

**FAYETTE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
AND VOTER REGISTRATION**

MINUTES

November 26, 2013

Board Members Present: Addison Lester, Chairman
Marilyn Watts

Staff Present: Tom Sawyer, Elections Supervisor
Beverly Westmoreland, Part-Time Election Clerk

Others in Attendance: None

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lester called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. Chairman Lester and Member Watts were present. Member Hicks was absent.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Watts made motion to approve the November 26, 2013 Agenda; Chairman Lester seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

C. HEARING

1. DECEASED VOTERS

Supervisor Sawyer presented the list of the cancelled deceased voters from the Elections List to the Board for approval.

2. FELONS

Supervisor Sawyer presented the list of cancelled and deleted felons from the Elections List to the Board for approval.

(Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that he had sent an email to Sheila Studdard, Clerk of the Courts, trying to get current information updated more timely for this information.)

Member Watts made motion to approve the list of cancelled, deceased voters and the cancelled list of felons. Chairman Lester seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

D. OLD BUSINESS

3. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING BOARD MINUTES:

October 22, 2013 (OCTOBER)

Chairman Lester made motion to approve the October 22, 2013 Minutes. Member Watts seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

E. NEW BUSINESS

4. POLL WORKERS – FAMILY MEMBERS

Supervisor Sawyer brought to the Board's attention that he had been questioned by Member Hicks about there being a conflict of interest regarding his wife, Gail Sawyer, working as a poll worker during the November 5, 2013 election at Precinct # 7. Supervisor Sawyer told the Board he had received approval from Steve Rapson, Fayette County Administrator, for Mrs. Sawyer to work and that Mr. Rapson gave his approval. The need for this position had come up unexpectedly. He also told the Board that that particular precinct did not have any candidates on the ballot; it only had the question about a local option sales tax.

Some further discussion ensued with Chairman Lester saying in the future, this policy should be the exception and not the norm, when it involves a family member of the Supervisor of Elections, being employed as a poll worker. Supervisor Sawyer agreed and said he understood that the perception could be misconstrued.

Discussion continued with the consensus from the Board that this issue was not a problem. The motion was made by Member Watts that this office continue with the same policy it has had in the past as this issue has never been a problem. Chairman Lester seconded. **Motion carried.**

5. OFFICIAL & COMPLETE – November 5, 2013

• RECOUNT – TOWN OF TYRONE – TOWN COUNCIL POST 3

Supervisor Sawyer discussed with the Board the final and complete November 5, 2013 election results. There were no provisional voters nor were there any additional votes that came in. He mentioned there had been a request for a recount for the Town of Tyrone, Council Post # 3, for the race between Pota Coston and Ken Matthews. Member

Watts asked that in the future the Board be notified when recounts are done. Supervisor Sawyer agreed. He said he did notify Ken Matthews, the Councilman who won the seat, along with Bob Ross and they came for the recount. Wayne Kendall who represented the NAACP was also present. The recount proved to be exactly the same with Ken Matthews claiming 50.04% of votes cast.

Member Watts brought up another subject relating to the election night regarding poll watchers. She asked “what can a poll watcher do during election counting?” Her opinion was that was not a poll watcher.

Member Watts went on to explain that a lady was here as a “poll watcher” during election night after the polls had closed and her understanding is that this person could watch but there should not be any kind of conversation from this person during the time election results are being presented to the Board. Member Watts observed that this “poll watcher” asked one of the precinct managers how many people they had had to vote. (She said she did not hear the whole conversation.) The “poll watcher” was told that Pota Coston had won. Member Watts further stated that no one had apparently told this poll watcher that she is not supposed to talk or use her cell phone and she was doing all of that. Member Watts said she is not sure it is in order for this person to be sitting there while they are conducting business. She understands they can be there to watch but there should be no conversation.

Member Watts stated that this poll watcher was given wrong information and should not have been told anything. She reiterated that no results are official at this point of the election and should not be discussed at all.

Chairman Lester stated that the training of poll workers should include this information and that this may need to be re-enforced. Also, training of poll watchers was discussed. Supervisor Sawyer said that he had had a request from Pota Coston that this lady come and observe as results were returned to this office.

There was further discussion that this poll watcher or observer be seated outside of the window when compiling was being done. There could be a misconception by poll workers that everyone in the room was election staff, and that was not the case.

There was some discussion relating to opening of the Commissioners Meeting Room for news media and when this was necessary.

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that during the day of the election he received a phone call from Precinct 10 there was “some guy hanging around out there”. He asked one of the technical staff to go by there to see what was going on was told by the man that he was a monitor. There was no authorization from this office for him to be a monitor on behalf of Pota Coston. The man was trying to direct city voters to go back to the library for the city election. Supervisor Sawyer said he did not see anything wrong with it as long as he was outside.

6. GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION – RUNOFF – MAYOR – PTC

- **ADVANCED VOTING –NOVEMBER 18, 2013 TO NOVEMBER 27, 2013
8:00 A.M TO 5:00 P.M.**

Supervisor Sawyer gave the Board an update on the Advanced Voting at the Peachtree City Library. He said as of the previous day, there had been 1,030 voters.

- **DECEMBER 3, 2013 – 6:30 P.M.**

The Board decided to meet back at the office at 6:30 p.m. on December 3, 2013 for the Peachtree City Run-off election.

7. CANCEL REGULARLY SCHEDULED DECEMBER MEETING DECEMBER 24, 2013

Chairman Lester made motion to cancel the December 24, 2013 Board of Election meeting. Member Watts seconded. **Motion carried.**

8. REDISTRICTING

- **TRAINING – ELECTION-NET – NOVEMBER 18, 2013**

Supervisor Sawyer updated the Board about a training class on redistricting the office had attended on November 18, 2013 in Macon, Ga. He further stated that whatever changes need to be done should be ready by February, 2014.

9. HB 143 – TRAINING – DECEMBER 10, 2013 – CHEROKEE ELECTIONS OFFICE

Supervisor Sawyer told the Board that there will be a training class on HB 143, the new ethics bill, to be held in Cherokee County Elections office on December 10, 2013. He plans for himself and Brenda Jones from this office to attend. There will be another meeting in January, 2014 to discuss this with all the elected officials here in the County. Webinars will be held for the elected officials and it's on the ACCG's website.

10. COMBINED CONFERENCE – GEOA/VRAG-MARCH 30 - APRIL 2, 2014

The Board discussed the combined GEOA/VRAG conference to be held March 30 through April 2, 2014 in Augusta, GA. They will start taking reservation on February 3,

2014. Supervisor Sawyer told the Board he will attend a planning meeting on December 12-13, 2013 for this conference.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Lester asked if there was any other business. There was none.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

H. OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no other items for consideration.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Lester moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:35 p.m. Member Watts seconded. **Motion carried.**

The next Board meeting will be January 28, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.