MACON-BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

*(HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE)*

OCTOBER 22, 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: Maria Bryant, Macon-Bibb NAACP, Sandy Tharpe, Georgia Women, Carolyn Hargrove, LWV, Peter Taylor, Candace Kortovich,GA Voters Group, Peggy Sakach, Fair Fight, Liz Fabian, Janice Davis, Helen Butler, Elaine Lucas, Commissioner, Elaine Johnson, Alexa Denogall, WGXA News, Juawn Jackson

CALL TO ORDER:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Board meeting held Thursday, August 27, 2020. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Watson requested approval to defer approval of the minutes from the regular Board meeting held Thursday, September 17, 2020 to the November 19, 2020 meeting date. The Board agreed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Dr. Ficklin made a motion to approve the Resolution of the Macon-Bibb County Commission authorizing the Mayor to accept a grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL) in the amount of $557,598 for the Macon-Bibb County Board of Elections, and for other lawful purposes; and to submit the check to the Macon-Bibb County Finance Department for funds to be used as set-forth in Exhibit A and with the legal opinion from Mr. Noland, County Attorney. *(Please see the attachment)*

Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Mrs. Wilson agreed.

1. Mr. Spangler made a motion to approve the Poll Manager Appointments for the November 3, 2020 General and Special Election according to O.C.G.A. 21-2-90. Ms. Powell seconded. Mrs. Wilson, Dr. Ficklin and Mr. Kaplan agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Mrs. Watson requested approval from the Board to reschedule the November 19, 2020 regular Board meeting to Friday, November 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. for the Board to hear any challenges which may occur during the November 3, 2020 General and Special Election. Dr. Ficklin requested for the Board to meet on November 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the grant funds allocation. The Board members agreed.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Kaplan informed the Board of the Official Absentee Ballot Drop Box locations. The official drop boxes are located at: The Macon-Bibb County Board of Elections office and the Bibb County Courthouse. Mr. Kaplan further stated he will contact Dr. Moffett and spearhead getting the 3rd drop box set up.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Items from the Chief Registrar, Veronica Seals *(The ElectioNet registration reporting system is down)*
   1. Voter registration deadline for the November 3, 2020 General/Special Election is October 5
   2. Absentee in-person – Advance voting began on Monday, October 12, 2020
   3. All absentee ballot drop boxes will close at 7:00 p.m. at the close of the polls on election day
   4. **The Online Absentee Ballot Application Portal** is now live and the public can log on to: [https://ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov](https://ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov/) to process their absentee ballot application and it will automatically be submitted to the board of elections office electronically
   5. Absentee in-person – Early Voting Begins Monday, October 12, 2020
      1. Returned Ballots –
      2. Active – **107,934** Inactive – **7,970** Combined Total – **115,904**

as of date: **10/22/2020**

* 1. Mailing of absentee ballots began Wednesday, October 14, 2020.
  2. ElectioNet Voter Registration Dashboard Report
     1. DDS Department Driver Services Applications – **1,249**
     2. OLVR – Online Voter Registration Applications– **638**
     3. Verification of Pending Voters – **48**
     4. Online Absentee Ballot Application Portal – **22**

1. Items from Board Members
   1. Dr. Ficklin made a motion to add the discussion of purchasing a rapid letter opener machine which can be purchased with grant funds. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. Dr. Ficklin made a motion for approval of the purchase of a rapid letter opener with grant funds. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
   2. Dr. Ficklin stated there is a vacant building in Central City Park which may be available to store voting equipment and supplies after the 2020 General Election cycle. After discussion, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to request approval to use that building for storage of elections equipment after the election and during years when no elections are being held. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Spangler, and Mrs. Wilson agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Items from the Supervisor
   1. Preparation for the November 3, 2020 General Election
   2. Prepare budget for grant funds allocation and to include hazard pay in the submission
   3. Attend training webinars for post-election random audits required by the Secretary of State according to HB 316
   4. Prepare for early opening of absentee ballots
   5. The deadline for certification of the November 3, 2020 General & Special Election is Friday, November 13th
   6. Preparation, staffing, and training for additional advance voting locations
   7. Discussion of poll worker forms and recap sheets required to be completed at the close of the polls on election day
   8. Set up a Zoom meeting account.
3. Items from the County Attorney
   1. Mr. Noland rendered the legal opinion that neither he nor Mr. Ryan German, legal counsel for the Secretary of State could identify any legislation that gives the observers or outside organizations any special status to arbitrarily offer and/or render assistance to voters waiting in line. Mr. Noland drafted a policy of rules and guidelines governing the conduct of poll observers for the Board to consider. After discussion, Mr. Spangler made a motion to adopt the rules and guidelines governing conduct of poll observers as it pertains to rendering assistance. The sole purpose of these rules is to protect voters. Dr. Ficklin seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.
   2. Mr. Noland provided the Board with what actions are permissible concerning requiring poll workers use of PPE. After discussion, Dr. Ficklin made a motion to adopt a policy which requires poll workers to wear a mask and offered additional PPE. In addition, the poll workers will be

required to sign a form stating they were offered additional PPE such as shields, gloves, and gowns and opted not to use it. Mr. Spangler seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Ms. Powell agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

* 1. Mr. Noland provided legal opinion concerning hazard pay from grant funds. Mr. Noland stated Poll workers are not county employees and are eligible to receive fixed pay in the form of hazard pay as permitted from the grant funds.

1. Correspondence: (Copies for Board meeting files)
   1. Resolution of the Macon-Bibb County Commission authorizing the Mayor to accept a grant from the Center for Technology and Civic Life awarded to the Board of Elections
   2. List of Poll Manager assignments for the November 3, 2020 General Election
   3. Budget Performance Report
   4. My Voter Page (MVP) Tracking an absentee ballot
   5. Absentee voting (Unofficial & Incomplete voter totals)
   6. Vote review panels and ballot duplication teams
   7. Poll Worker Training

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Spangler made a motion for adjournment at 4:54 p.m. Ms. Powell seconded. Mr. Kaplan, Mrs. Wilson, and Dr. Ficklin agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

***Minutes transcribed by Jeanetta Watson***