

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Darryl Hicks, Chairman
Addison Lester
Aaron Wright

FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Floyd L Jones, Director
Leigh Combs, Registrar
April Crosby, Elections Supervisor



140 Stonewall Avenue West
Public Meeting Room
Fayetteville, GA 30214

MINUTES

October 24, 2017
6:15 p.m.

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Elections. Your participation is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman to Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Hicks called the October 24, 2017 Board of Elections meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Board member Addison Lester was not present for the meeting, however, he joined the meeting through telephone.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Wright moved to approve the Agenda as published. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester not being present for the vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No one spoke during Public Comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consideration of staff's request to approve the September 26, 2017 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Wright moved to approve the September 26, 2017 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester not being present for the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING:

2. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased.

No one spoke in favor of or in opposition to this matter.

Mr. Wright moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester not being present for the vote. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 1," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

3. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons.

Director Jones reported that the felons list was much longer than usual due to information provided from the State of Georgia. He further reported that the state had sent a series of emails indicating there were problems with the felon list it provided. He informed the Board that the state had finally provided an email indicating the problems had been resolved. Based on that information, letters were sent to those on the felons list informing them of their new voter status. Mr. Jones stated that after the letter was sent out, a new email was issued from the state indicating there were more problems with the felons list and that some of those where were mailed letters were actually not supposed to be on the felon list. Mr. Jones further informed the Board that the Elections Office had just received a letter from an attorney stating his client was notified of his felon status but that the client was not a felon. Mr. Jones pointed out that this was a statewide issue and not one solely concerning Fayette County. He stated that the felon list could either be tabled or that it could be approved with an understanding that those who claim they are not felons can vote on a provisional ballot in order to allow staff to research their status.

Discussion followed in an effort to get clarity on the matter at hand.

Assistant County Attorney Patrick Stough added that he read the letter from the attorney but there was not enough information to determine whether or not the attorney's claim that his client was not a felon was accurate.

It was also noted that the state was expecting the county to issue apology letters to those who incorrectly received a letter concerning their felon status. The sample letter provided by the state gave strong implication that it was the county's mistake. The Board and Mr. Jones emphasized that the wording of the letter would be massaged in order to show that the letters were based on erroneous information provided by the State of Georgia.

No one else spoke in favor of or in opposition to this matter.

Mr. Wright moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Elector's List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester not being present for the vote. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 2," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

Chairman Hicks asked for staff to make a reply to the attorney about his claim.

CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no items on the Consent Agenda.

OLD BUSINESS:

4. Consideration of staff's recommendation to adopt the Fayette County Board of Elections By-laws. This item was tabled at the August 29, 2017 Board of Elections meeting and at the September 26, 2017 Board of Elections meeting.

Discussion from the Board occurred about whether or not to table this matter until the full Board was present to vote on the By-laws. It was pointed out that there are currently By-laws in place, but that the next time a full Board would meet would be in January 2018.

Mr. Lester stated he was in favor of the proposed changes to the By-laws as written and presented in the Agenda, and he had no problem with the Board approving the By-laws in his absence.

Assistant Attorney Patrick Stough pointed out that the changes to the proposed By-laws were written in red. Chairman Hicks read Chapter III of the By-laws into the record.

Mr. Lester mentioned that the By-laws need to be addressed each year and it was noted they will be placed on each February Agenda. Mr. Lester repeated that he supported the approval of the By-laws through conference call even though he would not be able to vote on the By-laws due to his absence.

Mr. Wright moved to approve By-laws as revised on September 26, 2017. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester being absent from the vote. Copies of the request and By-laws, identified as "Attachment 3," follow these minutes and are made an official part hereof.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Consideration of staff's recommendation to adopt the Calendar Year 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Schedule.

Mr. Wright moved to approve the Calendar Year 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Schedule. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester not being present for the vote.

It was then observed that the March meeting date had the incorrect time and a notation that the meeting would be to certify an election.

Mr. Wright moved to amend the Calendar Year 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Schedule to remove the notation about certifying an election and to correct the meeting time from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester being absent from the vote. A copy of the request with the amended meeting schedule, identified as "Attachment 4," follow these minutes and are made an official part hereof.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

There was no Director's Report.

ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

There was no Attorney's Report.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

Update on Numbers of Voters: Mr. Lester asked if there were updated numbers of voters available who had voted in the ongoing election. Director Jones reported that he had numbers from Monday but had not seen Tuesday's numbers prior to the meeting.

Consolidation of Precincts: Mr. Wright asked if there was a willingness of the Board to consolidate precincts barring an election in March since there could be a considerable amount of time between the November election and primaries in 2018.

Director Jones stated that staff would do as directed by the Board but he understood that there were two issues that prevented consolidation during the summer: a compressed time frame and a desire to build a better relationship with the Board of Education.

Chairman Hicks suggested that the conversations with the Board of Education should resume after the November elections and that there would have to be community conversations as well. He further asked for staff to look at a timeline to see if the consolidation could take place in the spring while causing as little disruption to the primary as possible. Mr. Wright stated that the conversation could start immediately after the election with the hope of getting the administrative portion of consolidation taken care of early.

Mr. Lester stated that the Board of Education had set the calendar without including the Board of Elections in the calendar. Mr. Wright indicated that the Board of Education's staff had general questions but the concerns were not deal-breakers.

Chairman Hicks stated a conversation needed to happen. Mr. Wright stated it would be good to get the information to see if it could be done as early as possible.

Mr. Lester added that if the consolidation is not done now then it would be several years down the road. Chairman Hicks stated he was getting the sense that staff was not supportive of consolidating in the spring if possible. Director Jones replied that he was trying to convey any resistance to the effort since he agreed this could be a good time to do consolidation. He only wanted to make sure it was done right.

There was some discussion about possibilities for extended voting hours.

Running Project List. Mr. Wright stated he and Director Jones had an off-line conversation about a running project list. He asked if the list had been compiled for presentation to the Board. Director Jones replied he had not compiled the list since his intent was to bring an end of the year report at the November meeting. Mr. Lester added that the Board members needed to be aware not to provide instruction to staff. He clarified that he did not mean to say instruction had been given, but he wanted to make sure that the understanding was conveyed.

Security in the Elections Office: Mr. Wright asked Director Jones if he had spoken to the County Administrator about security for the Elections Office. Director Jones replied he had not had a chance to hold that conversation. Additional conversation followed on this matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Wright moved to adjourn the October 24, 2017 Board of Elections meeting. Chairman Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Lester being absent from the meeting.

The October 24, 2017 Board of Elections meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Floyd L. Jones, Director

Darryl Hicks, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Elections of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 13th day of November 2017. Referenced attachments are available upon request in the Board of Elections' Office.

Floyd L. Jones, Director