

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD  
OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS  
DEKALB COUNTY  
January 9, 2020**

The DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections convened to conduct its monthly meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup>, in the Training Room at 4380 Memorial Drive with Board Chair Samuel Tillman presiding.

Present: Anthony Lewis, Board Member  
Susan Motter, Board Member  
Dele Lowman Smith, Board Member  
Baoky Vu, Board Member  
Erica Hamilton, Director  
Viviane Ernstes, County Attorney  
Irene Vander Els, Assistant County Attorney  
Tiffani Gilbert, Elections Supervisor  
Twyla Hart, Registration Supervisor  
Sharon Hillman, Administrative Coordinator

Mr. Tillman called the meeting to order at approximately 4:40 PM and requested that the Director's Report to occur prior to the Executive Session on the agenda. No other changes were requested and the agenda was adopted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Vu to approve the minutes. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The question was called, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Comments from the Public

Eight citizens signed in and addressed the Board. Numerous citizens expressed their concerns about the new voting equipment and the need for paper ballots. One citizen spoke on her concerns as a poll worker, and one Sheriff's Candidate expressed concerns on the qualifying process.

Presentation from Presiding Officer Jeff Rader

Presiding Officer Jeff Rader introduced himself, Commissioner Nancy Jester and Commissioner Mereda Davis-Johnson, who were attendance, along with members of their staff. He presented information on the stakeholder working group for DeKalb Elections. The working group is recommending a professional review of election practices, challenges, and opportunities. Presiding Officer Rader brought three request to the board:

1. For the Board to endorse Mr. Vu and Ms. Smith's participation in the working group and designate them as their representatives in this initiative
2. The DeKalb VRE pledge cooperation with the consultants in the completion of the work described in the proposal
3. The DeKalb VRE direct staff to cooperate in the work outlined in the proposal, to allocate adequate time and to cooperate with the assessment actives

Mr. Vu and Ms. Smith both spoke on their time as a member of the working group and expressed support of the proposals. Mr. Vu and Mr. Lewis stated their concerns of time restraint and not disrupting the election season. Mr. Tillman requested to receive additional time to review the entirety of the proposal. Mr. Vu motioned to endorse the participation of Mr. Vu and Ms. Smith in the working group. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The question was called the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Vu motioned to pledge cooperation with the consultants in the completion of

the work described in the proposal. Ms. Smith second the motion. The question was called the motion passed unanimously.

Challenges – None

Unfinished Business – None

New Business

- A) Advance Voting Times and Locations – Ms. Hamilton stated that at the moment the staff was working to finalize early voting locations and times. She stated that there will be two locations on Memorial Drive along with other locations throughout the county. The times will range from three weeks to one week. Once the staff finalizes locations and times, it will be presented to the Board. County Attorney Ernstes stated that the County is currently looking into purchasing insurance for voting locations. She stated that she would report back to the Board in February. There was a discussion on determining locations and times of early voting including Saturday and Sunday voting.
- B) Proposed Polling Place Changes for May 2020 – Ms. Hamilton presented that with the assistance of Commissioner Rader, the county received permission to continue using the polling location for the Emory Road Precinct for the elections in March and April. The precinct will not need to be divided. Ms. Hamilton stated that Dunwoody Pines and Lin Mary Lin Elementary will no longer be able to accommodate the county after April. The staff is currently looking for a new polling location within both precincts boundary lines.
- C) Sheriff Candidate's Concerns – Ms. Hamilton stated that after qualify closed, the Secretary of State's office notified Ms. Hamilton of their concerns with Ruth Stringer's request that her name read Ruth "The Truth" Stringer on the ballot. The SEB Rule 183-1-11.02 states, *"A candidate's name may include a nickname by which the candidate is commonly known in the community but shall not contain any spurious phrases, title or degree designating the business, fraternal, religious, or professional affiliation of the candidate, or political slogan or message. A title or degree includes, but is not limited to, military or professional title or rank, or references such as "Dr.," "Rev.," "Judge", "Mr.," "Ms.," "Mrs.," or "Miss". A determination as to whether a nickname violates this Rule lies within the sound discretion of the Secretary of State or election superintendent, as appropriate."* It was the staff's recommendation that "The Truth" be removed from the ballot. Mr. Lewis motioned to follow staff recommendation and remove "The Truth." For the purpose of discussion, Ms. Smith seconded the motion.

Ms. Stringer explained that "Truth" has been a nickname for several decades. The Board had a thorough discussion on nicknames, slogans, and the importance of remaining consistent. Mr. Lewis rescinded his motion. Ms. Smith motioned to allow "The Truth" to remain on the ballot. Mr. Vu seconded the motion. The question was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Ms. Hamilton provided information on the status of the Registration Department, Election Department and the Outreach Team.

County Attorney Ernstes introduced an additional member of the Law Department's Election Team, Aaron Ross. County Attorney Ernstes explained the Executive Session process. The Board decided to have comments on the Board and then to recess to an Executive Session.

Comments from the Board – Mr. Vu thanked the members of the public and the Commissioners for attending the meeting. He thanked Commissioner Rader for taking the lead on the working group. Ms. Motter thanked the Commissioners for their work and attendance as well. Mr. Lewis thanked Mr. Vu and Ms. Smith for their efforts on the working group and thanked the Commissioners for attending. He also offered his support to the staff during the busy 2020 Election Year. Ms. Smith echoed the sentiments shared. Mr. Tillman spoke on the importance of being one of the first counties in metro Atlanta to receive new voting equipment. He thanked Ms. Hamilton for pushing forward and the Commissioners for their support.

Executive Session

Mr. Vu motioned to go into an executive session to discuss litigation matters. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously. The Board was excused. Once the Board reentered, Mr. Lewis motioned the meeting back in order. Mr. Vu seconded. The question was called, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Tillman stated, “No decisions were made and no votes were taken while we were in Executive Session.” A signed affidavit to this effect will be placed with minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Sharon Hillman, Administrative Coordinator.  
Registration and Elections

STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF DEKALB

OPEN MEETING AFFIDAVIT

Personally came Samuel Tillman, who on oath says that, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2020, in the County aforesaid, a meeting of the DeKalb County Board of Voter Registration & Elections was closed to the public for the following reasons: [check appropriate line(s)]

1.  Consultation with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the County or any department, officer or employee thereof [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2-(1)];
2.  Those tax matters which are otherwise made confidential by state law [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2-(2)];
3.  Staff meeting held for investigative purposes under duties and responsibilities imposed by law [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(1)];
4.  Meetings of a law enforcement agency, including grand jury meetings [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(3)];
5.  The future acquisition of real estate [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(4)];
6.  Meeting of the governing authority of a public hospital or any committee thereof when discussing the staff privileges or the granting of abortions under state or federal law [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(5)];
7.  Meeting when discussing or deliberating upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee but not when receiving evidence or hearing argument [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(6)];
8.  Meetings of the board of trustees or the investment committee of any public retirement system created by Title 47 [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3-(8)];
9.  Inspection of physical facilities [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1-(2)];
10.  Meeting outside of geographical jurisdiction of agency at which no official action is to be taken [O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1-(2)];
11.  Other (please provide legal authority): \_\_\_\_\_

and that except for the foregoing, no portion of the closed meeting involved discussion, presentation, or any action on any other matter.

Sworn to and subscribed  
before me, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of  
January, 2020.

[Signature]  
Notary Public

[Signature]  
Signature of Chair or Presiding Officer

