

**MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
2525 PIO NONO AVE., STE 1200 MACON, GA 31206  
JUNE 27, 2019**

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

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: Sandy Tharpe, Claudia Kirkwood, LWV, Carolyn Hargrove, LWV, Alaina Reaves, Spread the Vote, Commissioner Valerie Wynn, Willie Frazier, Linwood Foundation, Maria Bryant, NAACP

CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Henry Ficklin, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Kaplan made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2019 Regular Board Meeting. Mr. Spangler, seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Macon-Bibb County Commission approved a Resolution to authorize the Board of Elections to purchase a 1992 Cargo Van from the Macon Water Authority in the amount of \$300.00. Mrs. Watson further stated that she will inform the Board when this office takes possession of the Van after it has been inspected and by the Vehicle Maintenance Department.
- B) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that Ms. Laura Mathis, Executive Director for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has not contacted her concerning Dr. Ficklin's request for her assistance with a policies and procedures manual for this office. Dr. Ficklin requested for Mrs. Watson to reach out to Ms. Mathis and provide an update.
- C) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that she spoke with Mr. Chris Floore, Public Relations Director concerning assisting this office with producing voter education videos. She stated Mr. Floore informed her that the Public Affairs department no longer has a budget allocated for this purpose and that each individual department is now responsible for acquiring a budget and hiring a videographer. Mr. Floore stated he will be happy to recommend a videographer when we are ready. Mrs. Watson further stated that it would be better to wait until we get the new equipment. The Board members agreed.
- D) Mrs. Watson provided a report on behalf of the postmaster committee that she spoke with Ms. Lisa Payton who is the Political Mail Coordinator for the Atlanta area. Per our conversation, Ms. Payton stated she would follow up with me concerning identifying who the postmaster is for our area. Mrs. Watson will provide the Board with an update.

- E) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that Cana Communications has installed the necessary software which will allow a network connection to the lobby televisions which supports functionality to display PowerPoint presentations.
- F) Dr. Ficklin informed the Board that the Board of Commissioners did not approve the request for salary increases or job reclassification for any employees in the FY 2020 Budget. Dr. Ficklin further stated that the requests made for this office will be submitted again in the FY 2021 Budget.
- G) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that Kristen Casimir, External Affairs Coordinator is the new contact person for the Secretary of State Student Ambassador Program. The Kickoff date for 2019-2020 has not been announced. She has forwarded information to over 150 High Schools throughout the state encouraging registration for those who wish to participate. Mrs. Watson will keep the Board updated with this office's involvement with the students as time permits.
- H) Mr. William Noland, Attorney, made the following recommendation concerning ongoing or continuing open records requests. There is a Georgia Supreme Court case (it was later overruled on other grounds) that seems to state that an ongoing or continuing open records request is allowed. See *Howard v. Sumter Free Press, Inc.*, 272 Ga. 521 (2000). Accordingly, the Board of Elections should honor these requests. Mr. Noland further stated we may charge each time a production is made; however, a new request every time is not required.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Code of Ordinances for Macon-Bibb County Sec. 20-6 created a position of Open Records Officer. The Clerk of Commission is the designated Open Records Officer and all request must go through the Open Records officer first. It shall be the duty of the Open Records Officer to accept written requests to inspect and copy public records. The requests are submitted to the appropriate entity for fulfillment in accordance with the Georgia Open Records Act.
- B) Dr. Ficklin requested approval from the Board concerning implementation of additional fees for conducting elections for outside entities such as the Bibb County Board of Education and the Macon Water Authority. He stated this would help offset the cost for salary increases for the elections staff. Mrs. Watson stated she performed some research and found that there are some counties that charge a minimal fee to conduct elections for their cities when races appear on the ballot during a primary or general election; however, most counties do not charge any fees when their city, county or special election to fill a vacancy is held in conjunction with a primary or general election. When elections are held separate and apart from a primary or general the outside entity pays 100 percent of the cost.  
  
After discussion, Dr. Ficklin requested the Board to approve for Mr. William Noland, Attorney to perform some additional research to confirm if there is law that would prohibit this action. The Board members agreed.
- C) Governor Brian P. Kemp announced he will appoint State Court Judge Jeffery O. Monroe to the Superior Court of the Macon Judicial Circuit. Mr. William Noland will review and confirm if the State Court Judge race should appear on the May 2020 ballot.
- D) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that according to O.C.G.A. 21-2-418 which states elections offices must provide a provisional ballot free access system for voters to confirm their provisional ballot status. The Macon-Bibb County IT Department is not able to provide access to a 1-800-number currently;

therefore, an email will be implemented. The following email address will be provided to the public [provisionalballotstatus@maconbibb.us](mailto:provisionalballotstatus@maconbibb.us).

- E) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger has set the date for the Presidential Preference Primary to be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2020.
- F) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Bibb County Board of Education may possibly want the Board of Elections to conduct an E-SPLOST election on November 5, 2019. Mrs. Watson will provide an update as soon as more information is available.
- G) Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Commissioners have approved an Ordinance authorizing employees to have July 5<sup>th</sup>, as an additional Holiday; therefore, the office will be closed on July 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

##### A) Correspondence

- a. Monthly Supervisors Report
- b. Copy of the Resolution approving the purchase of a 1992 Cargo Van
- c. Macon-Bibb County Ordinance for Open Records Request passed Sept. 2018
- d. 2020 Elections Calendar – Revised
- e. GA Constitution – Judicial Decisions
- f. 1983 Constitution of GA – Superior and State Court Judges
- g. Ordinance Authorizing July 5, 2019 as an additional Holiday

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

Mrs. Seals provided the Board with the following updates concerning voter registration totals as of June 26, 2019.

- a. Active - 104,959      Inactive - 5,662      Combined Total – 110,621
- b. ElectionNet Voter Registration Dashboard Report (Registrations to be processed)
  - i. 228 DDS Department Driver Services Applications
  - ii. 1 OLVR – Online Voter Registration Applications
  - iii. 1,289 Pending Voters
  - iv. 1,204 Verification of Non-Matched Pending Voters
- c. Update – The National Change of Address process (NCOA)
  - i. Number of NCOA’s mailed 6,419
  - ii. Number of NCOA’s processed 127
- d. Registration Verification - The passage of House Bill 316 changed the verification process. Records will no longer be placed in Pending status as a result of failing to verify first name, last name, date of birth, Driver’s License #, or SSN. Following the verification process, records will be moved into Active status. If no ID was provided and the record fails the verification process, the record will be flagged as Missing Identification Required (MIDR).

##### C) Items from the Board Members

There was none.

##### D) Items from the Supervisor

- a. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that Judd Drake, County Attorney has resigned.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL MATTER:

Mr. Kaplan made a motion to enter in an Executive Session for personnel matter at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Spangler seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kaplan made a motion to return to the Regular Board Meeting at 5:23 p.m. Ms. Powell seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mr. Spangler and Mrs. Wilson agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Spangler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 p.m. Mr. Kaplan seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

*Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson*