

DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2020

*via zoom platform

Start Time: 4:30 p.m.

End Time: 7:05 p.m.

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

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

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Lewis to adopt the June 25, 2020 special called meeting minutes. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Lewis to adopt the June 29, 2020 special called meeting minutes. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Smith requested that the Board read public comments into the record during the meeting or alternatively, allow public comments during the meeting.

Mr. Tillman 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 4:30 PM and 5:00 PM 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).

NEW BUSINESS

A) Additional Runoff Advanced Voting Locations

Ms. Motter stated that a number of voters and elected officials have contacted her asking that Tucker Library and Stonecrest be added as additional early voting locations. Motion by Ms. Motter and seconded by Ms. Smith that the Board approve Tucker Library and Stonecrest as additional early voting locations.

The Board discussed whether early voting should be for two weeks or for one week at these additional locations. Also, the Board considered expanding voting locations in the western part of the county.

Motion by Ms. Motter and seconded by Mr. Vu to approve two additional early voting locations at Tucker Library and Stonecrest for two weeks. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

B) Discussion and Adoption of a Resolution for the DeKalb County VRE Implementation Plan

Ms. Hamilton discussed the concerns in the auditor's report and described projects that have already been implemented. Mr. Vu presented three (3) resolutions related to the implementation plan:

- (1) The Board of Registration and Elections accepts the final report recommendations dated May 29, 2020, and approves and resolves to implement recommendations in the three-month implementation plan previously presented to the Board in time for the November 2020 General Election;
- (2) The Board of Registration and Elections approves the hiring of an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3 General Election, in cooperation with the Director and with an appropriate resource ask from the County Commission; and
- (3) The Board of Registration and Elections will immediately contract with or hire a full-time communications professional, to plan and implement a voter out-reach and communications plan for the November 2020 General Election.

The Board discussed department needs with respect to staffing and resources in consideration of the above resolutions.

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Lewis that the Board will immediately contract with or hire a full-time communications professional, to plan and implement a voter out-reach and communications plan for the November 3, 2020 General Election in cooperation with the Director. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Vu that the Board accepts the final report recommendations dated May 29, 2020, and approves and resolves to implement recommendations in the three-month implementation plan previously presented to the Board in time for the November 2020 General Election; with the exception of item 1(a) from the executive summary. Motion carries 3-2. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman both vote nay.

Motion by Mr. Vu and seconded by Mr. Lewis that the discussion of the second resolution be tabled for a special called meeting on Thursday, July 16 at 4:00 p.m. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

C) Absentee Ballot Applications for the November 3, 2020 General Election

Ms. Hamilton asked that the department take on the responsibility of mailing requests for absentee ballots because the Secretary of State Office will not be sending these applications for the November election. Motion by Ms. Motter and seconded by Ms. Smith that the DeKalb Elections Office send out absentee ballot applications to all voters who are registered in DeKalb County, with

an appropriate ask from the County Commission to implement this program. Motion carries by unanimous vote.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Larry Johnson asked that all approved agenda items and Ms. Hamilton's report be presented to the Board of Commissioners at their July 14 meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

See attachments(s).

Ms. Hamilton reported that another employee has tested positive for COVID-19 and that the office has been sanitized again. The employees that have tested positive will not be allowed to return until they test negative. The department is limiting the number of people in the office and those who can work from home will be working remotely until it is safe to return to the office.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Ms. Smith and seconded by Mr. Vu to recess for executive session to discuss litigation. Motion carries by unanimous vote. Motion by Mr. Vu and seconded by Ms. Smith to resume the regular meeting. Motion carries by unanimous vote. No votes were taken during executive session.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Tillman advised the Board to be careful and encouraged everyone to keep themselves and their families safe from COVID-19.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tillman called for a vote to adjourn. This meeting is adjourned.

Public Comment

Public Comment #1

To the Members of the Dekalb Board of Elections:

For the General Election I ask that you mail absentee ballot request forms to ALL Dekalb County voters along with postage paid return envelopes. Thank you.

Ronald Nuse
430 Eastland Drive
Decatur, GA 30030

Public Comment #2

In light of covid and the horrendous lines at in person voting, please mail out absentee ballots.

Thank you.

Jennifer Thompson

Public Comment #3

To:DeKalb Board of Elections

From Karen Morris

I respectfully and urgently request that the Board of Elections mail absentee ballot request forms with a postage paid return envelope to all DeKalb county voters. Doing so will ensure that all voters will have an opportunity to vote, even if their local polling place is closed, if they are will, if they cannot stand in long lines for hours, and if they are not able to be in DeKalb county on election day. I voted absentee in the June primary and found it a very satisfying experience, especially since the Governor had requested that people in my age bracket self- isolate until after the primary was held,so I would not have been able to get to the polls. Thank you.

Mrs. Karen Morris
9 Dartmouth Ave.
Avondale Estates, GA 30002

Public Comment #4

DeKalb County Elections Board,

Please mail out absentee ballots to all DeKalb County registered voters with a postage included return envelope. We need to make it easier to vote, not harder. Voting is a right. The Board of Elections needs to make voting available to every voter during this pandemic.

Thank you,

Susan Firestone,
Decatur, GA

Public Comment #5

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. We strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Enlist communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Susan Howard
Decatur, GA

Public Comment #6

To the DeKalb Elections Board,

I am a Georgia voter living in DeKalb County and I'm concerned about upcoming elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have the same problems experienced by my fellow voters in the recent June 2020 primaries. I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in person early voting locations and hours.

Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Dave Gordon
1667 Braeburn Dr SE
Atlanta, GA 30316

Public Comment #7

DeKalb Board of Commissioners,

The recommendations from the consultants' report to improve the Dekalb County voting system need to be implemented so the difficulty experienced by voters in July is not repeated. Please implement the following recommendations listed below this email.

Thank you for your work to improve the election process in DeKalb County.

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

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the [3-month implementation plan](#) and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Public Comment #8

Good morning:

I am a DeKalb County resident and voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot and should not have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. We strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.

2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.

3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Sincerely,

Eleanor A. Smith
600 Dancing Fox road
Decatur GA 30032

Public Comment #9

With the November election a mere four months away, and mail-in voting starting even earlier, it is imperative that the resources of the County be brought to bear immediately on addressing the numerous problems voters experienced in the recent election.

In addition to ensuring a better voting experience for voters, either by mail or in person, the Board of Elections must implement a voting system that voters have confidence in and believe is trustworthy.

One of the key concerns we continue to hear about is the lack of clear and frequent communications concerning the obtaining and processing of absentee ballots, and what voter should do if they fail to receive an absentee ballot on time.

On behalf of DeKalb Citizens Advocacy Council, and as a DeKalb voter, I encourage the DeKalb Board of Elections to collaborate with the CEO, the DeKalb Board of Commissioners, and the DeKalb Elections Stakeholders Working Group in approving, implementing, and funding the "3 Month Implementation Plan" recommended by The Elections Group. The plan includes recommendations concerning a voter outreach and communications plan, as well as improving the Vote-by-Mail process. These are among the first steps that must be taken to begin to restore voters' trust and credibility in the County's election process.

Mary Hinkel
Chair
DeKalb Citizens Advocacy Council
1718 Mason Mill Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

Public Comment #10

I'm a Dekalb County resident and voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. We strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by- Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.

2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.

3. Approve the attached [3-month implementation plan](#) and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Jamie Roberts
1103 Dancing Fox Rd, Decatur, GA 30032

Public Comment #11

I understand that the State of Georgia will not be sending out absentee ballot requests to all voters, as it did for the June primary. I urge DeKalb to do this for future elections, at least until the pandemic is under control. It will allow greater voter participation and help contain COVID 19 spread, which is currently on the rise in our county.

Thanks for your consideration -

Alison Mawle

Public Comment #12

DeKalb Board of Elections,

I urge you at the meeting tomorrow to approve mailing out absentee ballot request forms to all DeKalb County voters, along with a postage paid return envelope.

Best regards,

Katharine Johnson
301 Dancing Fox Rd.
Decatur, GA 30032-3975

Public Comment #13

To the Dekalb County Board of Elections,

I am a registered voter who is concerned about our elections on November 3, 2020.

Please take action now to ensure that we will have safe and secured elections that will enable ALL Dekalb County voters to safely and efficiently vote during the Covid-19 epidemic. Please take immediate action on the following 3 points:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in person early voting locations and hours.

Thank you.

Lee Pasackow
1430 Cambridge Common
Decatur, GA 30033

Public Comment #14

I am a Georgia voter residing in DeKalb County, and am concerned about elections in DeKalb County. In advance of the Board of Elections meeting on Thursday, July 9, I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections takes the following actions immediately:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end vote-by-mail process and operations for the November election.
2. Approve the outside consultants' [3-month implementation plan](#) in its entirety and work to accomplish the remainder of the consultants' recommendations, including: hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.
3. Hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.

As the consultants' report notes, these goals can be accomplished in the next three months and will have an immediate, positive impact on the County's administration of the November election.

Respectfully,

Karli Swift
Concerned DeKalb Resident

Public Comment #15

I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

- Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
- Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.

- Approve the 3-month implementation plan developed by the consultants, and work to accomplish the remainder of its recommendations, including hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Mary Lee-Szymanski

Public Comment #16

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in person early voting locations and hours.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns.

Respectfully,

Amy E Goch, PhD
317 Hertford Cir
Decatur, Ga 30030

Public Comment #17

Dear Members of the Commission:

My name is Michael Evans from 895 Derrydown Way in Decatur. I [read](#) about the commission's resolution requesting that the Georgia General Assembly look into online voting as a solution to our challenge with administering elections amid the pandemic.

As a citizen of the county, a political scientist, and a citizen of Georgia committed to voting rights and therefore improving election administration in this county and state, I find this resolution deeply concerning for two reasons.

First, this is a solution worse than the problem. [The consensus among cybersecurity experts is that online voting cannot be secured from hacking.](#) Online voting would be convenient and safe

from COVID, but unfortunately it cannot provide trust in our democratic process. We need to not only cast our votes, but also to be confident our votes are counted and that malicious actors are not sabotaging our democratic elections.

Second, this suggests to me that DeKalb is taking its eye off the ball when it comes to finding real solutions to our election administration problems. Even before COVID, as you know, we have had major issues with how our elections are administered. COVID has made it worse. But the only solution is to get real about modernizing our system. We need to build capacity to process absentee ballots and have a nonpartisan campaign to strongly encourage absentee voting. We also need to recruit and train young poll workers to staff our early voting and Election Day polling places.

I am working with a former student on a program called "Push for 5k." Our goal is to help five counties--Fulton, Gwinnett, Cobb, Clayton, and DeKalb--hire and train 5,000 student poll workers and/or absentee-ballot-counters for the upcoming general election. So far, four out of those five counties have enthusiastically embraced our initiative and are working with us to prepare for fall. Unfortunately, DeKalb has so far been completely uncooperative. This is also consistent with my experience when I applied to be a poll worker back in February. I still have not heard back from the county regarding my application. I know at least two other citizens of this county who have had the same experience. This leaves me wondering how many other citizens have attempted to serve as election workers during this emergency, only to be ignored. This is hard to understand when we are facing worker shortages.

Long lines are a product of worker shortages and malfunctioning voting machines. I am a proponent of hand marked paper ballots so that the latter will no longer be an issue. I realize we are stuck with our machines for the time being. But in the meantime we can at least try to address the worker shortage problem while also encouraging hand marked absentee ballots.

I hope you will lead an effort to get real about improving our elections and no longer waste precious time with a non-solution like online voting. If I can be of service in this effort, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Evans
Senior Lecturer
Department of Political Science
Georgia State University

Public Comment #18

I'm Joy Wasson, a DeKalb voter and **I appreciate the very challenging work you all do**. As a poll watcher and election integrity advocate, I have a few suggestions.

Preparedness on a very basic level needs to be stepped up. A frantic poll worker asked me for a pen on election morning because there were none supplied at Antioch AME where I was observing. Voters had been waiting 2 hours, and— with all equipment down— no one had voted at all until complaints seemed to prompt the voting on provisional paper ballots. It should not have been provisional ballots, but rather emergency ballots (not requiring curing), if only voters could have been verified by an **updated paper backup to the poll pad**.

Before election morning, precinct records could be updated from absentee and early voting information, and printed out, thus allowing voters to mark a regular ballot that can be scanned (then or later) without further verification needed. **Supplies at the polls— such as enough ballots** —will need to be on hand, not to mention pens to mark the ballots. You cannot rely solely on tech support to come to the rescue as it hasn't worked in the past and you never know whether power outages or some other problem makes machine voting impossible. No one should ever stand in line for hours with no voting taking place. Since you are planning to use the equipment, **more poll pads must be deployed** as they are the first roadblock to efficient voting. Again, the certified, updated electors list as a backup to poll books can help speed the process, even being used as an additional check in station. **Early voting** not only needs to be **increased, but it needs to be equitable** and in place in communities where the demand is not being met. There shouldn't be communities that never have a wait and communities that always have a wait.

As I mentioned at the recent DeKalb Voter Experience Forum, the **processing and adjudication of absentee ballots** needs to be improved. The software & scanners have been discovered to be overlooking clearly marked votes. The software must be set to catch overvotes but not to filter other marks so that **every legitimate vote is counted**. You also may have **multiple vote review panels** to avoid the unfortunate situation of reviewers working way too many hours. Especially given our COVID-19 situation, the time workers are indoors together should be limited. Observers during absentee ballot processing must be welcomed and the **public must be allowed to see the entire process** to ensure there is confidence in the results. The outside consultants talked about this kind of transparency in their report.

I look forward to your taking the suggestions of the outside consultants and implementing as many of them as you can. Hiring someone to help with **communications should be a priority**. It would be great if DCTV would post the videos of these meetings afterwards as they do routinely for BOC meetings. I want DeKalb Elections to have the resources and support it needs. Please use this opportunity with the backing of so many in our county **to request what you need to succeed**.

Thank you, and stay well.

Joy Wasson
612 Clifton Rd NE
Atlanta, GA 30307

Public Comment #19

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

My name is Susannah Scott. I am 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. It is imperative that the Board of Registration & Elections (BRE) take immediate steps to ensure that the November 3rd General Election are run smoothly to guarantee that all DeKalb County voters are able to safely and securely exercise their right to vote.

I write to you today to urge the BRE to take the following steps:

1. Approve the 3-month implementation plan proposed by the DeKalb Stakeholders Working Group on Elections. This committee has developed common sense improvements to the voting process in DeKalb and their guidance should be followed in order to best serve DeKalb voters.
2. Hire a communications professional to develop and implement a comprehensive voter outreach and communication plan. This is especially critical as we know there are attempts to misinform the public and undermine their confidence in the vote by mail process. It is also necessary to ensure accurate information regarding emergency polling places are communicated to voters leading up to Election Day.
3. Hire an external consulting group to plan and implement an end-to-end vote by mail process for the November 3rd General Election. It is clear that Georgia has not contained COVID-19 and the BRE must ensure that every voter that wishes to vote from the safety of their home is able to do so in a timely manner.

As a final note, I also strongly urge the BRE to take time to read public comments into the record during virtual meetings. DeKalb's citizens deserve to know that the BRE is listening to our voices, even when we cannot speak in person.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. 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 elections.

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

Public Comment #20

Dear Board members:

We saw long lines, closed polling locations, and malfunctioning equipment on June 9th. Poll workers had to risk COVID exposure to accommodate the crowds. If voter turnout is anywhere near predicted levels, DeKalb will not be able to accommodate all voters on November 3rd.

Some demand can be eased by providing more equipment, better trained poll workers, and public campaigns to get people to vote early – but those will only go so far. Mail voting has the most potential. Even though Raffensperger's Vote by Mail campaign was rolled out at the last

minute, DeKalb's absentee rate grew from under 7% of ballots in the 2018 Governor's race to 44% of Presidential votes in the June 9th General Primary.

DeKalb should seize this momentum and send applications to all active voters. This will ease demands for poll workers (who might quit at the last minute), polling places (which might cancel contracts at the last minute), and reduce the need for LAT and transportation of complex, bulky voting machines.

You have an opportunity to hire a communications professional, as described in the 3-month plan, to promote mail voting. That person could work with community groups and harness social media channels. They could give voters a time frame for returning ballot applications and ballots so citizens don't phone the elections office so much. A communications professional could reassure voters that absentee ballots will be counted accurately, and help build trust by inviting public observation of ballot processing.

Printing and postage might seem expensive, but the savings on poll worker salaries, rent, and transportation would be considerable. The board should demand a thorough comparison between mailing applications or accommodating overwhelming crowds in November.

Sincerely

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

Public Comment #21

I strongly urge you, the DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections, to adopt the Board of Commissioners consultants' report this afternoon. Its best practice recommendations, if implemented with enthusiasm and speed by Ms. Hamilton in collaboration with the Board of Commissioners along with continuous careful oversight and accountability by the BRE, has the potential to greatly improve the election experience for all DeKalb citizens. If, as I fear, the BRE continues to act passively as I have witnessed it doing over many BRE meetings, then it will be failing in its duty to DeKalb voters. If, as I fear, the report's recommendations are implemented with truculence and slow walking by Ms. Hamilton, then we will continue to see big problems with DeKalb elections, growing voter mistrust, and recognition that poor performance by her office is a significant component of voter suppression in our County.

Elizabeth Howze
3130 Westmart Lane
Atlanta, GA 30340

Public Comment #22

Hello,

My husband and I moved from Miami, FL to Atlanta in March 2020. The primary on June 9, 2020 was our first voting experience in the state of Georgia.

The absentee ballot/vote by mail request process in DeKalb County is clunky, antiquated and inconvenient.

□One, it requires that voters have access to a printer to print and then fax/mail the form. We have a printer but not everyone does.

□Two, once forms are submitted to the email address/fax number provided by the county, voters receive no confirmation that requests were actually received by the Elections office.

The lack of acknowledgement only serves to confuse voters like me who may then have to call the office to engage the staff in verifying whether or not requests were indeed received. This is a waste of time for both voters and staff.

In Miami Dade County, registered voters can request their vote by mail ballots on the county elections site or they may call the office and request their ballot over the phone. There is no added paperwork or steps and their office sends the voter a confirmation of the request. It's simple, fast and easy.

https://www.miamidade.gov/global/service.page?Mduid_service=ser1512065909614490

What can the BOE do to modernize and streamline the absentee ballot request process for both voters and staff at the DeKalb elections office?

Raffensperger said that he would create a new site for voters to request their own absentee ballots online. Does anyone know when voters can expect this technological marvel? **I would love for DeKalb County to provide us with an option to request an absentee ballot online.**

Please implement the Working Group's recommendations. November is right around the corner and we need improvements now.

Thank you for accepting my comment.

Darlene Moreira
1381 Newton Ave SE
Atlanta GA 30316

Public Comment #23

Name: Jamil A. Favors

Address: 230 E Ponce de Leon Ave, Decatur, GA 30030

As a resident of Dekalb County, I suggest the following:

1. The Board of Registration and Elections approves the hiring of an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote by Mail process and operations for the November 3 general election, in cooperation with the Department of Registration and Elections.
2. The Board of Registration and Elections will immediately contract with or hire a full-time communications professional to plan and implement a voter outreach and communications plan for the November 3 election.
3. The Board of Registration and Elections accepts the Final Report Recommendations, dated May 29, 2020, and approves and resolves to implement the recommendations in the Three Month Implementation Plan previously presented to this Board in time for the November 3 general election.

Thank you -

Public Comment #24

Dear Members of the Election Board,

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020.

I strongly urge you to pass the resolution to adopt the recommendations outlined in the [consultants' report](#):

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Lisa Hoveland Eisen
278 Connecticut Ave NE
Atlanta GA 30307

Public Comment #25

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the [3-month implementation plan](#) and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy polworkers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Ellen Nash
1448 Winston Place
Decatur. GA 30033

Public Comment #26

To the Board of Registration and Elections (BRE),
I am seeking answers to the following questions today:

1. Why does BRE website have nothing about the upcoming primary runoff election on August 11, 2020?
2. Why was no early voting place selected within Congressional District 6, such as in Brookhaven or Tucker? And why nothing closer to the people of Stonecrest and our Southern county surrounds? They will have to drive 20 minutes to get to the closest early voting location, which is not convenient, especially since that area has frequent traffic tie-ups. Please consider alleviating these problems by adding at least two additional early voting locations.
3. During the primary ending on June 9, how many, and which, absentee ballots were adjudicated by human panels? Explain whether or not ALL stray marks on every absentee ballot were viewed by a human panel, or only over-voted races? If not every ascertainable vote was adjudicated, why not, and who made that decision? Was the sensitivity setting on a scanning device set to "catch" those ballots for which a ballot was marked with an "X", check mark, or other mark that could have indicated the voter's intent? If not, why not?

Paula Bosworth
2845 Whitby Dr
Doraville, GA 30340

Public Comment #27

To the Board of Elections,

First, thank you for your service. We want to be sure that you are taking an active role in improving our election processes here in DeKalb. I am an interested DeKalb County resident (1123 Hunters Drive, Stone Mountain, 30083). We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. We strongly urge the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. **Increase funding.** It has been reported by the AJC that the BoE requested an additional \$1.6 mm, and I know the Board of Commissioners can only provide what was requested from the BoE. However, I would like to encourage active questioning of the budget and lobbying for more federal money/CARES Act funding for the election.
2. **Increase Vote-by-Mail.** Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale-up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
3. **Increase communications.** Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
4. **Increase hiring.** Approve the [3-month implementation plan](#) and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech-savvy poll workers and expanding in person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Deloris Bryant-Booker

Public Comment #28

This is Don Richard 3416 Wynnton Dr Brookhaven 30319 I like to suggest that the county make available to the Board a number of county workers to be trained as emergency Poll Workers to ready to step in for the November election

Public Comment #29

I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

- Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
- Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
- Approve the 3-month implementation plan developed by the consultants, and work to accomplish the remainder of its recommendations, including hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Mary Lee-Szymanski

3193 Alton Rd, Atlanta GA 30341

Public Comment #30

I am a Georgia voter concerned about the elections in Dekalb county. The problems we had in November 2018 and June 2020 can not be repeated. As a resident of Dekalb county, I strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the Dekalb county Board of Elections takes the following actions:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in person early voting locations and hours.

Thanks very much,

Jennifer Schweigert
2671 Kelly Lake ct.
Decatur, GA 30032

Public Comment #31

DeKalb County needs to provide each precinct with a hard copy backup of the e-poll books.

Madeleine Soloway
744 Park Lane
Decatur, 30033

Public Comment #32

Please adopt the BoC commissioned consultants report, especially the abbreviated 3 month plan.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Burns
731 Scott Circle
Decatur GA 30033

Public Comment #33

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. In addition, **the option to vote safely by mail during the pandemic should be easily available to everyone, with communication about how to do it.**

We strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.

2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,

Sarah Suzanne Estes
1701 Beverly Woods CT
Atlanta, GA 30341

Public Comment #34

I am a Georgia voter concerned about elections in DeKalb County. We cannot have a repeat of the problems experienced by voters in November 2018 and June 2020. In addition, **the option to vote safely by mail during the pandemic should be easily available to everyone, with communication about how to do it.**

We strongly urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the DeKalb Board of Elections take the following actions now:

1. Hire an external consulting group to plan, scale up, and manage the end-to-end Vote-by-Mail process and operations for the November 3rd general election.
2. Contract with or hire a communications professional to develop and implement a voter outreach and communications plan.
3. Approve the 3-month implementation plan and work to accomplish the remainder of these recommendations, including; hiring and training tech savvy poll workers and expanding in-person early voting locations and hours.

Respectfully,
Christopher Nesbitt
1701 Beverly Woods CT
Atlanta, GA 30341

Public Comment #35

What will BRE do to improve poorly performing poll books

Paula Bosworth
2845 Whitby Dr
Doraville GA

Public Comment #36

I am a Georgia voter and was very disturbed by the many problems encountered in the November 2019 and June 2020 elections. I am a 69 year old physician who retired after a 30-year career at CDC. As a public health professional, I assert that the coronavirus pandemic is a real threat to the health and well-being of DeKalb County residents and will likely be disruptive to the upcoming runoff in August and general election in November. It is very likely that we will see a second wave of Covid-19 infections this fall and it is critical that the County is prepared for the November election. As a senior citizen, the threat to my own health is clear.

I am encouraged that consultants were hired to make recommendations to improve the voting process. I strongly urge the Department of Elections to accept the recommendations outlined in the consultants report. Particular actions that would help improve elections while safeguarding the health of DeKalb residents would include the following:

- hire consultants to plan and manage the vote by mail process for the November 3 election;
- hire a communications professional to create and implement voter outreach and communications plan that will include clear instructions about early voting and vote by mail;
- approve the 3-month implementation plan and ensure the successful realization of all elements of the plan. This would include an increase in the number of early voting locations and hours, and the hiring and training of poll workers who have the technical proficiency to manage the election.

Sincerely,

Robert Quick
1205 Mansfield Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30307