

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD
OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS
DEKALB COUNTY
March 21, 2016**

The DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections convened to conduct a called meeting on March 21, in the Pollworker Training area at 4380 Memorial Drive with Board Chair Samuel Tillman presiding.

Present: Michael Coveny, Board Member
 Leona Perry, Board Member
 Baoky Vu, Board Member
 Maxine Daniels, Director
 Mary Frances Weeks, Administrative Assistant
 Bennett Bryan, Assistant County Attorney
 Viviane Ernstes, Deputy County Attorney

Mr. Tillman called the meeting to order at approximately 4:35 PM. He then asked for approval of the agenda. A motion was made by Ms. Perry to adopt the agenda. Mr. Vu seconded the motion. Mr. Tillman stated the motion was made and seconded. The question was called and the motion was approved.

Comments from the Public

Ms. Angela Patrick stated that she lives in Stone Mountain and is a longtime member of the DeKalb County NAACP. Ms. Patrick wished to encourage the Board move forward as quickly as possible to hold a Special Election for the recently vacated Commission District 7 Seat to prevent another lengthy deadlock on the Board of Commissioners.

Call for Commission District 7 Special Election

Ms. Daniels stated that the Board has been provided in their packets with several items relating to this Special Election including a copy of Code Section 21-2-540. Ms. Daniels explained that it is too late for the Special Election to be held in conjunction with May 24 General Primary Election; however, the law does allow for a “stand alone” election to be held at the same time. Also, included in the packet is the definition of a “stand alone” election and the ramifications thereof in this particular case. Ms. Daniels explained each issue associated with the “stand alone” election, including the additional cost to the county of approximately \$400,000. She then compared it to waiting and having the Special Election in November in conjunction with the General Election, whereby the process would be practically transparent with no additional staffing, equipment or cost. Taking everything into consideration, it is the recommendation of staff that the Commission District 7 Special Election be held in conjunction with the November 8 General Election. A motion was made by Mr. Vu to uphold staff recommendation for calling the Commission District 7 Special Election to be held in conjunction with the General Election. Ms. Perry seconded the motion. Mr. Tillman stated the motion was made and seconded. The question was called and the motion was unanimously approved.

Challenge of Sarah Copelin-Wood's Candidacy for School Board District 3

Mr. Tillman asked if Ms. Copelin-Wood or anyone representing her were present, and no one stepped forward. After being sworn in by Attorney Viviane Ernstes, Ms. Daniels testified the Ms. Wood had been notified of the hearing by mail to her home address, her post office box, e-mail address and by personal telephone call. Ms. Daniels explained the Ms. Copelin-Wood appeared at our office to qualify as a candidate for School Board on the last day of qualifying shortly before the end of the qualifying period. She completed paperwork; however, when making the payment she only had copies of her check, but insisted that was what the bank had given her. She was informed that was not acceptable and that since it was now after 12:00 Noon, if she left she would be unable to qualify. In the meantime, she contacted her daughter to bring cash which she did at approximately 12:20 PM. Rather than denying her at the time, the matter is being brought before the Board to be decided. Since at the 12:00 PM cutoff time Ms. Copelin-Wood did not have the qualifying funds, staff recommends her candidacy be denied and the money returned to her. A motion was made by Mr. Coveny to uphold staff recommendation to disqualify Ms. Copelin-Wood and to return her qualifying fee. Ms. Perry seconded the motion. Mr. Tillman stated the motion was made and seconded. The question was called and the motion was unanimously approved.

Comments from the Board

Ms. Perry extended her thanks to the department for allowing both Parties to qualify their candidates at this location. She stated it was a much easier transaction for all concerned. This will continue to be an option for the Parties in the future.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Mary Frances Weeks, Administrative Assistant
Registration and Elections