



**FULTON
COUNTY**

APPROVED MINUTES

BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 13, 2018

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Thursday, December 13, 2018, at 10:00 a.m., in Assembly Hall of the The Government Center Building, 141 Pryor Street, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

Presiding: Ms. Mary Carole Cooney, Chairperson

Other Board Members Present: Mr. Aaron Johnson, Vice-Chairperson
Mr. Mark Wingate
Ms. Vernetta K. Nuriddin
Mr. David Burge

Staff Attending: Mr. Richard Barron, Director; Mr. Ralph Jones, Registration Chief; Mrs. Pamela Coman, Registration Manager; Ms. Brenda McCloud, Administrative Manager; Ms. Breana Jenkins, Administrative Specialist; Mr. David Lowman, Staff Attorney; Ms. Cheryl Ringer, Senior Attorney; Jessica Corbitt, PIO & Director of External Affairs; April Majors, Public Affairs Manager

Guests Attending: David Ross (Georgia Democratic Party), Foris Webb III (City of Atlanta), Edward Leidelmeijer (BOC), Amanda Mickelsen

#1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Cooney entertained a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Wingate and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

#2– COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RESPONSE

None

#3– REMOVAL OF NAMES FROM VOTER LIST DUE TO FELONY CONVICTIONS

Ms. Coman presented the November Felon Report to the Board that was transmitted by the State and recommended the removal of 2,011 names. Letters were mailed; however, no responses were received

Chairperson Cooney entertained a motion to approve the removal of 2,011 names from the voters list. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Ms. Nuriddin and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

#4– APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Special Meeting – November 6, 2018**
- **Regular Meeting- November 8, 2018**
- **Executive Session – November 8, 2018**
- **Special Meeting – November 20, 2018**
- **Executive Session – November 20, 2018**

A motion to approve all the meeting minutes from the Regular meeting, Special meetings, and Executive Sessions in the month of November 2018. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a vote of 4-1; Mr. Burge.

Mr. Burge objected to the approval of November 13, 2018 special meeting minutes because he was present at that meeting, although the minutes indicate he was absent.

Mr. Johnson proposed a correction to the minutes to reflect Mr. Burge's presence at the November 13, 2018.

- **Special Meeting – November 13, 2018**

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the Special meeting on November 13, 2018 corrected to reflect Mr. Burge's presence. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Nuriddin and carried by a vote of 4-1.

#5– MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2018

Mr. Barron highlighted Voter Registration numbers, personnel, election, and administrative related issues:

- 23,471 voter registration applications received in November
- The total number of voter registration applications received in 2018 - 322,444
- As of December 1st, **770,772** (707,005 active and 63,767 inactive) registered voters reside in Fulton County
- A legal hold remains on the DRE voting units from the April 18, 2017 and June 20, 2017 6th Congressional Special Election and Runoff Special Election
- Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) have been completed and submitted to Municipalities for a March 2019 Election
- Early Voting countywide survey cards- 44,525
 - 93.99% Very Satisfied
 - 5.71% Satisfied
 - .30% Dissatisfied
- Seven Judicial orders rendered during the General and Special Election and the General Runoff Election

Mr. Wingate inquired about the number of voters registered in Fulton County and the number of applications this year, and questioned if the numbers should be higher

Mr. Barron mentioned that the applications are not based solely on people, but to changes made by voters in and out of the county

Ms. Nuriddin expressed her excitement regarding the number of registered voters in the county, and she inquired about what the department is doing to get the additional help that is needed by hiring temporary or permanent staff

Mr. Barron informed the **BRE** that this information was presented during the budget hearing and The Budget Commission received all the metrics for the needs of the department to provide the department with adequate staffing of fulltime permanent or fulltime temporary staff

Ms. Nuriddin implored the **BRE** to reach out to their perspective parties to get some assistance with receiving more staff in the department. **Ms. Nuriddin** inquired about the processing of voter registration applications through an automated system

Mr. Barron stated that would have to be implemented statewide by the Secretary of State's office

Chairperson Cooney requested information regarding being able to attend a Public Budget Hearing for the proposed 2019 budget.

Ms. Corbitt explained that the Public Budget Meetings have concluded and the alternative would be to attend the next BOC meeting where the 2019 Budget will be discussed

Mr. Wingate inquired about the number of absentee ballot received by the postmarked date of December 4th and received by December 7th

Mr. Jones stated approximately 1,200 ballots

#6-REVIEW OF RECENT ELECTION CYCLE ISSUES – RICHARD BARRON

Mr. Barron informed the **BRE** that he met with staff regarding issues that occurred during this election cycle and resolutions for the department to implement for future elections

Absentee by Mail and Provisional Voting: **Mr. Barron** informed the **BRE** that the website will have an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), to assist voters, early voting staff will be trained to process rejected ballots, and the department will enter this information in ElectioNet (new policy). **Mr. Barron** wants to ensure that via the website, voters will have access information in real time.

Poll Watchers Encouraging Voters to Vote Provisionally: **Mr. Barron** informed the **BRE** that he understands that poll watchers are attempting to help the voter; however, Georgia Election Code mandates that voters must vote in their assigned precinct. **Mr. Barron** stated one resolution will be to identify a government facility to provide Early Voting near the Atlanta University Center (AUC), for Archer Hall at Morehouse College and Booker T. Washington High School. **Mr. Barron** also mentioned that the VEO (Voter Education and Outreach) Team will set-up a booth and provide students with factual information on voting and the upcoming election

Public Comments: **Mr. Barron** mentioned that once the department investigates the comments that are made and all the facts are presented, the department finds that the vast majority of the problems related to absentee ballots were because the public neglected or forgot to complete the process. **Mr. Barron** mentioned a public speaker who stated during public comment that her daughter's (out of the country) absentee ballot was not counted, but the department later found out that the daughter gave her ballot to a Voter group that dropped the ballot at the US Embassy. The voter did not put the ballot in the mail. **Mr. Barron** stated that the department cannot take responsibility for the voter's actions or inactions

Secretary of State's Office: **Mr. Barron** informed the **BRE** that there have been a large number of complaints from voters in and out to the county expressed about the Secretary of State's office policies and procedures.

Mr. Wingate asked can the information that will be added to the website be added to the Head of Household letter

Mr. Barron stated that it could be added; however, it will lengthen the letter and he is unsure if voters will continue to read

Ms. Nuriddin mentioned that one of the challenges with the AUC campuses is that the students move off campus, but will return to vote because they voted there in previous Election Cycles. The issue is if that student has gone to DDS at any point before an election, their voter registration may change and that student may be unaware.

Mr. Johnson referenced a previous **BRE** meeting regarding voter's information being updated by DDS, and that there should be a precinct card sent to the voter's new address. **Mr. Johnson** mentioned that he knows that this would be a challenge for the department, especially for voters that move out of county.

Mr. Barron informed the **BRE** that the department has to use a government building for early voting; however, on Election Day, any facility can be used as long as it is ADA compliant. **Mr. Barron** stated that if he could change any law, that it would be to remove some restrictions on the types of facilities that have been mandated

Mr. Johnson requested a section to be added to the Department's monthly report pertaining to responses to Public Comments

Mr. Barron stated that it will be included in future reports

Mr. Burge inquired about a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) facility on the AUC campuses that the department could potentially use as an Early Voting location. **Mr. Burge** addressed the issues that provisional voting has presented to the department and voters

Mr. Wingate asked does the department require the poll managers to submit a Post-Election Report

Mr. Barron states No

#7- INCREASING NUMBER OF POLLING LOCATIONS IN ADVANCE OF 2020 ELECTION CYCLE

Mr. Barron informed the **BRE** of the department's goal to increase the number of polling locations in advance of the 2020 Election Cycle. **Mr. Barron** informed the **BRE** that the department currently has **183** polling locations. **Mr. Barron** mentioned that the ongoing challenge is with the library renovation schedule, as well as polling locations no longer wanting to host polling operations. **Mr. Barron** informed the **BRE** of a location that has over 5,600 registered voters that declined to continue being used as a polling location. **Ms. Barron** stated that the library renovations and changing polling location was another complaint. Unfortunately, some of the renovations have been delayed, and voters are questioning why their polling location was moved, although the library is not being renovated.

Mr. Johnson inquired about the largest number of polling locations in the county to Mr. Barron's knowledge

Mr. Barron stated he believes there were **267**

#8- REVIEW OF PROCESS FOR ANNUAL EVALUATION OF ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

Chairperson Cooney presented the **BRE** with information to complete an assessment of **Mr. Barron's** work performance along with some directives and the timeline for completion. **Chairperson Cooney** requested **Mr. Barron** to submit a self-assessment report of his performance; this report is expected to be completed on December 25, 2018

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairperson Cooney entertained a motion to close regular session and convene into executive session to discuss personnel matters and pending litigation. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

After executive session, **Chairperson Cooney entertained a motion to resume into regular session. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

ADJOURNMENT

With no other items requiring the Board's action, **Chairperson Cooney entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Burge seconded the motion.** Collectively, the Board agreed to adjourn at 11:28 a.m.

The meeting adjourned.

Prepared by,

Mariska Bodison, Board Secretary