

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Zach Livsey, Chairperson
Sharlene Alexander, Vice Chairperson
Beverly Daniel, Member



FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Brieanna Garrett, Director
Malcolm Unvala, Registrar
Vacant, Elections Supervisor

175 Johnson Ave., Suite B
Fayetteville, GA 30214

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2026

1:00 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.

1. CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Motion made by Board Member Daniel, seconded by Vice Chair Alexander, to accept the June 23, 2026, Agenda for the Regular Board meeting. Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Speakers will be given a five (5) minute maximum time limit to speak before the Board of Elections about various topics, issues, and concerns. Speakers must direct comments to the Board. Responses are reserved at the direction of the Board.

Hello everybody. My name is Tonya Stai and I am a Fayette County resident. I'm the current DPG County Liaison for Voter Protection and I manage the Poll Watcher program on the Fayette Democrat side of things. I'm very new, but it's been a crash course and I'm learning. I have a couple of observations, and keep in mind that I showed up 24 hours early for a meeting, so I have my own struggles with keeping dates and times straight. So, this is not casting aspersions or stones, but just a call to action to see what we could do to improve communication of panels and meetings. I know that the office works hard to keep things as up to date as they can, but I wonder if there is just a more instantaneous way to inform the public of changes to the schedule. I know that some of these panels are limited to certain numbers of people and that not all meetings and panels are open to the public, but that doesn't mean that the public maybe shouldn't be aware of them? Maybe they would take more of an interest in the process and then we'd have more volunteers and all of that. One recent example, which I know you all have addressed, but you all know about the Risk-Limiting Audit mismatch of times. My second comment is that I wanted to follow up in May in which another public speaker made some comments about ADA access in the viewing area for the ballot monitoring. I was wondering if anything came of that or if there were any attempts to make it easier for people who need mobility devices or whatnot to see since the window is very high up and you're standing to see it. I think that's it, just thank you for all that you do and thank you for your patience with me as I learn this too. I appreciate you.

Good afternoon, my name is Philip Thomas, and I am a Fayette County resident. I was a tabulation observer for the ACLU on the May 19th Primary and I was a poll watcher credentialed by the Democratic Party for tabulation on the June 16th Runoff. On June 16th, I ran into a major issue, I was denied access that I was entitled to as a credentialed poll watcher/ballot observer under OCGA 21-2-408 and also SEB Rule 183-1-1-13-

.05 both to the computer room and to the check-in area of the tabulation center/elections office. I would like to emphasize the importance of poll watchers/observers and election transparency, especially in these current times, and that legally barring observers only raises more questions and concerns about our elections. It's important that the Board and all elections staff follow the law, but it's even more important that they understand that observers and watchers are there in order to safeguard the integrity of elections and to closely observe all processes that happen. Elections, tabulation of election results, and all processes that constitute such things should not be some closely guarded secret, they should be completely transparent. I'm not necessarily claiming that any staff are doing anything malicious in secret, but I do think it is important that there are eyes that aren't explicitly under the control of the elections office on every single process of the election. Once again, these elections are supposed to be transparent, and if members of the general public aren't allowed to get a very close view of it, which I personally disagree with, the next best thing are credentialed observers from parties or candidates. I know that there might be some that disagree that every process should be closely monitored, and that's quite concerning as that only raises more questions and suspicions that something nefarious or untoward is going on. If there are indeed problems that occur in the election or its processes, it's important that extra eyes are on such things. When I was rudely denied access to both the computer room and check-in area, the individual doing so also brought up a request that I made at the previous certification meeting, where I suggested that there be TV screens in the public viewing area to allow the general public to be able to know what's happening in the computer room. This individual, seemingly speaking on behalf of the Board, the collective superintendent, bluntly denied this request and disturbingly insinuated that the processes that I sought to observe were for their and their staff's eyes only and not for the eyes of anyone else. This was very disturbing because these elections do not belong to the elections office or its staff, they belong to the people of the county and are funded by our taxpayer dollars. Transparency should be an obligation, especially when the law requires it, as in my case as a credentialed observer. I made it clear when conversing with this person that the areas available to the public were not sufficient to adequately observe all processes of tabulation and that I was entitled to more access, but was rudely denied as I already stated, with her claiming that my presence in the room observing would constitute interference. This was likely an attempt to scare me and shut down any further discussion. It's very disturbing that it seems that, at least according to the elections office, scrutiny of election processes is considered something that should be avoided. If no personally identifiable information of voters connecting them to which choices they made is involved in the processes sought to be observed, there shouldn't be all these restrictions and secrecy. I would like to remind the Board that they ought to ensure that everyone who serves under them is polite and respectful when interacting with members of the public or credentialed observers and allows them to have the access to areas to which they are entitled and if there is a problem, to make it clear what problem exists in a polite, non-snappy manner and to actually listen to the concerns voiced by the other party. All staff members should be respectful and polite, and not rude, snarky, or otherwise unprofessional. I would also like to say to the Board that if those that serve under them are not following the law or are otherwise being unpleasant, the Board as the collective superintendent should step in to resolve any issues in order to ensure that the laws are being followed and that members of the public who are partisan observers are being treated in a respectful manner. I know that there are good people present on the Board and it would be a shame if the actions and behavior of those that the Board has charged with running elections ends up tainting the Board's overall reputation. Once again, transparent elections are exceptionally important to our county, our state, and our country. It's important that the Board take actions to ensure that elections and all processes surrounding elections are transparent and that appropriate access is given to observers. I hope that come November, these issues that I and others have described are adequately resolved. Thank you.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

A. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 22, 2026, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Motion made by Board Member Daniel, seconded by Vice Chair Alexander to accept the May 22, 2026, Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 22, 2026, SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES

Motion made by Board Member Daniel, seconded by Vice Chair Alexander to accept the May 22, 2026, Special Called Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. CERTIFICATION OF THE JUNE 16, 2026, GENERAL PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION

Chairman Livsey discussed how the Board and the Elections office learned from the oversight of the past election making the June Runoff smoother and more like the typical elections administered in Fayette County and highlighted how the shorter lines, adequate machine count, and empowerment of staff reflected the Board's continuous commitment to improvement.

Chairman Livsey recognized that this was the first ever election cycle where the entirety of the office building was able to be used and that the new public viewing room was designed to accommodate Georgia laws and State Elections Board rules.

Director Garrett reported that for the June 16th General Primary Runoff, Fayette County saw a total of 18,385 ballots cast, 9,504 of them being Election Day Voters, 8,480 of them being Advance Voting voters, 398 of them being Absentee by Mail voters, and 3 of them being provisional voters, resulting in a 20% turnout.

Motion made by Board Member Daniel, seconded by Vice-Chair Alexander to Certify the June 16, 2026 General Primary Runoff Election. Motion carried.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Public Hearing of staff's challenges to remove Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as Deceased, Mentally Incompetent, Cancelled or Felon as well as precinct and/or polling location changes. (As Needed)

Director Garrett reported that since the May Board of Elections meeting, 113 voters have been removed: 77 Deceased, 7 Felons, 1 Mentally Incompetent, and 28 Cancelled.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Garrett reported that as of June 23rd, 2026, there are 99,359 registered voters in Fayette County, with 92,776 of those voters being active.

Director Garrett announced that the Risk-Limiting Audit for the June 16th Primary is scheduled for Friday, June 26th at 9:30 AM at the Fayette County Health Department and explained that it's better for the Vote Review Panel to arrive 30 minutes to an hour after the audit's start time when their presence is needed.

Director Garrett announced that the recount for the May 19th General Primary Election PSC District 5 Republican contest is scheduled to begin 10:00 on June 24th in the Fayette County Elections Office and will continue daily until completion.

Director Garrett announced the arrival of new summer interns who will work with office staff to implement long-term projects that target facility changes, poll worker enhancement, and voter outreach and education.

Director Garrett asserted that during Election Night, there is no secrecy in the office and that all staff are polite, kind, respectful, and available.

Director Garrett implored the public and party leaders to stay engaged with the Fayette County Elections Office during the election off-season to learn about election processes so they no longer seem foreign and that an understanding of the difference between privacy and secrecy is reinforced.

Director Garrett explained that the public viewing room was tested to ensure that you could hear and see everything going on in the tabulation room but expressed that she had not reviewed ADA compliancy and will circle back to it in the next meeting.

Director Garrett described how she communicates to parties, stating that she mainly communicates to the Party Chair and allows them to disseminate the information she gave to other party officials.

Director Garrett mentioned that the party officials she has been in contact with have been very easy and open to communicate with, acknowledging Tonya Stai's positive conduct during this cycle.

9. ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

There was no attorney report.

10. BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS:

Chairman Livsey extended a welcome to Board Member Daniel, describing her as a dedicated and experienced public servant who he is overjoyed to have on the Board.

Board Member Daniel expressed her excitement to serve on the Fayette County Board of Elections by learning all she can about the Board and collaborating with the other members and the Director to ensure smooth running elections.

Vice Chair Alexander conveyed her thankfulness to have somebody who worked at the office end up serving on the Board, describing it as an opportunity for both Vice Chair Alexander and Chairman Livsey to learn more about office processes.

Vice Chair Alexander explained that although there were machine issues on the June 16th Runoff, they were not due to any fault of elections staff but resulted from the extensive use of the machinery, and she emphasized that frequent machine issues are unacceptable because they cause the voters to lose confidence in the election process.

Vice Chair Alexander thanked the election office staff and poll workers for their hard work during the primary and its runoff election

Chairman Livsey expressed his gratitude for elections staff who give out complete answers to issues and make it so that most machine issues don't affect or discourage any voters.

Chairman Livsey explained that the Board is dedicated to receiving feedback and using it to implement solutions, but noted strict laws and the tense environment surrounding elections prevent the Board from saying "yes" to everything, while reiterating the complexity of election processes and imploring the public to do more to learn about them.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (as necessary for litigation & personnel)

12. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Vice Chair Alexander to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:31 P.M.

Brieanna Garrett, Director

Zachary Livsey, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Elections of Fayette County Georgia, held on the 28th day of July 2026.