

SPALDING COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION
August 14, 2018
Monthly Meeting
825 Memorial Drive
10:00 a.m.
Minutes

The meeting of the Spalding County Board of Elections and Voter Registration (BOER) convened at the Elections and Voter Registration Office, 825 Memorial Drive, Griffin, GA at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018.

In attendance: Chairman Betty Bryant, Vice Chair Margaret Bentley, Secretary Randall Gooden, Board Member Ballard Brooks, Board Member Glenda Henley (arrived at 10:10 a.m.), Elections Supervisor Marcia Ridley and Elections Assistant Carla Rapp.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Betty Bryant at 10:02 am.

Public Comments - None

Review minutes from June 12th Regular Meeting

Chairman Bryant asked the board to take time to review the minutes. Chairman Bryant indicated since there are no corrections she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion to approve the minutes: Secretary Randall Gooden.
Second: Vice-Chairman Margaret Bentley
Minutes approved 4-0

Old Business:

Gary Reid Polling Place

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley to give an update on Gary Reid Polling Place. Supervisor Ridley stated that we will keep the polling place and will be replacing 2 poll workers – Manager and Assistant Manager. There are 2 poll workers at Robert's Fire station who are interested in taking the positions. Board member Ballard Brooks asked if the 2 being replaced wanted to work anywhere else and Ridley said no. Supervisor Ridley noted that there wasn't anywhere else other than a fire station and that is not what they wanted. Ridley stated that they will be working Early Voting in the future.

Fairmont Polling Place

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley to update the board on the construction at Fairmont. Ridley indicated that the construction is nearly complete and the facility looks good. Poll workers were moved to an area to the right of the former area, which worked out well. Ridley stated that they have another room which might work better for the November Election. Chairman Bryant said she wanted to thank the poll workers for putting up with the construction by taking them lunch in November.

Update for July 24, 2018 Runoff Election

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley about how close were the votes for Duncan and Shaffer. Supervisor Ridley stated that Duncan received 51.13% - with 2468 votes and Shaffer received 48.87% with 2359 votes. Ridley also stated that Spalding certified the July 24th Election on July 30, 2018 and the State of Georgia certified the Election on August 6, 2018. Ridley also stated that the July 24th Election was a success with a few hiccups. Ridley stated that there never is a perfect election and having the extra machines at PCT 21 helped.

Update on November Ballot

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley for an update on the November Ballot. Ridley told the Board that the City of Griffin will have a question on the ballot regarding the Brunch Bill which it asks voters to approve the sale of alcohol by the drink starting At 11:00 am instead of 12:30 pm. She also stated that the county will have a Question regarding a Homestead Exemption for citizens 65 and older to be exempt from paying the school portion on their property taxes.

New Business:

Voter Registration

Chairman Bryant asked Vice Chairman Bentley if she had done any registrar trainings. Vice Chairman Bentley noted that she had done 2 trainings with a total of 2 people. She stated that she will be doing some more in the near future.

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley to update the Board on Voter Registration. Ridley passed out the numbers for Voter Registration as she read them to the Board as follows;

Total number of Voters - 43,501 as of August 8, 2018

Active Voters – 39,997

Inactive Voters – 3,504

Chairman Bryant noted that someone came in during Early Vote and found out that they were no longer on the roll. She said the staff gave the voter a registration card to fill out. Supervisor Ridley noted that she heard that 591,000 voters have been purged. She has not heard that officially from the State of Georgia. She also noted that there is a process that the State of Georgia goes through with mailing out notices on a timed schedule to voters that they may be purged from the roll. Voters just need to read and respond to them. Vice-Chairman Bentley said she saw on the Secretary of State's website that the banner reads "Are you registered?"

Chairman Bryant suggested that Supervisor Ridley could get registration information on the county website. Supervisor Ridley that registration information is on the website and

noted that the website is very busy and not user-friendly, information should be one page.

Board member Ballard Brooks asked if there was another way to get the word out about registration. Supervisor Ridley said there are many different communication channels, one, get it in the Daybook and allow it to run constant because it is free to place the ad, get a spot on the radio as well as speaking at different venues and finally community involvement would be ideal.

Secretary Gooden suggested doing a press release about registration or get Supervisor Ridley to do an interview.

Board member Brooks asked about High Schools. Vice Chairman Bentley noted that she goes to them in the Spring.

Chairman Bryant asked what the board can do to help with getting the word out about getting people registered. Vice Chairman Margaret Bentley mentioned that in the City of Griffin most people do not take the paper. Board member Brooks suggested getting information about registration into church bulletins and Secretary Gooden mentioned it would be good to have a speaker's bureau.

Supervisor Ridley noted that she has spoken at several places and will be speaking this Saturday at St. Phillips AME church. Vice Chairman Bentley said that 2 other churches are partnering with them. Trinity CME church and Faith United Methodist Church.

Update of Complaint for Commissioner Donald Hawbaker and Commissioner Gwen Taylor - Flowers

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley for an update on the complaint. Supervisor Ridley noted that nothing was found and neither Commissioner Hawbaker nor Commissioner Taylor-Flowers were in violation of the Ethics Ordinance. Ridley also stated that the two Commissioners were not performing their duties when the incidents occurred. Vice Chairman Bentley stated that she attended the hearing and noted it is very difficult to find any violation as the code is written.

Update for L & A for November Election

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley for an update L & A for November. Ridley stated that she is waiting on information from the State of Georgia and stated that it will probably in October. She will get the dates to the Board by September.

National Voter Registration Day

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley about National Voter Registration Day. Supervisor Ridley noted that September 25 is National Voter Registration Day. It's an opportunity to partner with community organizations. Ridley stated that she is inviting organization to come and set up tents to promote what they offer while citizens come in to register to vote. Ridley also shared with the Board that the selling of any products will not be allowed. Carla Rapp and Angelyne Butler will be working with the perspective community organization.

Revision of By-Laws

Chairman Bryant asked Secretary Gooden about the revision of the By-Laws. Secretary Gooden noted that during the Closed Session he thought that that they would be discussing the By-Laws in closed session based on what others said. He stated that everyone had been emailed a copy of the revised By-Laws and that today would be a discussion on any other items that need to be changed or discussed. They would then be voted on at the next meeting.

Secretary Gooden noted Section 3-4 regarding poll workers being chosen from the list provided by the political parties. This is per the 2003 law; however this conflicts with the Election Code. Chairman Bryant stated that they have never sent any lists. Gooden questioned if the law says, we only have to choose from party lists insofar what's is practical, trainable, qualified and available poll worker. Supervisor Ridley stated that it is open to any citizen which supersedes the statement. The local legislation was enabled when the Board was created. If a party wants to recommend someone we just have to make sure they are qualified. Gooden mentioned that the staff found some letters that were written around the time of the legislation. Gooden stated that the Board just need to make sure there is balance, and consider an Attorney to view the By-Laws.

Chairman Bryant asked Secretary Gooden for some clarification of Section 2-1- composition of the board. Gooden noted that this is also taken from the 2003 law Enabling act and the law itself doesn't mention parties but nothing in the law indicates that it chairman has to be from the majority party. Gooden questioned was the past chairman of the party a majority? If not, it doesn't mean it was right. Chairman Bryant asked; why does it have to be? Officers can be any party, majority vote. Vice Chairman Bentley stated that we need to make sure we are in compliance with the statute. Bentley also stated that there is a copy of the legislation (June 2003) in the Retreat book.

Secretary Gooden noted that past criticisms have been that the By-Laws were unclear and someone needs to step in. We just need to make sure the By-Laws are clear so there are no questions. He reiterated that the board would vote on the By-Laws at the next meeting. He noted that Vice-Chairman Bentley and Supervisor Ridley were crucial in helping understand the context. Chairman Bryant asked that any comments or questions be sent to Secretary Gooden.

Legislative Update

Chairman Bryant asked Supervisor Ridley for a Legislative update. Ridley stated that there really aren't any updates to report. Ridley state there is talk about going back to paper ballots and indicated that it would really be costly and we'd need more employees. Board Member Ballard Brooks said that this is a step backwards. Ridley noted that as soon as she knows something she will let everyone know.

Reports

Chairman Bryant asked if anyone had anything to report.

Board members

Board Member Ballard Brooks suggested that we have business cards made for each of the Board members, so that when they are out they can give them their information. He said that they don't need a lot and shouldn't cost too much. Chairman Bryant asked if he would like to make a motion. Brooks made the motion that we purchase business cards for the board members.

Second: Secretary Randall Gooden

Motion approved 4-1

Elections Supervisor

Supervisor Ridley noted that there was a situation at Gary Reid where the staff had to respond to an emergency at 4:00 a.m. and no one was at the station at 6:00 a.m. to let the Poll Workers in to set up for the Election which the staff later showed up approximately 6:40 a.m. Supervisor Ridley stated that she called for a meeting with Chief Jamie Clark and they late met and came up with a plan that if there is another situation like that at any station, Chief Clark assures a door will be left unlocked so the Poll workers can get in. Fairmont and AMBUCS got in later than normal as well. Ridley talked to Kelly Carmichael and she indicated that she will make sure the center directors are there to open the facilities.

Supervisor Ridley noted that the Manager at Roberts Fire station was late and didn't answer his phone. He finally arrived at the precinct around 6:45 am. Ridley indicated that she was preparing to take supplies to the precinct then received a call that the Manager had arrived. Sent the Regional Manager there and she helped them get set up. Secretary Gooden went there and he stated that the manager was rushing everyone to get set up due to the fact that the manager had arrived late. Ridley noted that the manager has not responded to the office when he was been called about paperwork.

Supervisor Ridley stated to the Board that although the several of the polling places had mishaps relating to the time, they were both open on time to receive the voters at 7:00 a.m.

Supervisor Ridley noted that registration was shut down from April 24-Aug 1. People registered during that time frame and when the State of Georgia opened up registration, there were at least 4000 people who had registered that needed to be processed. As of today, we are down to less than 500 to process and over 700 Felon letters have been mailed. If someone disagrees with the letter they can challenge it and a hearing will be set up with the Board. Ridley will let the board know if there are any challenges relating to Felons. Ridley explained that the process is very precise, when the information comes from the state it is lined up and has to be an exact match. Angelyne Butler processes the Felons. Board member Brooks asked, how they get back on the roll. Ridley stated that once they have finished there sentence and cleared any restitution then they can re-register. Ridley also stated that when a Felon re-register, their information will go through a verification process, and the State of Georgia authorizes them to become active or rejected. Ridley also explained that after they are registered

and active, they will then receive a precinct card or if the registration is in question, they will receive a letter.

Ridley mentioned that the last day to register is October 9 for the November 6, 2018 Election and Early Voting starts October 15. Supervisor Ridley noted that the Early Vote precinct by law is set up just like a regular precinct with a Manager, 2 Assistant Managers and 1 Clerk. The manager came to Ridley and asked for a raise of \$15/day as she does do a lot of work. Right now all the poll workers make \$75/day. That was raised from \$50/day when Supervisor Ridley started. Ridley proposed the following:
Manager additional \$15 bringing it up to \$90/day
Assistant Manager additional \$10 bringing it up to \$85/day
Clerk additional \$5 bringing it up to \$80/day
This is for 3 weeks plus 1 Saturday. Supervisor Ridley said the budget can handle it.

Vice Chairman Bentley made a motion that the Early Vote precinct compensation be raised by \$15 for the Manager, \$10 for the Assistant Managers and \$5 for the Clerk.
Second: Board Member Glenda Henley
Discussion: Secretary Gooden suggested that they should get more based on what they make on Election Day. Supervisor Ridley stated that the budget can't handle that right now and could revisit that during the next budget process.
Motion passed 5-0

Supervisor Ridley noted that there was a small amount of voters 25-30 who were had incorrect street names according to the map. Letters were sent out to the voters with a new registration card for them to complete, and only 2 have come back. Ridley stated that prior to her hiring there was an audit done improperly due to lack of resources. Ridley completed an audit which exposed many redistricting issues as well as street problems, which as of today has been fixed.

Announcements:

Next regular meeting – September 11, 2018

Meeting Adjourned at 11:10 am

Chairman Bryant asked for a motion to adjourn.
Motion to adjourn: Vice Chairman Margaret Bentley
Second: Board Member Ballard Brooks
Motion passed: 5-0

Minutes taken by Elections Assistant, Carla L. Rapp

Minutes approved by: 
Randall S. Gooden – Secretary

EXECUTIVE SESSION

“Executive Session for discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary actions or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a county officer or employee as provided in O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(6).”

Adjournment at 11:40 a.m.