

DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Regular Meeting Minutes

November 30, 2020

*via zoom platform

Start Time: 4:30 p.m.

End Time: :00 p.m.

Board Attendees: Vice-Chair Baoky Vu
Dele Lowman Smith
Anthony Lewis
Susan Motter

Other Attendees: Erica Hamilton, Director
Viviane Ernstes, County Attorney
Terry Phillips, Deputy County Attorney
Irene Vander Els, Assistant County Attorney
Shelley Momo, Assistant County Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Vu called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Ms. Smith added approval of Profile HR Marketing contract to the agenda. Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Ms. Motter to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Phillips read the rules for public comment.

Public comment may be submitted by sending an email of one page or less to Electionspubliccmnt@dekalbcountyga.gov which must be received between 8:30 AM and 9:00 AM on the day of the meeting. The body of your email must include your first and last name, followed by your address. Abusive, profane, or derogatory language will not be permitted. By submitting an email for public comment, you agree to have your name, address and the email broadcast on the UStream and entered into the record and minutes. The DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections reserves the right, at the DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections' sole discretion, to (1) add your email to the record/minutes without reading any of it into the broadcast or (2) read all or a portion of your email into the record/minutes. The Public Comments received are attached and hereby incorporated into these minutes by reference. See attachment(s).

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Larry Johnson provided an update on the Civic Life Grant and reported that some poll workers have not been paid. Also, Commissioner Larry Johnson asked for an update on absentee ballots.

NEW BUSINESS

A) Profile HR Marketing Contract

Mr. Phillips summarized the activities listed in the contract. In short, the term has been extended and the amount of hours purchased by the Board have been increased.

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Ms. Motter to approve the amended contract with Profile PR Marketing. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

B) Recount Update

Ms. Hamilton reported that all ballots have been scanned. There will be a review to make sure all ballots have been scanned. The expectation is that staff will complete this process today.

The Board discussed the deadline for this process and under what circumstances the Board will meet if the number of votes change for purposes of recertifying after the recount.

C) Departmental Staffing & Operations Update

Ms. Smith addressed recent departmental and administrative issues such as payroll issues, untimely posting of agendas and meeting minutes, and the need for a COO.

Ms. Hamilton discussed steps the department has taken to resolve some of the issues. Primarily, new employees have been hired to help with the day-to-day operations so that Ms. Hamilton can oversee management operations.

Ms. Motter discussed how Mr. Tillman has voluntarily taken on more responsibilities as though he is a department employee and expressed the need for the department to be more accountable to the Board.

Mr. Lewis discussed chain of custody procedure for materials being moved around and inquired about having signatures before and after every stop with respect to drop boxes.

D) January 5th Runoffs Early Voting Locations & Hours

Ms. Hamilton is working to establish holiday hours for all early voting locations. Ms. Motter asked that Jay forward the finalized list of locations/hours to the Board.

Ms. Smith suggested that early voting hours be consistent with the November election for non-holiday dates and weekends. Additionally, Ms. Smith requested a list of sites that have been confirmed for early voting.

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Ms. Motter to approve the hours of 7AM to 7PM on weekdays, 9AM to 6PM on Saturdays, and 12PM to 6PM on Sundays for each weekend of early voting, and to close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve for the January 5 Runoff Early Voting locations. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

- Board members discussed staff members and poll workers working long hours on the weekends and the possibility of breaking it up into shifts.

Motion by Ms. Motter and seconded by Ms. Smith to approve confirmed voting locations, with the exception of City of Atlanta Cohn, Brookhaven, and House of Hope. The Board authorizes Ms. Hamilton to finalize the remaining three locations. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

E) January 5th Runoffs Absentee Voting Update (including NVAHI)

Ms. Smith recommended having drop boxes at each of the advanced early voting sites. Ms. Ernstes advised there are video footage requirements that should be reviewed and considered before the Board moves forward with this recommendation.

The Board discussed having a DeKalb County drop box at the Kirkwood Library in Fulton County.

- Mr. Phillips explained that the Board would need to enter into an intergovernmental agreement to place a drop box at that location with proper authorization.
- Ms. Ernstes commented that there may be some confusion on the part of Fulton County electors

Ms. Hamilton reported that per the State Board of Elections it is now mandatory for the county to start opening and scanning ballots the week prior to the election.

F) Communications Update

Mr. Burton has prepared a press release for the recount and provided an update on translations. Additionally, Mr. Burton stressed the importance of communicating/educating voters about absentee voting and utilizing other resources during the pandemic.

G) Future Meeting Dates

As of today, there is no need for a meeting to recertify the recount results.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

See attachment(s).

BOARD COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Ms. Motter to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

Public Comments (7)

Public Comment #1

Good afternoon Dekalb County Board of Registration & Elections,

My name is Alpresia Pressley, a resident of Dekalb County. (4099 Woodridge Way, Tucker GA 30084).

I have several questions relating to payment of the poll workers:

1. When will the poll workers be paid who worked the early voting elections in October for the Nov 3rd election.? Election day workers have been paid.
2. If we work the early elections in Deceember for the January run-off, when will we be paid?
3. Who do we contact if there is another issue with being paid? Name and number please.

The questions are due to the round around many have received but no specific response. Last told (11/24/20) an estimated pay date of two to three weeks.

Thank you - Alpresia Pressley

Public Comment #2

Rachel Kachur
4005 Menlo Drive
Atlanta, GA 30340

It would be very helpful if the Board could create an email listserve that would notify County residents of these special meetings. Also, it would be helpful if an agenda could be provided at the same time that the meeting is announced.

Thank you,

Rachel

Public Comment #3

Dear Board Members:

Georgians are deeply divided about the integrity of our latest election. 70% of Republicans reportedly don't believe the presidential election was "free and fair" and think ballot tampering probably occurred. Not only must elections be fair, they must be run in a way that the public can recognize as fair. Computerized voting equipment will never meet this standard. January's true election outcomes can never be known, verified, or defended if we stick with digital voting, and will provoke controversy for years.

Luckily, the simplicity of the January 5 ballot lends itself to using hand marked paper ballots for in-person voting. The short, single ballot style could be counted on optical scanners, and robust transparent post-election audits on all three races could verify the outcome for all.

- **No new equipment or training is required**, just pens instead of complex touchscreens, printers, and mysterious QR codes. Polling places are already required to have sufficient provisional emergency paper ballots on hand to be used when the equipment fails or wait times exceed 30 minutes. Poll workers are required to be trained to issue these hand marked ballots, identical to absentee ballots.
- **Hand marked ballots are secure**. Computers invite mischief and errors, particularly as governments are being hit with malware attacks. The hand marked paper ballot assures that votes reflect the choices made by the voter. **Machine vote count errors were**

discovered in several counties in November: Electronic voting is no guarantee of accuracy.

- **Switching to hand marked ballots for in-person voting is lawful, and counties are already prepared.** Georgia law provides that if it is impractical or impossible to use the BMDs, then hand marked paper ballots must be used. Poll workers are required to be trained to issue hand marked ballots, which are identical to mail ballots. They can be scanned and tabulated right in the polling place.
- **DeKalb could save many hours** of Logic and Accuracy testing, transportation, setup, and takedown. Hand marked ballots are less demanding of space and electricity.
- **Reducing our reliance on computers** for voting will have bi-partisan support.

Replacing the ballot marking touchscreens and printers with paper ballots marked by pen is legal, easy to implement, and ensures unassailable outcomes. Tell Secretary Raffensperger and the State Election Board today to insist on this commonsense plan for a verifiable January election.

Sincerely

Liz Throop
612 Clifton Rd., NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

Public Comment #4

Chairman Tillman, Vice-Chairman Vu, and Board Members Lewis, Smith, and Motter:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I am Susannah Scott, the president of the League of Women Voters of Georgia, and a life-long resident of DeKalb County. I am committed to the League's mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

I am aware that you're all working to ensure a smooth election tomorrow and prepping for early voting, which begins in 2 weeks and that this work is vitally important. I would like to ask, again, however that public comments be read into the record during meetings. Given the failure of this Board to publish minutes in a timely fashion (the last minutes posted on the website are from the June 29, 2020 Special Called Meeting), it is important that the public is aware of the concerns and issues their fellow citizens are raising during the public comment section. I also strongly encourage the Board to ensure that they are adhering to the Open Meetings Act (§50-14-1) by ensuring meeting agendas and minutes are posted in a timely fashion. Given the importance of this election cycle, it is imperative that this information be made available to the citizens of DeKalb. The ongoing failure of this Board to ensure adequate notice of meetings and timely publication of minutes is very concerning to the public, as well as being a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

Thank you for your time and attention to these issues. The League of Women Voters stands ready to assist DeKalb to ensure all DeKalb voters have full and equal access to the ballot box in the upcoming election.

Sincerely,
Susannah E. Scott
2557 Hawthorne Drive NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

Public Comment #5

Dear Board -

Mr. Vu just announced that this is a Regular meeting, not a Special Called meeting as posted, and yet there was NO agenda posted as of this afternoon when I last checked. Please do better. It would add much to our trust in the Board's ability to properly handle elections matters.

Similarly, please assign the task of completing minutes on a timely basis to the Voter Registration and Elections (VRE) office. The lack of meeting minutes is inexcusable, and I cannot fathom why the County Attorney continues to turn a blind eye to this violation of Federal election law.

Please meet as a board at least once, if not twice, before the January 5 run-off to ensure all election preparations are on track for a successful election.

Sincerely,
On Behalf of Indivisible Marching Buddies of Atlanta,
Paula Bosworth
2845 Whitby Dr
Doraville 30340

Public Comment #6

Comment to the DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Due the importance of the January 5th election to all DeKalb County residents and the health implications of a high-turnout election during this pandemic, it is recommended that the Board request the County to revise and improve its website access to voter information—specifically by adding a prominent clickable box to the top portion of the home page of <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/> with a link to a new, ***separate* Current January 5, 2021 Election and Information** page that has all the relevant links in one place to the upcoming Runoffs, but *without* the distractions of information on the other 2020 elections currently on the County page linked to by www.dekalbvotes.com.

I would be happy to help with additional specifics, if asked.

David Moriarty, 129 Ponce de Leon Court, Decatur, GA 30030

Public Comment #7

Dear Board:

Please Erica Hamilton a short (1 week?) deadline to get back to you with names of COO suggestion, her outreach to a "rent an executive" agency, and/or outreach to county executive pool. If the PUBLIC is aware that you want a COO, it seems disingenuous that Ms Hamilton is not aware.

Paula

Public Comment #8

Dear Board - if it turns out that most early voting sites are unable to collect absentee ballots, please consider a handout stating three to five of the nearest drop boxes, to be given to voters trying to turn in heir absentee ballots at an early voting site.

Thank you,

Paula Bosworth

2845 Whitby Dr

Doraville 30340