

BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

8 June 2023

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

Staff present: Tesha Green, Crystal Danley-Bridges, Cameron Fairley, Heather James, Philbert Smith, and Malcolm Unvala

Legal counsel present: Leslie Suson

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. Evans seconded. The agenda was approved unopposed.

Citizen Comment

There were no citizen comments.

Approval of Minutes for 11 May 2023 Monthly Board Meeting

Mrs. Good requested a motion to approve the minutes from the 11 May 2023 monthly board meeting. Mr. Evans made the motion and Mr. Word seconded.

Felon Hearings

Mrs. Green announced that there were no felon hearings to discuss for this meeting.

Office Operations report

Mrs. James explained that due to the implementation of the new voter registration system, the Secretary of State has asked the office to hold out on fully processing in the system as updates have been rolled out. She explained the office has finally begun processing the backlog of registrations and will be completed prior to Villa Rica's redistricting process. Once this redistricting process is completed, all affected voters will be updated of any changes via precinct card.

Mrs. Green informed the board that the office has begun reaching out to poll workers who have worked with the office in the past to see their availability for the upcoming elections. Based on their responses, the office will determine how many new hires will be needed in November. Beginning on September 4, Mrs. Green explained that she will begin looking at applications for the 2024 cycle and preparing staffing for polling locations.

Mr. Fairley explained that he has begun verifying the supplies and inventory of elections equipment and materials for the upcoming November election as well as for the 2024 cycle. He explained that each election requires various consumables and supplies, and that inventory must be prepared for five potential elections in 2024.

Mr. Unvala announced that the office is in the process of updating Easy Vote on all computers used during elections. He explained that Easy Vote is one of the programs used for processing voters during advanced voting as well as for submitting and compiling campaign finance contribution information.

Mrs. Good asked how many voter registration applications were held in the backlog.

Mrs. James informed her that there were 1,805 applications to be processed as of the morning.

Mrs. Good asked whether the office had the capacity to handle that volume.

Mrs. Green explained that the number was above 5,800 at the beginning of the month.

Mrs. Good asked about the potential for five elections in 2024, and which ones those would be.

Mrs. Green explained that the Presidential Preference Primary would be held in March of 2024, a General Primary in May with a potential run-off in June, and the General Election in November with a potential run-off in December.

Mr. Evans asked for the minimum age to serve as a poll worker.

Mrs. Green informed him that poll workers must be 16 years old.

Old Business

Mrs. Green announced that the office continues to review training materials and are currently making necessary revisions and updates. She added that since the implementation of new equipment in 2020, Dominion, KnowInk, and the Secretary of State's office continues to update their own procedures and the Douglas County Board of Elections works to ensure that current and future poll workers will be properly trained and prepared for upcoming elections.

Mrs. Green announced high interest in the Deputy Registrar training program and noted that she has trained several people over the past few weeks. She explained that these trainings are mandatory for anyone interested in conducting a voter registration drive. Any interested parties can reach out to Tesha Green at tgreen@douglascountyga.gov or call the office at 404.920.7213.

Mr. Unvala announced that the 2023 Municipal General Elections for Douglasville and Villa Rica will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. For Douglasville, the seats on the ballot are; Mayor, Councilmembers Ward 2 Post 2, Ward 4, and Ward 5. He explained that qualifying will take place from Monday, August 21 through Wednesday, August 23 at the office of the City Clerk in Douglasville City Hall at 6695 Church St from 9:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-4:30pm. For Villa Rica, the seats on the ballot are; Mayor, Councilmembers Ward 1 and Ward 2. Qualifying will take place from Monday, August 21 through Wednesday, August 23 at the office of the City Clerk in Villa Rica City Hall at 571 W. Bankhead Hwy from 8:30AM-4:30PM.

New Business

Mrs. Green announced that Georgia has implemented a program where citizens can download their driver's license to their Apple Wallet. Using the State's verification process, citizens are currently allowed to use this mobile ID at TSA checkpoints. To be proactive in addressing potential issues at polling locations, Mrs. Green explained that the office has been in communication with legal counsel regarding the possibility of these mobile IDs being used for identification when casting a ballot.

Mr. Smith read the following communication disseminated to counties from the State's Election Director, Blake Evans:

In the future, all counties are required to use the new cellular Poll Pads for Advance Voting check-in. I am very excited about this new check-in process. It allows the entire check-in and card encoding processes to occur at one time at a single station, which makes the voter's experience much quicker and reduces work for poll workers. Additionally, because these Poll Pads communicate information to your ePulse dashboards through cellular connection, you will be able to monitor your voting locations in near real-time.

Many of you saw the new Poll Pads at our training conference in early January. The setup that you saw at conference included the cellular Poll Pads on a blue metal stand with a wireless printer that could print paper voter certificates. The wireless printers and blue metal stands are NOT required in order for you to use the new Poll Pads for Advance Voting check-in. If you do not have the metal stands and wireless printers, you will use the same Poll Pad setup for Advance Voting that you use on Election Day. If you are interested in purchasing the metal stands and wireless printers for your county, you can certainly do that. For information on purchasing options, you can contact KNOWiNK at support@knowink.com. At this time, our office does not have plans to purchase printers and stands for the entire state. If something changes in the future, we will let you know.

As we are moving to this new check-in process, we are actively having discussions about how to pay for the cellular data that these Poll Pads require to utilize their full functionality. For counties holding March Special Elections, we are planning for our office to pay the cost for the data used during Advance Voting and on Election Day. We will keep you updated about future elections beyond March.

Again, I am very excited about this new check-in process. You will love the additional insight you have to prevent issues during Advance Voting and on Election Day. Your poll workers will love how easy to use the Poll Pads are. Voters will love the increased efficiency.

Mr. Smith explained that this is a new procedure moving forward and something to consider as the office prepares to conduct elections. He also noted that no part of the election system is online, and that this update concerns the voter registration system and is only used to give credit to voters and has no bearing on the actual tally and tabulation of votes.

Mrs. Crochetiere asked for clarification of the process, and whether this means a person can “electronically check-in” and not with a poll worker.

Mrs. Green explained that this process for early voting is now similar to the election day process and eliminates the need to check-in voters on the computer. She noted that there are no plans currently to phase out the computers and utilize them as a back-up procedure.

Mr. Word noted that the upcoming municipal election cycle would serve as a good opportunity to implement this new equipment and procedure.

Mr. Word asked if the county would have to finance the new models.

Mrs. Smith explained that Douglas County already has the poll pads, but there will be additional costs with the data plans. He noted that the office does not have the stands and printers.

Mr. Word asked if a cost was known for the data.

Mrs. Green explained that it was unknown at this time.

Executive Session

Mrs. Good requested a motion to move into executive session to discuss a non-voting legal matter. Mrs. Crochetiere made the motion and Mr. Evans seconded. The meeting moved into executive session at 5:27PM.

The meeting resumed at 5:34PM

Board Member Concerns

There were no board member concerns.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35PM.

Next Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, 13 July 2023 at 5:00pm