

DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Special Called Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2022

*via zoom platform

Start Time: 1:30 p.m.

End Time: 2:50 p.m.

Board Attendees: Chair Dele Lowman Smith
Vice-Chair Nancy Jester
Anthony Lewis
Susan Motter
Karli Swift

Other Attendees: Keisha Smith, Executive Director
John Matelski, Chief Innovation Officer
Terry Phillips, Deputy County Attorney
Irene Vander Els, Assistant County Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Lowman Smith called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Ms. Austin read the roll by calling each board member by name. All members except Mr. Lewis were in attendance. Mr. Lewis joined later in the meeting.

Motion by Vice-Chair Jester, seconded by Ms. Motter, to approve the agenda with the addition of an executive session for purposes of litigation. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Austin read the rules for public comment:

Public comments of two minutes or less may be made live via the teleconference. For those joining the meeting by telephone, please be aware that your phone number may be displayed to the public viewing or participating in the online meeting. Citizens who attend the meeting via the Zoom link above may join the public comment queue by raising their hand in the Zoom application, while citizens who attend the meeting via telephone may join the comment queue by pressing # followed by 2. There will be no comment cards, so when you are called upon, please state your name for the record. Also, please be conscious of speaking time so that everyone has an opportunity to provide input in the allotted time. Abusive, profane, or derogatory language will not be permitted.

The following citizens provided public comment:

- Marci McCarthy
- Lori Edwards
- Bill Quinn
- Judy Sophianopoulos
- Jim Duffie

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- Jenine Milum
- David Cross
- Stephen Binney
- Jan Appling

ITEMS FOR DECISION

A) Konnech (Poll Chief)

Director Smith reminded listeners that last month, the department had entered into an agreement with Konnech Corporation as part of an effort to modernize its poll worker, asset, and learning management capabilities. The agreement had required that all data be housed in the United States and that all poll worker data be used only for its intended purpose. The Director announced that on October 4, the department had learned of allegations made against Konnech and asked the Board to decide on the matter.

Ms. Swift asked where the data would be stored. Mr. Matelski responded that any vendor's data would be stored in DeKalb County's Azure tenant where the IT Department could control access to it.

Ms. Swift asked what information had already been shared with Konnech. Director Smith responded that to date only publicly available information such as addresses and phone numbers had been shared.

Chair Lowman Smith noted that as soon as the allegations surfaced, further entry of data had ceased until it could be stored as Mr. Matelski had described.

Vice-Chair Jester asked if identity protection for poll workers had been considered. The Chair responded that it had not been discussed because no private information had been shared to date.

The Vice Chair asked Mr. Matelski if this arrangement would be similar to relationships with existing vendors. Mr. Matelski responded that it was similar to other arrangements the county had made. In some cases data was stored on the county's servers and in other cases it was stored by the vendor.

The Vice Chair asked how the county knew that its data was safe when it was stored by other vendors. Mr. Matelski responded the IT Department worked with the vendors to receive reports and logs.

Chair Lowman Smith asked Director Smith to reconfirm that the Poll Chief system had no relationship to the voting equipment. The Director responded that it did not connect to the voting equipment in any way.

Motion by Vice-Chair Jester, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to terminate Konnech's contract in its entirety.

The motion failed by a vote of 2-3. Vice-Chair Jester and Mr. Lewis voted aye. Chair Lowman Smith, Ms. Motter, and Ms. Swift voted nay.

Motion by Ms. Motter to approve an amendment to the Poll Chief license, maintenance, and support agreement between the Board and Konnech, in such form that the county attorneys may recommend, to reflect that the DeKalb County poll worker data so referenced in such agreement will be maintained by a server of DeKalb County, with the security, particulars, and protocols as discussed in this meeting, that no data shall be maintained by Konnech on any of its servers, and that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to sign such an amendment on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Swift. The motion carried by a vote of 3-2. Chair Lowman Smith, Ms. Motter, and Ms. Swift voted aye. Vice-Chair Jester and Mr. Lewis voted nay.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Ms. Motter, seconded by Vice-Chair Jester, to move to executive session to discuss litigation. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ms. Swift, seconded by Vice-Chair Jester, to resume the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. No votes were taken during the session.

BOARD COMMENTS

Chair Lowman Smith thanked the Director, the Law Department, and IT for allowing the Board to understand the situation and helping to find a solution that prioritized the protection of poll workers' information and the Department's ability to maintain its focus on preparing for early voting.

The Chair reiterated that this was an administrative system with no connection to voter data or election outcomes.

Vice Chair Jester expressed her disappointment with the outcome of the vote. She stated that in the comments she had heard, there was no confusion about the purpose of the system but that she wished a different tool had been chosen.

Mr. Lewis was also disappointed with the outcome of the vote. He stated that in the past the decision-making of the board had been balanced and that he feared that balance was wavering.

As a board member with Asian ancestry, Ms. Motter felt a public responsibility to speak up about the subtext surrounding the accusations against Konnech's CEO. She mentioned examples of discrimination against Asians both from history and her own experience. She expressed concern about the impact this conversation would have on the Asian community and stated that the allegations being made would need to be sorted out in court.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Swift, seconded by Ms. Motter, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.