

MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
2525 PIO NONO AVE., STE 1200 MACON, GA 31206  
AUGUST 22, 2019

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Board Members Present: Dr. Henry Ficklin, Mrs. Rinda Wilson, Mr. Herbert Spangler and Ms. Cassandra Powell (Mr. Mike Kaplan was absent)

Staff Present: Mrs. Jeanetta Watson, Elections Supervisor, Mrs. Veronica Seals, Chief Registrar, Ms. Charlene Maynard, Administrative Assistant and Mr. Thomas Gillon, Elections Officer

Board of Elections' Attorney: Mr. William Noland

Visitors Present: Carolyn Hargrove, League of Women's Voters, Aklima Khondoker, ACLU of GA, Sandy Tharpe, Maria Bryant, NAACP and Valerie Wynn, Bibb County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Henry Ficklin, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Spangler made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 18, 2019 Regular Board Meeting. Ms. Powell seconded. Dr. Ficklin and Mrs. Wilson agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that this office has taken possession of the 1992 Cargo Van.
- B) Dr. Ficklin informed the Board that Ms. Laura Mathis, Executive Director for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission contacted him with the findings of her research concerning a policy and procedures manual for this office. Ms. Mathis stated the Secretary of State provides free access to a web-based informational tool called "Firefly". Dr. Ficklin stated he plans to speak with Ms. Mathis further concerning assistance with this matter.
- C) Mrs. Watson stated she will continue to reach out to the postmaster concerning an appointment to discuss timely receipt of mailed absentee ballots.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A) Mrs. Watson requested the Board to approve a proposal to temporarily move voters from the East Macon 5 precinct polling location which is Delores A. Brooks Recreation Center located at 3326 Ocmulgee East Blvd. (*which is currently under construction*) to the Kings Park Community Center located at 3283 Kingston Court. Ms. Powell was opposed to the Kings Park Community Center and she recommended Swift Creek Baptist Church located at 4354 Jeffersonville Rd. She stated this would be a more convenient location for voters.

After much discussion, Mr. Spangler made a motion for Mrs. Watson to look at another site preferably Swift Creek Baptist Church. Dr. Ficklin further stated that if Swift Creek is not available, that Mrs. Watson should move forward with the plan to use the Kings Park Community Center location. Ms. Powell seconded. The motion passed unanimously

- B) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that according to O.C.G.A. 21-2-261 & 21-2-262, it is permitted to have a polling place outside of a precinct; however, you cannot create a precinct that has noncontiguous boundaries or portions that do not touch. A noncontiguous precinct boundary line was inadvertently created between the old precinct Hazzard 5 (HA5) and Howard 1 (HO1) when the Hephzibah Children's home located at 6601 Zebulon Rd, Macon, GA 31220 which was polling location for HA5 closed before the 2018 May Primary. We merged the HA5 voters with Northway Church located at 5915 Zebulon Rd, Macon, GA 31210 which is the polling location for HO1; however, we crossed over the boundary line for Howard 2 (HO2) in the process which made the boundary line from the old precinct HA5 and precinct HO1 noncontiguous and must be modified.

Mr. Thomas Gillon, Elections Officer, assisted Mrs. Watson with the research for making this alteration by contacting Mrs. Gina Wright, Executive Director, with the Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment office for assistance with redistricting, determining the precise boundary lines and an estimation of the number of voters that would be affected by this modification.

Mrs. Watson requested the Board to approve a proposal to move the voters from the (old precinct HA5) from the precinct HO1 polling location to the precinct Hazzard 4 (HA4) polling location (*which is New Heights Church located at 158 Lamar Rd.*) to fix the noncontiguous boundary line from the old precinct HA5 and precinct HO1.

After much discussion, Mr. Spangler made a motion to approve the proposal to move the voters from the old precinct HA5 from the precinct HO1 polling location to the precinct Hazzard 4 (HA4) polling location (*which is New Heights Church located at 158 Lamar Rd.*) to fix the noncontiguous boundary line from the old precinct HA5 and precinct HO1. Ms. Powell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- C) Mrs. Watson requested approval from the Board to remove the old city boundary lines between precincts HO1 and HO2 as seen on the map of county voting precincts. This alteration will not affect voting district's nor will it require any changes to polling locations. Mr. Spangler made a motion to approve the removal of old city boundary lines between precincts HO1 and HO2. Ms. Powell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- D) Mrs. Watson requested approval from the Board to redistribute some of the voters from precinct Howard 3 (HO3) location which is Turning Point at Mable White Baptist Church located at 1415 Bass Rd. Mrs. Watson stated the number of registered voters assigned to HO3 has grown tremendously over the past couple of years as the area has become a prime target area for residential growth. Precinct HO3 currently has 9,305 registered voters and has proved to have high voter turnout. Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Seals and Mr. Gillon will consult with the Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment office to get assistance on redistributing voters from precinct HO3 to the surrounding precinct polling locations for HO2, HO5 and HO7. Once these changes are made the voters will be notified in plenty of time before the 2020 election cycle begins. Mrs. Watson also requested approval to wait until after the November 5, 2019 Special Election before beginning these modifications. Mrs. Wilson made a motion to approve minimizing the high number of registered voters at the precinct HO3 polling location by redistributing some of the voters from precinct HO3 to the surrounding precinct polling locations to include HO2, HO5, and HO7; and these modifications may be done after the November 5, 2019 Special Election and must be complete prior to the 2020 election cycle. Mr. Spangler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- E) Mrs. Watson requested approval from the Board to reschedule the September Board meeting to Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>; after which time, voters will have been properly notified of the proposed polling location changes and the Board may act on the final approval to authorize the requested changes and redistricting in the voter registration database can begin immediately. Mrs. Powell made a motion to approve moving

the September Board meeting to Thursday, September 12, 2019. Mr. Spangler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- F) Mrs. Watson provided the Board with a copy of a complaint letter mailed in from Elena Wimbush a voter at the precinct Vineville 3 polling location which is Glorious Hope Baptist Church located at 3805 Napier Ave. pertaining to lack of handicap accessibility. Dr. Ficklin stated he recently attended an event at Glorious Hope Baptist Church and could affirm that the polling location is ADA compliant; however, the handicap parking signs are very faded and need to be more readily identifiable. Our office will work with Glorious Hope Baptist Church to make sure the handicap parking signs are recognizable. The letter will be deferred to Mr. William Noland, County Attorney, for response to the voter.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

##### A) Correspondence

- a. Supervisor's Report (*provided verbally*)
- b. A Resolution from the Bibb County Board of Education requesting the Macon-Bibb County Board of Elections to Call the (E-SPLOST) election. (*Signatures required*) Mr. William Noland, County Attorney, will obtain clarity concerning this additional Resolution submitted from the Bibb County Board of Education requesting the Board of Elections to Call and sign another E-SPLOST document. After discussion, the Board members agreed not to sign the document at this time.

##### B) Items from the Chief Registrar – Veronica Seals

Mrs. Seals provided the Board with the following updates concerning voter registration totals as of July 18, 2019.

- a. Active 105,170          Inactive – 7,527          Combined Total – 112,697
- b. ElectioNet Voter Registration Dashboard Report (Registrations to be processed)
  - i. 161    DDS Department Driver Services Applications
  - ii. 3     OLVR – Online Voter Registration Applications
  - iii. 195   Pending Voters
  - iv. 599   Verification of Non-Matched Pending Voters

##### C) Items from the Elections Officer – Thomas Gillon

- a. Mr. Gillon notified the Board that since the July meeting Judge Jefferey Monroe, Commissioner Al Tilman and Water Authority Chairman Sam Hart have turned in their personal financial disclosure reports late. Their names have already been submitted to the Georgia Government and Transparency and Finance Commission.

##### D) Items from the Board Members

Ms. Powell asked why the new canopy at the employee entrance is not flat to the wall. Mrs. Watson explained that she brought it to the attention of the workers immediately when she noticed the space between the awning while they were installing it. She further stated that she called and sent an email to the Director of Facilities & Maintenance Department while the workers were present. The worker stated that because of how the wall is made they were not able to sand it down. Dr. Ficklin stated he will contact the Mayor's office concerning this issue.

##### E) Items from the County Attorney

- a. Mr. Noland stated that he will communicate the concerns regarding the terms of the Board of Elections current lease and the need for additional space at this location to the Commission for

their consideration before committing to a 10-year lease agreement with the current owner of the Westgate Plaza.

- b. Mr. Noland stated from a legal standpoint there is no provision in the elections code which requires a formal request be made with the Board of Elections or the County Clerk of Commission. Election documents have a separate code and are open to inspection at the time a request is made.
- c. Mr. Noland stated he will provide a written opinion concerning the Boards request to implement a policy to request payment from outside entities for conduct of elections held in conjunction with a Primary, General or Special Election.

F) Items from the Supervisor

- a. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Secretary of State chose Dominion Voting as the new vendor to supply the new election equipment.
- b. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that she met with Mrs. Claire Cox with the GA Women's Group. The GA Women's Group will collaborate with Mrs. Watson to host the events for National Voter Registration Day held Tuesday, September 24, 2019. Notification will be distributed throughout the county by radio station broadcast, legal organ, media blasts, libraries, grocery stores and word of mouth. We will request donations from local businesses for event prizes.

*(Verbal Supervisor's Report)*

- Mrs. Watson will check on the status of the 2019-2020 Student Ambassador Program participation for Bibb County Schools.
- Mrs. Watson held a Region 6 election officials support meeting on Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
- Mrs. Watson stated because Elections Systems & Software (ES&S) will no longer be providing logic and accuracy (L&A) testing, training and technical support to Georgia Counties officials for the current voting equipment; the Center for Elections recommend that county administrators reach out to surrounding counties for assistance. I volunteered to be a host county and provide L&A training to those that need it. The training will be held at our office on Thursday, August 29, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Spangler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:13 p.m. Ms. Powell seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

*Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson*