MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

*(HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE)*

JULY 16, 2020

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

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: Liz Fabian, Mercer University Ctr for Collective Journalism, Maria Bryant, Macon-Bibb NAACP, Claudia Kirkwood, LWV, Juwan Jackson, Candidate for Board of Education, Elaine Johnson, Stephanie Woods-Miller, Whitby for Mayor Campaign, Renee Bumpus, Whitby for Mayor Campaign, Sandy Tharpe, Carolyn Hargrove, LWV, Elaine Lucas, Commissioner District 3

Following the concerns presented by Stephanie Miller on behalf of the Whitby for Mayor Campaign, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to provide a written response to address their concerns. Mr. Kaplan requested for Mr. William Noland, County Attorney to submit the letter to each of the candidate’s listed on the August 11, 2020 Nonpartisan General Runoff Election ballot on behalf of the Board of Elections. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Mrs. Wilson agreed.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mike Kaplan, Chairperson, called the Special Call meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Spangler stated his name was not listed under Adjournment for the May 28, 2020 Board meeting. Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Board meeting held Thursday, May 28, 2020 with the revision. Mrs. Wilson seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Spangler made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Board meeting held Thursday, June 23, 2020. Dr. Ficklin seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the State Election Board (SEB) Emergency Rule 183-1-14-0.6-.14 for securing absentee ballot drop boxes has been extended and will remain effective for the August 11, 2020 runoff election. The rule states 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. Placing a voted absentee ballot into the drop box shall be deemed delivery pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385 and is subject to the limitations on who may deliver a ballot on behalf of an elector. Drop box locations may open beginning 49 days before Election Day and shall close at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, and ballots collected at 7:00 p.m.

1. Mrs. Watson informed the Board that the SEB Emergency Rule 183-1-14-0.7-.15 for early processing of absentee ballots prior to election day has been extended and will remain effective for the August 11, 2020 runoff election. The rule states at 8:00 a.m. on the second Monday prior to Election Day, county election superintendents shall be authorized to begin processing absentee ballots.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Items from the Elections Officer – Tom Gillon
	1. Mr. Gillon provided the Board members with a list of the elected officials who have not turned in their annual Personal Financial Disclosure (PFD) by the July 1st, deadline. The report has been submitted to the Georgia Government Transparency & Campaign Finance Commission (GTCFC) formerly known as the State Ethics Commission (SEC). Mr. Gillon also provided the list of elected officials and/or candidates who have not turned in their June 30th, Campaign Contribution Disclosure Report (CCDR) by the June 8th, standard grace period deadline.
2. Items from the Chief Registrar – Veronica Seals
	1. On July 6, 2020 Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger announced that effective immediately, the voter registration deadline for the August 11, 2020 Primary and Nonpartisan General Runoff Election has been moved to comply with National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) – Federal Law. Georgia voters who have updated their voter registration since the June 9, primary will be eligible to vote in the August 11, runoff election. The voter registration deadline is now July 13, 2020.
		1. July 6 – July 13 voter registrations - **285**
	2. Absentee Voting
		1. Absentee in-person advance voting begins Monday, July 20, 2020
		2. Number of ballots mailed from the elderly & disabled rollover list issue date July 6, 2020 - **9,994**
		3. Returned number of Absentee ballots by mail – **As of July 15th, no mail ballot returns have been processed**
	3. Voter Registration
		1. Active Voters - 1**04,727** Inactive - **9,443** Combined Total – **114,170** *as of July 15, 2020*
	4. ElectioNet Voter Registration Workload (After the July 13, voter registration cutoff)
		1. DDS Department of Driver Services Application to Process – **131**
		2. OLVR – Online Voter Registration Application to Process – **14**
		3. Verification of Pending Voters - **259**
3. Items from Board Members
	1. Ms. Powell asked Mrs. Watson why a project which had been approved by the Board to be implemented some time ago did not happen. Ms. Powell further stated she understood the poll workers would be able to report polling place voter turnout totals every 2 hours electronically from the polls and the information would be made available on the Board of Elections Website. Mrs. Watson stated during a conversation with Ms. Powell prior to the

PPP/General Primary and NP General Election it was explained that after further research the project was not able to move forward due to the county not being able to fulfill the requested

distribution of cell phones to over 31 poll workers and election workers because of costly service requirements; also, due to the roll out challenges the poll workers faced with implementation of all the new voting equipment and many new procedural changes. She further explained that the project was only brought to the Board’s attention as a possibility for a great new tool and was never stated to the Board as moving forward. Mr. Kaplan stated for Mrs. Watson to keep the Board abreast of the outcome from Board discussions.

* 1. Dr. Ficklin requested to have an Executive Session with Mrs. Watson present concerning personnel & poll managers. Mr. Kaplan stated he will arrange for Executive Sessions after the August Election.
	2. Dr. Ficklin stated he spoke with an election’s director in Texas regarding PPE for poll workers. They also provide face shields, goggles, and gowns as well as the most common PPE inclusive of masks, gloves, and hand-sanitizer.
	3. Mr. Kaplan stated he will meet with Mrs. Watson tomorrow regarding providing additional PPE to consist of face shields and gowns. Also, poll workers will be provided masks to provide to the public, for any individual who needs one.
	4. Dr. Ficklin made a motion to require poll workers to wear the provided PPE. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. Mr. William Noland, County Attorney will provide confirmation regarding whether the Board can require poll workers to wear a mask.
1. Items from the Supervisor
	1. Continue with preparation for the August 11, 2020 Nonpartisan General Runoff Election.
	2. Additional Poll Worker training in preparation for the August runoff election was held July 13 – 17.
2. Correspondence
	1. List of elected officials who have not turned in their annual PFD; also includes election officials and/or candidates who have not turned in their CCDR.
	2. Notice of Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger’ s announcement to move the Voter Registration deadline for the August 11th, Primary Runoff Election.
	3. Mrs. Watson will include a copy of Mr. Noland’s response letter to the candidate’s concerning 3 questions raised by the Whitby for Mayor Campaign for the records of this meeting as soon as it becomes available.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Due to the Board’s inability to conduct an Executive Session to discuss attorney client privileged information over the phone during this meeting, Mr. Kaplan stated he would arrange to schedule a meeting for the purpose of executive session discussions.

ADJOURNMENT:

Dr. Ficklin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Wilson seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

***Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson***