MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

*(HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE)*

APRIL 30, 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: Gwendalyn Bailey, Candidate Commission Dist. (9), Linda Adams, Michelle Parks, Candidate Commission Dist. (8), Carolyn Hargrove, League of Women’s Voters, Valerie Wynn, Commissioner Dist. (1), Larry Schlesinger, Commissioner Dist. (2), Claudia Kirkwood, League of Women’s Voter’s, Mark Dehler, Democratic Party of Georgia, Carlton Kitchens, Candidate Commission Dist. (5), Juawn Jackson, Candidate Board of Education Dist. (4), David Gowan, Bibb County School District, Maria Bryant, Macon NAACP, Lester Miller, Candidate for Mayor, Sam Kitchens, Bibb County School District, Sandy Tharpe, Liz Fabian, Center for Collaborative Journalism Mercer University, Alexia Denagall, Reporter Fox 24, Lora Corley, GA News Lab, Jenna Eason, Macon Telegraph, Corey McFarland, New Georgia Project

CALL TO ORDER:

Mike Kaplan, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2020 regular Board meeting. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2020 Special Call Board meeting. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Spangler agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mrs. Watson asked the Board to approve the Fiscal Year 2021 proposed budget request. After discussion, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to table approval of the FY 2021 proposed budget to allow the Board to have more time for review; and to move the budget discussion to a Special Call meeting to be held Monday, May 4, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
2. There was no motion for discussion to approve a Sunday voting during the June Primary and Nonpartisan General Election.
3. Mrs. Watson informed the Board of the new State Election Board Emergency Rule 183-1-14-0.6-.14 adopted at their April 15, 2020 meeting. For the Elections held on June 9, 2020, County registrars are authorized to establish one or more drop box locations as a means for absentee by mail electors to

deliver their ballots to the county registrars. A drop box shall only be located on county or municipal government property generally accessible to the public. The rule specifies all other requirements when establishing drop boxes. After much discussion, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the purchase of two absentee drop boxes subject to the approval of funding by the Macon-Bibb County Commission. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Mr. Kaplan informed the Board that the absentee ballot package for the General Primary election sent by an outside vendor on behalf of the Secretary of State for mailing ballots did not include a secrecy envelope and included partially incorrect ballot return instructions. Instead of a secrecy envelope, they enclosed is a paper sleeve to fold over the ballot; however, the instruction stated to place the ballot inside the secrecy envelope. The Secretary of State does not intend to send any secrecy envelopes going forward. They will continue to mail the paper sleeve and include accurate return ballot instructions.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. There is no update concerning an additional advanced voting site.
2. Mrs. Watson provided the Board with an update on behalf of the postmaster committee. She stated she has communicated concerns of this office with the new local postmaster and was assured every effort any issues and/or concerns will be addressed promptly.
3. Mr. Kaplan informed the Board that due to the diligent efforts of Dr. Ficklin to procure additional funds for this office to purchase much needed supplies the Commission approved a supplemental budget in the amount of $377,300. This allows the office secure equipment and supplies as required by new legislation and State Election Board Rules recently passed as it pertains to the new voting equipment.
4. Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the change from the East Macon 2 (EM2) precinct polling location which is St. Paul A.M.E. located at 2501 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31211 to St. Matthew Baptist Church located at 1211 Shurling Dr., Macon, GA 31211. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Mrs. Wilson agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the Board of Education approved for all schools used as polling locations to be open for voting during the June election cycle; therefore the Godfrey 4 (GF4) precinct polling location which is Bruce school will be available.
6. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the precinct polling location for East Macon 3 (EM3) which is Northeast High School will be open for voting during the June election cycle.
7. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that she was unable to identify a new polling location for precinct Warrior 2 (WA2) which is Macon Evangelistic Church; therefore, we will remain at this location until another can be found prior to the November election.
8. Mr. Kaplan requested approval from the Board to move the Board meeting from Friday, May 22, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. which was moved for the Board to have a Hearing for any possible election challenges from the May 19, 2020 General Primary and Nonpartisan General Election. Since the General Primary and Nonpartisan General Election has been postponed to June 9, 2020, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to move the regular Board meeting to Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. Mrs. Wilson seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Items from the Chief Registrar
   1. Absentee Voting
      1. Processed Mailed Ballots 19,146
      2. Returned number of Absentee ballots by mail 1,174
   2. Voter Registration
      1. Active Voters 107,599 Inactive 5,255 Combined Total 112,854 *as of April 30, 2020*
   3. ElectioNet Voter Registration Workload
      1. DDS Department of Driver Services Application to Process – 12
      2. OLVR – Online Voter Registration Application to Process – 2
      3. Verification of Pending Voters - 0
2. Items from Board Members
   1. Mr. Kaplan stated to let the minutes reflect the fabulous leadership the Board of Elections experienced from Dr. Henry Ficklin as Chair during the April 2019 – March 31, 2020 term.
3. Items from the Supervisor
   1. BOE mailed 2,333 absentee ballot applications were mailed to inactive voters
   2. Secretary of State
      1. Will not be providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to counties. They have a grant to reimburse 90% up to $5K for PPE reimbursement.
      2. Considering authorizing early opening of absentee ballots
   3. 90% of poll workers have internet access and will receive web-based poll worker training
   4. We have obtained an additional mini mobile storage container
   5. The Board of Elections has its’ own free access teleconference phone number
   6. MBC Human Resources Department conducted an Employees Job Assessment/Salary Comparison Survey while partnered with Management Advisory Group, Inc. Each employee was required to participate in a study to make sure that the job titles and classification levels recommended as of a result of the study are fair and equitable.
4. Correspondence *(Copies of documents for the following correspondence was provided to each Board member)*
   1. Approved Supplemental Budget for Elections Supplies
   2. FY 2021 Budget Proposal
   3. New SEB Rule 183-1-14-0.6-.14 – Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes
   4. Quote for Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes
5. Final Public Comment

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Spangler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Dr. Ficklin seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

***Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson***