

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD
OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS
DEKALBCOUNTY
August 21, 2020**

The DeKalb board of Registration and elections convened to conduct its monthly Meeting on August 21, 2020 Via Teleconference (Zoom) while simultaneous available via live stream on DCTV's UStream channel ([https://video.ibm.com /channel/dctv-channel](https://video.ibm.com/channel/dctv-channel) – 23).

Present: Samuel Tillman, Chairman
Baoky Vu, Vice Chairman
Anthony Lewis, Board Member
Dele Lowman Smith, Board Member
Susan Motter, Board Member
Erica Hamilton, Director
Terry Phillips, Deputy County Attorney
Irene Vander Els, Assistant County Attorney
Shelly Momo, Assistant County Attorney

Mr. Tillman called the meeting to order 2:30 p. m. and the agenda was adopted.

1. Comments from the public

Mr. Tillman explained the protocol to be followed by the public to submit a comment to be acknowledged by the board during a board meeting. Mr. Tillman further explained that public notice of this meeting was posted on the website, in the main office, and copy of the notice was provided to the Champion newspaper.

2. New Business

A). The August Runoff Elections Overview

Ms. Hamilton reported that the Run-Off Election on Tuesday, August 11, 2020 went well. There were some lessons learned that will assist in running smoother elections during the remainder of the election cycle. Ms. Hamilton provided a report on the state provided Dominion Technicians. In all there were 41,000 ballots returned during this election. Having the extra review panel was helpful. Additional review panels will be added in the upcoming elections. She stated that staff has shifted their focus to the September and November Elections.

Mr. Tillman commented that he wants to make sure that technicians are at every DeKalb County polling place particularly during the November General election.

B). Special Congressional Election in District 5 to fill the seat of Congressman, John Lewis

Ms. Hamilton recommended that the Board approve 3-three-week Advance Voting Locations for the Congressional District 5 Special Election. The recommended dates and times were September 8, 2020 through September 25, 2020 Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm and Saturday September 19 from 9:00am to 4:00 pm. The three locations suggested were Montclair Elementary School, South DeKalb, and Memorial Drive

Mr. Vu motioned to approve the advance voting location and times for the Special Congressional Election to fill the unexpired term of Congressman John Lewis. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The vote was called and passed unanimously the motion was approved.

C). Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes

Ms. Hamilton reported that six additional drop boxes were ordered. Drop boxes are being requested by the City of Decatur, Chamblee, Tucker and the staff is looking for locations in the Redan Road area, Rockbridge area, Bouldercrest and Cedar Grove areas. Ms. Hamilton reminded the board that drop boxes can only be installed on government property. Mr. Tillman asked Ms. Hamilton to draft a letter to Secretary of State inquiring if the State Board of Elections would consider relaxing the rule to allow for drop boxes to be installed non-governmental property with 24-hour surveillance. This will allow more boxes to be placed in convenient locations.

Mr. Vu asked how many boxes does DeKalb County have and the cost of each box. Ms. Hamilton reported that the department will have 16 drop boxes for the election and the cost is \$700.00 per box.

Ms. Smith emailed an analysis of locations for drop boxes. The analysis was prepared by a citizen pro bono. This analysis shows 21 drop boxes strategically placed at government locations where everyone in the county will be 2 miles from a drop box. Ms. Motter is concerned about the southwestern part of the county having drop box coverage. Mr. Lewis is concerned that the ballots are secure and prefers a governmental location for placement of a drop box. Ms. Hamilton stated that the department will order at least 5 additional drop boxes for the November election.

Ms. Smith asked for status update on the online absentee ballot portal. Ms. Hamilton replied the State is not ready to go “live.” Ms. Hamilton also reported that the state will provide training for Voter Registration and Elections Office Staff. The DeKalb Voter Registration and Elections Office plans to do press release to announce when the site goes “live.”

Mr. Tillman suggested that there be security at each of the drop boxes on election night as staff removes ballots from the boxes.

4. Commissioner’s Report

Commissioner Larry Johnson would like for Commissioners to have the opportunity to speak at monthly board meetings so they the two entities can build a good working relationship. Commissioner Johnson is appreciative of the work that the Board of Registration and Elections is doing.

5. Certification of the August 11, 2020 Runoff Election

A motion was made and seconded to recess until 4:00 pm to allow for Board members to certify the August Election. The vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously to recess the meeting.

Motion was by Mr. Vu and seconded by Mrs. Lewis to reconvene the regular meeting.

5. Director's Report

Ms. Hamilton reported that the department was sending information to the Commissioners to secure funding for the Communications Director position. She also reported that she has worked with the COO, Zack Williams, to procure additional space for the department at the Porter Sanford Performance Arts Building. Additional scanning equipment will be order and training for the September and November elections has begun.

6. Executive Session

Mr. Vu motioned for the Board to go into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Motter The vote was called and passed unanimously. There was a motion to return to regular session by Mr. Vu and a second by Mr. Lewis. The vote was called and unanimously affirmed the motion to return from executive session.

Mr. Tillman stated that no votes were taken during Executive Session.

7. Comments from the Board

Mr. Tillman suggested that the Board hold a town hall meeting in the future to provide answers to the public concerning the electoral process. Ms. Smith expressed her appreciation for the work from staff and board members. She made suggestions regarding line control for future elections. Ms. Motter thanked everyone for their hard work. Mr. Lewis thanked everyone for their hard work and agreed that the town hall meeting is a good idea.

Ms. Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Mr. Lewis. All agreed to adjourn meeting.