

DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2025
Start Time: 4:41 p.m.
End Time: 7:03 p.m.

Board Attendees: Karli Swift, Chair
Vasu Abhiraman, Vice-Chair
Travis Bowden
Gail Lee
Dele Lowman

Other Attendees: Keisha Smith, Executive Director
Terry Phillips, Deputy County Attorney
Michael Petty, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Clark Candler, Senior 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 conducted the roll, confirming the presence of each board member by name. A quorum was established.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Vice-Chair Abhiraman and seconded by Mr. Bowden. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 14th meeting was made by Ms. Lowman and seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman. The motion passed 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 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 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

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permitted to show support for or opposition to a speaker's position. The following citizens provided public comment:

- Cheryl Dudley
- Michael Beach
- Faye Coffield
- Geraldine Champion
- Donna Priest-Brown
- Konrad Hayashi
- Janet Grant
- Cheryl Moore-Mathis
- Marla Tepper
- Bill Henderson
- Angela Harrison
- Bethann Frillman
- Dave Marcus

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A) Director's Report

Director Smith provided an update on a voter registration stating that registered active voters dropped below 500,000 and thus in accordance with Georgia law, a drop box was removed. She went on to report the applications in process, return mailings, and State List Maintenance. She reminded the public that inactive does not mean ineligible to vote. She shared the list of qualified candidates for the upcoming November 4th election. She then shared details regarding the poll worker training underway for the upcoming election cycle.

Ms. Lee asked about the figure on page 7 of the manual: voter 1412 last month compared to only 859 this month. Since this number is cumulative, she wanted clarification. Director Smith explained that the correct year-to-date total is 1,988, noting that the discrepancy was a typo. The updated total as of today is 1,988. Ms. Lee thanked Director Smith for providing the detailed breakdown of the List Maintenance from the SOS and commented that it is encouraging.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

A) Drop Box Removal

A motion to authorize the department to remove a single absentee voting box in accordance with state law and allow the department to restore that absentee voting box to the Memorial Drive location should our active voter registration count rise above 500,000 was made by Ms. Lowman. Seconded by Mr. Abhiraman. The motion passed unanimously.

B) City of Lithonia

A motion to authorize Director Smith to sign the agreement for the Special Election in the City of Lithonia was made by Ms. Lee. Seconded by Ms. Lowman. The motion passed unanimously.

C) Challenge to the Registration of Jason Lary submitted by David Marcus

A motion to remove Jason Lary from voter rolls in accordance with Code of Georgia § 21-2-216 was made by Ms. Lowman. Seconded by Ms. Lee. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to strike the name of Jason Lary from the ballot as a candidate for the November 4th, 2025 Stonecrest City Council District 5 election was made by Mr. Abhiraman. Seconded by Ms. Lowman. The motion passed unanimously.

D) City of Doraville Candidate Challenge submitted by Warren Simmons

A motion to strike the name of SM Abu Zahed from the ballot as a candidate for the November 4th, 2025 City of Doraville City Council District 1 Post 3 election in accordance with Code of Georgia § 45-2-1 was made by Mr. Abhiraman. Seconded by Ms. Lowman. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Ms. Lowman, seconded by Vice-Chair Abhiraman to recess for executive session to discuss pending litigation. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The Board entered executive session at 6:26 p.m. No action was taken during the executive session.

Motion by Vice-Chair Abhiraman, seconded by Mr. Bowden to exit recess for the purpose executive session and resume regular order. The motion carried unanimously. The Board exited executive session at 6:53 p.m. and resumed the regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Bowden, seconded by Ms. Lowman to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.