MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

*(HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM)*

JANUARY 28, 2021

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Board Members Present: Mr. Mike Kaplan, Dr. Henry Ficklin, and Ms. Cassandra Powell

*(Mrs. Rinda Wilson, Absent and Mr. Herbert Spangler was unable to access the meeting)*

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: Sandy Tharpe, Georgia Women, Maria Bryant, Macon-Bibb NAACP, Darius Maynard, Macon Democrat Party, Karen Evans, Macon Democrat Party, Claudia Kirkwood, LWV, Peter Taylor, Jr., Juawn A. Jackson, Bibb County Board of Education, District 4, Monica Hodges, ACLU, Canetra Ford, Elections Staff, Austin Rayford, Teresa Harris

CALL TO ORDER:

Mike Kaplan, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Minutes from the regular meeting held Thursday, December 17, 2020 approval deferred to next Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. According to O.C.G.A. 21-2-497, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the consolidated certification of returns for the January 5, 2021 General & Special Nonpartisan Runoff Election as a permanent record of the January 28, 2021 meeting minutes. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Mrs. Watson stated that the new employee pay scale implementation starts with the upcoming pay period and has been confirmed by each employee. She further stated she is working on a county to county pay scale and job description assessment survey to include justification for hiring additional staff which is necessary because elections officials are now having to accommodate procedural changes more frequently and due to new voting equipment requirements. Also, in Georgia and across the country, elections officials are working in a more politically charged social atmosphere within which protests, threats of violence, and other acts of defiance, and intimidation are at the forefront. Mrs. Watson stated the workloads of the entire staff needs to be reassessed. She plans to meet with Alisha Duhart, the Human Resources Department Director, to discuss staffing issues.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Kaplan stated payroll and poll worker training compensation cannot be paid retroactively with grant funds provided by the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL). Mrs. Watson has submitted a request to CTCL for an extension to spend down the remaining funds.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Items from the Chief Registrar, Veronica Seals
   * 1. Active – **109,543** Inactive – **6,990** Combined Total – **116,533** as of date: *January 28, 2021*
   1. ElectioNet Voter Registration Dashboard Report
      1. DDS Department Driver Services Applications – **2,767**
      2. OLVR – Online Voter Registration Applications– **299**
      3. Verification of Pending Voters – **0**
2. Items from the Board Members
   1. Dr. Ficklin made a motion for Mrs. Watson to work with the attorneys to get all workers from June and forward to be paid Hazard pay. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan agreed. The motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Watson stated any poll workers or election workers who were not scheduled to work the January Runoff Election were not called to attend the December poll worker training.
   2. Ms. Powell stated there continues to be an ongoing issue with the postal services delivering voter ballots to the Board of Elections office before the deadline because of postal issues.
   3. Dr. Ficklin stated there was an elections technician who acted unprofessionally while at the Appling Middle School polling location and asked Mrs. Watson what actions were going to take place concerning this issue. Mrs. Watson stated she will further investigate the situation and act accordingly.
3. Items from the Supervisor
   1. Thanks for all the support during the 2020 elections
   2. Begin FY 22 Budget Preparation
   3. Update the BOE Website
   4. Respond to backlog of open records request
4. Items from the County Attorney – Mr. William Noland
   1. Mr. Noland stated there is no legal matter which prevents the Board of Elections office from requiring masks and temperature checks before entering the office. Dr. Ficklin stated he would check with the County Commission regarding a temperature check requirement.
   2. Mr. Noland provided the Board members with a legal opinion concerning nomination of the At-Large member to be appointed to the new 2-year term. Legislation is not clear as to the timeframe for when this is to be done; however, the new term begins April 1, 2021. The Board members agreed to submit names at the February meeting.
5. Correspondence: (Copies for Board meeting files)
   1. Certification of Returns – General & Special Election Recount from November 3, 2020
   2. Budget Performance Report for December 17, 2020
   3. New Georgia Project – Emergency Injunctive and Declaratory Relief
   4. 2021 State Elections & Voter Registration Calendar

ADJOURNMENT:

Dr. Ficklin made a motion for adjournment at 4:45 p.m. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

***Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson***