

## **BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

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

*Staff present:* Milton Kidd, Tesha Green, Cameron Fairley, Philbert Smith, and Malcolm Unvala

*Citizens present:* Carol Newborn

### **Call to Order**

Mrs. Good called the meeting to order at 5:02PM.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mrs. Good requested a motion to approve the meeting's agenda. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mr. Word seconded. The agenda was approved unopposed.

### **Citizen Comment**

Mrs. Good informed Mrs. Newborn that she would be afforded three minutes to speak on any subject germane to the meeting's topic.

Mrs. Newborn introduced herself, noting that she resided at 9448 Cedar Creek PL. She voiced her concerns regarding the qualifications of residents within the county to vote, and whether the elections office has addressed that since or clarified the rules. She also sought clarification on the process of "turning off votes" after voting has started. She asked for an explanation on how this process is reported to the state and who makes the decision.

Mrs. Good requested that Director Kidd follow up on these questions later on in the meeting.

Director Kidd agreed.

### **Approval of Minutes for 13 April 2023 Monthly Board Meeting**

Mrs. Good requested a motion to approve the minutes for the April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 monthly board meeting. Mr. Hurry made the motion, with the stipulation that the minutes be corrected to change "Omega Omega chapter" to "Sigma Omega Omega chapter" on the second page, fourth paragraph. Mrs. Crochetiere seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unopposed pending corrections.

### Felon Hearings

Mrs. Green noted that no felon letters had been transmitted to the elections office for this meeting, explaining that the State's system for generating these letters is not fully operational, but that in discussions with the Secretary of State's office, she was assured that it will be working properly within a week.

Mr. Word asked for clarification regarding these letters, and whether she was referring to the letters from the Secretary of State that say which people committed felonies within the county.

Director Kidd informed Mr. Word that he was correct.

Mr. Word sought further clarification, stating that the process is supposed to come from the Secretary of State through the new voter registration system, GaRViS, then transmitted to counties to handle the rest of the process.

Director Kidd informed him that he was correct.

Mr. Word asked if it was possible for him to view a sample of those felon letters.

Director Kidd informed him that he would do that.

Mr. Hurry asked Director Kidd for the timeframe that GaRViS has been online.

Director Kidd informed the Board that beginning on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, GaRViS was rolled out and implemented by all counties across Georgia. He explained that since then, there have been continuous improvements and updates to the system.

Mr. Word requested a copy of the monthly list provided to the elections office from the Secretary of State's office concerning the felon letters.

Director Kidd explained that he will show him these lists and the form of transmittal at a later date.

### Office Operations report

Mr. Unvala announced that on April 20<sup>th</sup>, the office staff participated in Mt. Carmel's Career Day. He thanked the students and staff of the school for the opportunity to present and inform future voters of the elections process, and the office looks forward to working with Mt. Carmel in the future.

Mr. Smith announced that voter registration events were held at Douglas County High School and New Manchester High School in conjunction with the Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta sororities. He informed the Board that an additional voter

registration event will be held on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at Chapel Hill High School, with an additional event scheduled in the Fall at Alexander High School.

Mr. Unvala explained that on April 25<sup>th</sup>, the office presented to the students of Douglas County's Citizen Academy program. This was an opportunity to answer any questions and concerns as well as demonstrate the need for citizen engagement during elections.

Mr. Smith noted that on that same day, Douglas County hosted a KnowInk training at the Lithia Springs Senior Center. This was a great success and an opportunity to meet and talk with several other counties from across the state and prepare for upcoming changes to election processes for 2024.

Mr. Unvala informed the board that the office has received Villa Rica's new city council maps and has been working through street segments to correctly assign voters any changes. Any voters affected by these changes will be mailed a new precinct card.

Director Kidd took the opportunity to address Mrs. Newborn's questions. He cited §21-2-5 of O.C.G.A which states the qualifications for candidates as well as §21-2-6 which outlines the procedure for challenging qualifications. He added that it outlines the policies counties are required to follow if it is found that a candidate should be removed from a ballot. He noted that Douglas County followed these procedures during past elections. He noted that in cases where the ballot has already been created, counties are instructed to notify the Secretary of State, and that prominent signage be placed at all polling locations notifying electors of disqualified candidates as well as in mailed absentee ballots.

Mr. Hurry asked Director Kidd if, once the ballot is created by the Secretary of State, there is any way for Douglas County to turn off the ballot for that individual nor change votes.

Director Kidd informed Mr. Hurry that he was correct. He went on to explain that the state has a policy regarding the reporting mechanism of results whereby votes cast for a disqualified candidate will not be displayed.

Mrs. Crochetiere asked for a time frame for when Villa Rica voters will be notified of any ward changes.

Director Kidd informed her that there is no timeframe for when precinct cards will be delivered to affected voters. He explained that the redistricting module is also housed within the voter registration system, and those features are not yet in place. He noted that all of these changes need to take place before the November municipal elections.

### Old Business

Mrs. Green explained that for the past couple of weeks, she has been working with her elections coordinators, associates and trainers on updating training materials, binders, forms and procedures for the upcoming elections. The office will be implementing new forms of training, such as an online portal where poll workers can watch videos and answer assessment questions. She has also been meeting with Sonline to manage the implementation of a new clock-in system for polling locations, as Douglas County moves towards digitizing the clock-in process to ensure accuracy of timesheets and payroll.

Mrs. Crochetiere requested an update regarding the status of First Baptist Douglasville, which has opted out of being a polling location on Election Day.

Director Kidd noted that an alternative location has been identified, but added that First Baptist Douglasville will not be involved in the November municipal elections, so affected voters will be notified at the end of the year, noting that they will receive new precinct cards as well as additional signage at both locations.

Mrs. Good asked if the clocking-in process will involve breaks and lunch.

Mrs. Green informed her that it will track their time from when they clock-in in the morning, out for lunch and leave for the night.

#### New Business

Mr. Smith announced that voter registration events were held at Douglas County High School and New Manchester High School in conjunction with the Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta sororities. He informed the Board that an additional voter registration event will be held on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at Chapel Hill High School, with an additional event scheduled in the Fall at Alexander High School.

Director Kidd explained that the Douglas County Board of Elections has reached out to county administrative staff to work with other departments and utilizing their expertise to procure a new location of the office. The office is awaiting further communication.

Director Kidd announced that the Secretary of State's office has announced a date for the Presidential Preference Primary, which will be held on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 which will be the first election of 2024. Elections calendars will be distributed to county facilities. He noted that with new absentee-by-mail legislation, applications for mail ballots will begin being accepted for this election on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Director Kidd concluded by explaining that he will be undergoing a medical procedure at the end of May and that he will be unable to attend June's board meeting and that Mrs. Green will be administering the office's portion of that meeting.

Mr. Evans asked Director Kidd if all future board meetings will be conducted in-person.

Director Kidd explained that meetings were conducted virtually because the office was acting under the emergency service acts due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, and that going forward they will be held in-person.

#### Board Member Concerns

Mr. Word asked office staff to expound on Mrs. Newborn's question regarding the turning off of votes.

Director Kidd referred again to §21-2-6, noting that counties do not have the ability to remove candidates from the ballot, and explains that the code section refers to the requirements in cases where the ballot has already been produced. He explained that "turning off" is a misnomer, as digital data exists but is instead not reported in the official results. He noted that prominent signage must be posted at all polling locations and included with mail ballots.

Mr. Word reiterated to Mrs. Newborn that no one is able to physically turn off a vote that is cast.

Director Kidd added that the code section outlines the procedure, including the notification of the Secretary of State.

Mrs. Good added that audits are conducted after all major elections and that the Secretary of State's office reviews any discrepancies.

Director Kidd noted that each county administers its own elections, and all 159 counties in Georgia transmits their own results to the Secretary of State. He explained that the State will review all of this before they certify the election, which takes place after county certification.

Director Kidd urged that any concerned citizen is welcome to the elections office to ask questions about the elections process.

#### Adjournment

Mrs. Good requested a motion to adjourn the board meeting. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mr. Word seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:31PM

Next Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, 8 June 2023 at 5:00pm