that, in preparation for the 7 November election, the office staff has been verifying the status of Lithia Springs High School and has confirmed that it will be available as a polling place for the rest of the year. He explained that its status will be monitored and any updates regarding relocation will be announced as they become known.

Mrs. Good asked for the contests that would be on the ballot for the municipal election. Director Kidd explained that any ballot measures do not need to be submitted at this time, but a complete ballot would be known by August when the qualifying period ends.

Mrs. Good asked if the office has made any decision regarding situations when Early Voting locations are the same as Election Day locations and the confusion that can cause. Director Kidd explained that while he understands the confusion it can cause, Douglas County does not have enough facilities available to accommodate the requirements to be a polling place which causes this overlap.

Old Business

Director Kidd explained that during the last Commission Board Meeting, he asked the Board for permission to begin looking for a new facility to house the Board of Elections and Registration department. The office has begun identifying potential sites and will be looking to secure a location as well as the funding for this transition.

New Business

Mr. Unvala explained that Chapel Hill Church has opted out of being a polling place going forward. Due to this, the elections office has begun the process of transitioning those affected voters to Chapel Hill High School as their new polling place. Once this is completed, he explained that all affected voters will receive a new precinct card. Mr. Unvala noted that this will not affect this year's municipal elections but will be in effect by next year's Presidential Preference Primary.

Mrs. Green announced that from 12 February and 15 February, the office will be attending Georgia's annual GAVREO conference to maintain their election official certification.

Director Kidd explained that during odd election years, the Board of Elections typically reviews the by-laws of the Board and, with the help of legal counsel, makes any changes recommended by the current incarnation of the board. He requested the board members to review the by-laws and be prepared to suggest any changes or recommendations at the following board meeting.

Executive Session

Mrs. Good requested a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss a pending legal matter. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mr. Word seconded. The motion was passed unopposed, and the meeting moved into Executive Session at 5:32PM.

The board meeting resumed at 5:55PM. Mrs. Good explained that no votes were taken.

Board Member Concerns

There were no board member concerns.

Adjournment

Mrs. Good extended her congratulations to Mr. Word as the newest member of the board.

Mrs. Good requested a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mr. Evans seconded. The motion was passed unopposed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:57PM