

# DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

## Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2024

Start Time: 4:41 p.m.

End Time: 5:45 p.m.

Board Attendees: Karli Swift, Chair  
Vasu Abhiraman, Vice-Chair  
Nancy Jester  
Susan Motter

Other Attendees: Keisha Smith, Executive Director  
Terry Phillips, Deputy County Attorney  
Michael Petty, Assistant County Attorney  
Tristen Waite, Assistant County Attorney

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Swift called the Board of Registration and Elections meeting to order at 4:41 p.m. Ms. Austin read the roll by calling each board member by name. A quorum was met.

Motion to approve the agenda by Ms. Motter and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman. The motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to reconsider the minutes of the February 10 special called meeting at the Gathering Spot by Ms. Motter and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman. Motion to amend the minutes of the February 10 special called meeting at the Gathering Spot to remove Ms. Jester as a Board attendee by Vice-Chair Abhiraman and seconded by Ms. Motter. Motion to adopt the revised minutes of the February 10 special called meeting at the Gathering Spot by Ms. Motter and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman. Motion to approve the minutes of the March 18 scheduled meeting by Ms. Motter and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman. All motions carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Austin read the rules for public comment:

Public comments may be made in person or submitted by sending an email of one printed page or less at a minimum font of 12 to [electionspubliccmnt@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:electionspubliccmnt@dekalbcountyga.gov) which must be received between 35 and 5 minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting. The body of your email must include your first and last name. By submitting an email for public comment, you agree to have your name 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. All public

APPROVED 05/28/2024

comments will be limited to 2 minutes. Abusive, profane, or derogatory language, holding up signs, clapping, yelling, standing or laying in the aisles to show support for or opposition to a speaker will not be permitted, but a show of hands or quietly standing in place will be permitted to show support for or opposition to a speaker's position.

The following citizens provided public comment:

- Clint Monroe
- Betsy Shackelford
- Gail Lee
- Victor Tripp

### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### A) Director's Report

Director Smith reported on registration and election activities including the mailing of polling place change letters for the May and June elections and precinct cards. Director Smith reminded the Board and public to plan accordingly when mailing or receiving election materials due to USPS mail service delays. Additionally, she reported on pre-election activities including ballot proofing review and L&A testing for the May General Primary and post-election activities for the March PPP including the Risk Limiting Audit which matched the statement of votes cast. She further reported on the qualifying activities for the Commission District 3 and Super District 7 special election. She went on to provide updates on the FY24 budget, poll worker recruitment, training, and communications.

Ms. Motter commented on the mailing of the precinct cards and re-emphasized the importance of electors checking their registration status on the cards as well as online.

Ms. Jester inquired about the coding of salaries in the budget. Director Smith replied that there was a posting error with the object code, and that staff would work with budget to correct the error.

Vice-Chair Abhiraman confirmed what was being verified in the Risk Limiting Audit.

Chair Swift asked about the communications plan regarding the voters affected by redistricting. Director Smith replied that resources are available online and that a PSA campaign was being developed. She also reiterated the importance of voters checking their voter registration status.

Vice-Chair Abhiraman asked if there is a step-by-step guide on the website for voters to be able to pull up their sample ballot. Director Smith replied that it does not exist today, but the staff will work to create and post the guide on the website.

#### B) Legislative Update

Ms. Waite reported that there were 4 election-related bills that passed in both the House and the Senate, but they have not been signed by the Governor. She expounded on each bill.

Vice-Chair Abhiraman inquired about the full effects of SB189. Mr. Phillips replied that if any of the bills are signed by the Governor or transitioned to law, the Law Department will provide a detailed analysis of each.

Chair Swift asked Mr. Phillips to provide a summary for the public on how bills become laws. Mr. Phillips proceeded to provide the overview.

## **ITEMS FOR DECISION**

### A) Contract Signing Authority || Executive Director

Chair Swift stated that the Board asked the County Attorneys to determine if a threshold could be approved for the Executive Director to sign certain contracts between meetings for the ease of operations. She asked Mr. Phillips to speak on the contract signing authority of the Executive Director.

Mr. Phillips stated that the Law Department created a resolution that articulates a delegation of the Board's authority to the Executive Director to execute contracts with a threshold of \$50,000 in consultation with the County Chief Operating Officer and any contracts must be executed in a form approved by the County Attorneys. The Executive Director would then be required to report on the contracts at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Jester asked Mr. Phillips if the \$50,000 threshold accounted for aggregate purchases. Mr. Phillips replied that an aggregation clause could be added to the resolution.

Motion to grant the Executive Director the authority to approve and execute contracts on behalf of and within the DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections sole and exclusive domain for the acquisition of services and materials used for the conduct of voter registration and elections constituting an expenditure of up to \$50,000 subject to the Executive Assistant (Chief Operating Officer) or his designees budgetary approval and confirmation that said contracts do not fall under DeKalb County's domain and the County Attorney's approval of said contracts and approve and adopt the resolution articulating this by Vice-Chair Abhiraman and seconded by Ms. Motter. The motion passed unanimously.

### B) Dominion Contract

Mr. Phillips stated that Dominion notified the Law Department that they were unable to identify the executed contract from 2020. He stated that Executive Director Smith, with the help of others, was also not able to find a fully executed copy of the contract either.

Motion to ratify the 2020 contract with Dominion and authorize the current Director to execute the necessary documents by Ms. Motter and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman.

Further discussion ensued.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Ms. Motter shared her excitement seeing the improvements in the department. She thanked Director Smith and the department, the County Attorneys, and the Board Members.

Ms. Jester commented on the improvements of transparency made by the Board and thanked Director Smith for the level of detail she provides, especially regarding the budget.

Vice-Chair Abhiraman thanked the staff, the Director, the Attorneys and the public. He also stated that he appreciates the efficiency of the operations.

Chair Swift, thanked the public for their attendance and the people watching on DCTV.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Jester and seconded by Ms. Motter. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.