

SPALDING COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION
After Agenda
January 9, 2024

This Regular Meeting of the Spalding County Board of Elections and Registration was held at the County Courthouse Annex, 109 East Solomon Street at 6:00 p.m. on January 9, 2024. Attending were Chair, Ben Johnson, presiding; Roy McClain; Jim O'Brien; James Newland, and Dexter Wimbish.

Also present were Elections Supervisor Kim Slaughter; Attorney Stephanie Windham; and Teresa Watson to record minutes.

Invocation/Moment of Silence - Invocation was given by Jim O'Brien.

Pledge to the Flag - Pledge was led by Dexter Wimbish.

Citizens Comments

Chairman Johnson read the guidelines for citizen comments. No one was signed to speak.

Adoption of the Agenda

Motion/second by James Newland/Jim O'Brien to amend the agenda to: 1) Remove Item A from Old Business, "Request to approve the Amendment to the Resolution for Delegating Authority to the Election Supervisor by increasing the amount of procurement and purchasing of equipment and supplies from \$500 to \$3000 as voted on by the Board of Elections and Voter Registration at the October 10, 2023 meeting" and 2) Remove Item B from New Business "Policy/Procedure for Elector Roll Challenges" and replace it with "Adopt Resolution for Delegation of Authority in 2024." Motion carried unanimously.

Motion/second by James Newland/Jim O'Brien to approve the agenda as amended carried 5-0.

Minutes

Motion/second by Jim O'Brien/Dexter Wimbish to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting of the October 10, 2023. The minutes of subsequent meetings will be carried forward. Motion to approve carried 5-0.

Report of Elections Supervisor

Ms. Slaughter detailed statistics for the number of registered voters (51,662), DDS voter transactions totaling 1,166, deceased voters (35), mail/walk-in transfers (7), online voter registration (15), My Voter Page (23), and felons (7) as of January 2024.

Precinct cards have not been received from the Secretary of State's office since August 2023. They will research and notify further.

List maintenance continues with address changes (755) with confirmation notices mailed to all. We have received 111 "within county" NCOA's with a forwarding address that we confirmed. DDS confirmation notices help to identify voters who have canceled their driver's license to get a license in another state. Our office received a list of 245 voters and 39 of those have been returned as undeliverable.

REIF (Reporting Elections Systems Issues) – We have reported two different system issues to SOS Office which have been addressed, relating to Absentee Ballot applications and a voter "stuck" on the potential duplicate tile after processing.

GARVIS last update was January 8, 2024, with the primary focus being Absentee Ballot work and the redistricting module in preparation for the upcoming March 12, 2024, election and redistricting projects.

MOC and MOS Reports – None have been received since August 2023, although one neighboring county shared how to obtain these reports on our own.

Duplicate Voter Report – Our office received a duplicate voter report containing 30 duplicate voters due to being previously registered in other counties, had name changes, or lacked driver license numbers.

State Election Board Meeting – County Attorney, Stephanie Windham, attended on December 19, 2023, but Ms. Slaughter could not attend due to illness. Both cases were dismissed. Ms. Windham provided reminders of previous SEB decisions regarding the fraudulent ballot case. The SOS Office was to return with methods put in place where a ballot could not print this way again, but they have yet to do so.

Board Member Oath – Dexter Wimbish was sworn in today for a new term by Probate Judge Jan Hunt with fellow members Newland and O'Brien in attendance, as well as Ms. Slaughter.

Precinct Update – Precinct 17 (Ambucs Park which is undergoing renovations) and Precinct 9 (Union Baptist Church) will be combined and be located at Union Baptist Church. Advertising and notifications will be completed to make everyone aware of this space for now and for future growth. This consolidation will serve both voters and poll workers well for these two precincts.

March 12, 2024, Presidential Preference Primary – Ballot building and proofing are almost complete. We are working now in GARVIS to rename Precinct 17-Precinct 9 so that all paper ballots will reflect correctly. In a Preference Primary voters may choose a “party” ballot and select the “candidate” of the party they wish to appear on the November General ballot for President of that party. There are 11 choices on the Republican ballot and 3 choices on the Democratic ballot. She named the candidates.

Qualifying – Local qualifying for Spalding County Commission seats for Districts 1, 3, and 4, Griffin-Spalding County School System seats for Districts 2 and 4, and Spalding County Tax Commissioner, Coroner, Sheriff, Clerk of Court, Probate Judge, State Court Judge and Magistrate Court Judge will be held. Each party can conduct their own qualifying, or the Elections Supervisor staff can do so. The Board of Commissioners voted on the setting of qualifying fees at last night’s meeting. Ms. Kathy Gibson will forward a list of approved fees.

Advance Voting – Will be held at the Hall of Fame located at 841 Memorial Drive until further notice. Dates and times are as follows:

2/19 – 2/24/24 and 2/26 – 3/2/24	Monday-Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm
3/4 – 3/8/24	Monday-Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

Redistricting – Maps were received from Reapportionment today. Spalding County House Districts were the only districts affected, and we have opened a redistricting project within GARVIS to begin the process. We will again work with Brian Haynes as we have in the past for help with GIS in this process. The deadline issued by the SOS Office to complete this project is February 9, 2024, which is fast approaching.

Mr. McClain noted that once again the State and GARVIS have left us in a time constraint with no room for error. This is not the way to run Elections.

Old Business

- a. Removed
- b. Update on Election Supervisor salary – Mr. McClain reported he had attended a meeting of the Spalding County Board of Commissioners, as directed by the Board of Elections. They agreed that the Board of Elections controls its own budget and can adjust figures within an appropriated amount. This amended budget request is for the 2025 Fiscal Year. We have the authority to move funds around in our budget as needed. The specific reason to go before the Board of Commissioners was to move \$8000 maybe from other places to try and improve our Supervisor’s salary. They advised that

work would be completed by the 22nd to move funds -- if not from insurance but other funds. This move will be made by the County Manager and Finance Director; no further action is needed since the Board of Elections has already approved. The Finance Director makes end-of-year budget amendments to accommodate such changes. This will accomplish a bonus for Kim Slaughter for this fiscal year. Members thanked Mr. McClain for his efforts.

New Business

- a. 2024 Meeting Calendar for the Board of Elections and Voter Registration – *Motion/Second by Dexter Wimbish/James Newland to approve the calendar carried by a vote of 5-0.*
- b. Adopt Resolution for Delegation of Authority to Elections Supervisor for Spalding County by the Spalding County Board of Elections and Voter Registration for Calendar Year 2024 – *Motion/Second by James Newland/Dexter Wimbish to approve adoption of said resolution carried by a vote of 5-0.* The Bylaws are in line with 769 and these are the powers required by 769 for the Board.
- c. Election of Officers
Chair - Roy McClain nominated Ben Johnson for Chair for 2024, seconded by James Newland , for a one-year time frame in order to get back to an odd number rotation schedule as required by 769. Next year we will return to the odd-numbered two-year terms. Dexter Wimbish nominated James Newland for Chair for 2024, seconded by Jim O'Brien. Motion/second to close nominations by Roy McClain/Jim O'Brien carried 5-0. The vote was 3 for Ben Johnson (Johnson, Newland, McClain).
Vice Chair - Nomination for James Newland for Vice Chair by Roy McClain/Ben Johnson. No further nominations were forthcoming, and Mr. Newland was elected by acclimation.
Secretary – James Newland nominated Roy McClain, seconded by Ben Johnson. With no further nominations, Mr. McClain was elected by acclimation.

Board Member Comments

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| Roy McClain | It will be a busy year, and he thanked the staff for stepping up. All have had issues and without our dedicated and trained staff, we would suffer. He urged all to do the right thing. |
| Dexter Wimbish | He is glad to serve here again. He, too, thanked staff and Attorney Windham. He was glad to get Kim Slaughter her much-deserved compensation. We will work to ensure salaries are commensurate without pressure. The Board has moved positively over recent years, and he thanked James, Jim, and Kim for being at his swearing-in ceremony today. We need to keep moving and continue to set a positive tone. This morning made him proud. |
| Jim O'Brien,
James Newland | He missed the December meeting but was proud of the effort made for the manual count. He thanked Dexter Wimbish for taking another term and conveyed that he appreciates him. Members collaborate well, and he noted it was good to have Ben Johnson back. He sat through the whole recount with staff; they worked hard, and he thanked them for effort. Spalding County appears to be a leader in Georgia. It is good to be here for another year. |
| Ben Johnson | He appreciated everyone's comments. He hopes 2024 will be much improved and not require as much travel as 2023. He is happy to be back and honored to be reelected. He pledged to do his best, noting he was pleased to see the attitudes that set a good tone for the year. He was also happy to get Kim Slaughter some additional compensation. |

Kim Slaughter noted she did not take lightly the support of the Board, and she thanked them.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:48 pm by Roy McClain/Jim O'Brien carried 5-0. .