MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

2525 PIO NONO AVE., STE 1200 MACON, GA 31206

*(HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE)*

MARCH 19, 2020

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

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

Board of Elections’ Attorney: Mr. William Noland

Visitors: Carolyn Hargrove, LWV, Sandy Tharpe, Claudia Kirkwood, LWV, Mrytice Johnson, Maria Bryant, NAACP, Liz Fabian, Center for Collaborative Journalism, Elaine Johnson, Peanut Gallery, Desmond Brown, Merritt Johnson

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 February 20, 2020 regular Board Meeting. Mr. Spangler seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Nomination for Chairperson:

1. Mr. Spangler made a motion to nominate Mr. Kaplan to serve as Chairperson. Mrs. Wilson seconded. Dr. Ficklin and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

Nomination for Vice-Chairperson:

* 1. Mr. Kaplan made a motion to nominate Mr. Spangler to serve as Vice Chairperson. Mrs. Wilson seconded. Dr. Ficklin agreed. Ms. Powell, opposed. The motion passed.

These appointments will be effective April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Update remains the same. The Board is still looking for an additional site.
2. Dr. Ficklin stated a request for a supplemental budget in the amount of $585,914.00 was submitted to the County Commission for approval for funds needed to cover additional expenses for items needed due to new elections equipment and state requirements; salaries for employee overtime and poll workers; and the purchase of a new cargo van.
3. Ms. Maynard stated the Finance Department minimized the requirements for the Vendor Package received from the facilities used as voting locations.
4. An update concerning employee job descriptions and hiring additional staff will be discussed at a later time.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Dr. Ficklin stated the Board received an Official Elections Bulletin from Mr. Chris Harvey, Elections Director notifying elections officials of the postponement of the Presidential Preference Primary Election to May 19, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Due to event scheduling conflicts, Mrs. Watson requested the Board to approve a proposed change to move the East Macon 2 (EM2) precinct polling location which is St. Paul A.M.E. Church located at 2501 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31217 to St. Matthew Baptist Church located at 1211 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31211 prior to the May Primary Election. Mr. Kaplan made a motion to approve the proposed change to move the East Macon 2 (EM2) precinct polling location which is St. Paul A.M.E. Church located at 2501 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31217 to St. Matthew Baptist Church located at 1211 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31211. Mr. Spangler seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Mrs. Watson stated due to the COVID-19 crisis, Bruce Elementary School is closed indefinitely; therefore, she requested the Board to approve a proposed change to move the Godfrey 4 (GF4) precinct polling location which is Bruce Elementary School located at 3660 Houston Ave., Macon, GA 31206 to Unionville Baptist Church located at 3837 Houston Ave., Macon, GA 31206; however, the Pastor at Unionville declined at this time.
4. Mrs. Watson stated due to the COVID-19 crisis, Northeast High School is closed; therefore, we are looking for another polling location for Northeast High School which is the East Macon 3 (EM3) precinct polling location.
5. Mrs. Watson stated due to event scheduling conflicts, we are looking for another place for Warrior 2 (WA2) precinct polling location which is Macon Evangelistic Church located at 5399 Hartley Bridge Rd., Macon, GA 31216.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Correspondence *(Copies of the following correspondence was provided to each Board member)*
   1. FY 2020 Supplemental Budget Request
   2. Macon-Bibb County Precinct District Combination Sheet
   3. Qualified Candidates list of emails and addresses
   4. Official Election Bulletin – Postponement of the Presidential Preference Primary Election
   5. Appointment for MWA District 2 *(Letter submitted by the County Attorney on behalf of the Board of Elections)*
2. Items from the Chief Registrar – Veronica Seals (Will be updated prior to the meeting)
   1. Active **106,809** Inactive **5,377** Combined Total **112,186** as of 3-19-20
   2. ElectioNet Voter Registration Dashboard Report (Registrations to be processed)
      1. DDS Department Driver Services Applications - **1830**
      2. OLVR – Online Voter Registration Applications- **192**
3. Items from Board Members
   1. None
4. Items from the County Attorney
   1. Mr. William Noland, County Attorney provided the Board with the letter he submitted to the Macon Water Authority attorney Mr. Virgil Adams requesting legal justification about the Board of Elections concern that an individual may be holding an elective office for which he is not qualified and the residents of his district are not being represented by one of their own.
   2. After much discussion, Mr. Kaplan made a motion to notify the Macon Water Authority that the election has been postponed to May 19. Due to the delay, there is no incumbent. Notify the candidate that he can not call himself the candidate and he should not be listed on the ballot as an incumbent. Ms. Powell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
   3. Mr. William Noland, County Attorney, states it is his legal opinion that Mrytice Johnson is eligible for candidacy for the School Board District 1 election.
5. Items from the Elections Supervisor, Jeanetta Watson
   1. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that ballots will county for voters who have already cast their voted early voting or has already returned their absentee ballot during the March PPP.
   2. Mrs. Watson is preparing to take a proactive approach to safety and encouraging voting by sending a notice to Bibb County voters to vote by mail due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. Final Public Comment

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Kaplan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m. Mr. Spangler seconded. Dr. Ficklin, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

***Minutes transcribed by Charlene Maynard***