

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF HENRY

The Henry County Board of Elections and Registration held a Regular Public Meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, in the Conference Room, of the Elections and Registration Building, 40 Atlanta Street, McDonough, Georgia. Notice of this meeting was posted in the entrance foyer of the Elections and Registration Building. The Daily Herald was notified of this meeting. Those present were:

Andy Callaway, Chairman and Republican Party Appointee
Arch Brown, Vice-Chairman and Board of Commissioners Appointee
Mildred Schmelz, Democratic Party Appointee
Marie Thomas, Democratic Party Appointee
Debbie Moon, Republican Party Appointee

Also attending was: Tina Lunsford, Elections and Registration Supervisor, Shay Mathis and Grayson Davis.

Chairman Callaway called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the agenda. Board Member Moon made a motion to approve the agenda; Board Member Schmelz seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Approval of the February Minuets

Board Member Thomas made the motion to approve the minutes; Board Member Brown seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Update on the budget meeting and budget transfer for water leak

Tina stated that she along with Board Member Schmelz and Chairman Callaway attend the budget meeting with the County Administration. It went well. They suggested since there were overages in some of the accounts to go ahead and purchase items for the upcoming budget year. This was in place but unfortunately we received a \$1,400 water bill.

The current building has 13 toilets and there was one on the back hall that a flap was placed on the toilet and it was running continuously. Not sure for how long. The water bill for January was \$1,300 and it's anticipated that the bill for February will be approximately \$3,000. There was \$5,000 budgeted for the 2017 budget, currently there is a balance of \$3,262 but there is an un-posted bill for \$1,178 which will leave approximately \$2,100. Board Member Schmelz asked had the water

department been contacted to possibly negotiate the balance. Tina stated yes they were contacted but unfortunately because it was not a ruptured line but a toilet, they are not willing to negotiate or adjust anything off the balance.

Board Member Brown asked how long has the toilet been running. Tina responded we're not sure. He also asked what the November and December bill was. Tina stated our normal bill is normally \$60 to \$80 per month. October's bill was increased because of voting (\$130). When we received the January bill for \$1,178 we immediately called and they said there must be a huge water leak. Facility Maintenance came and no water leak was found but that's when they found the toilet issue. Board Member Brown commented that this was a lot for one month.

Board Member Thomas asked who performs the maintenance on the building. Tina stated Facility Maintenance. A ticket is issued when staff realizes things are broke and they come and repair it. The majority of staff is in the front hall of the building and no one uses the restroom in the back by the sally port. Now staff makes rounds to make sure there are no issues.

Chairman Callaway asked if the water could be turned off on the toilets that are not used. Maintenance stated that the smell would come up and we should not do that. Board Member Brown commented that once the water is turned off the water would evaporate but by turning it back on at least once a month and let the bowel fill back up. Also, toilets and sinks have a traps. Those traps collect the water and blocks the sewerage smell.

Probate Court also experienced a similar issue.

Chairman Callaway also discussed the general housekeeping of the building. Tina stated that was handled by Community Service.

Tina stated that the issue has been repaired. Board Member Moon expressed her concern regarding the high volume of the water lost and that big of an expense in the stated period of time. Board Member Schmelz asked if there was an appeal process. Tina stated that staff is trying to work with them to see if they would be willing to take off half of the cost.

Board Member Schmelz commented that she would be interested in knowing how many other county departments that are located within the City of McDonough have been charged the high bills. Tina stated she knew of Probate Court that had a toilet running in one of their public restrooms.

After further discussion, Tina stated that funds will be transferred to handle the increase in the water bill. There is approximately \$9,000 in education and training. There are also funds available in printing and binding but we have the

national change of addresses that the State is getting ready to mail out. Postage will have to come from the communications budget at approximately \$1,300.

Board Member Schmelz commented that she was pretty optimistic about the budget meeting and the potential of moving out of the current building after talking with the Interim County Manager and the Chairperson of the BOC. Also, there needs to be a Resolution approved by the Board of Elections and presented to the Board of Commissioners for their approval for the \$250 increase to the salary of the Chairman of the Board of Elections.

Tina stated the budget meeting overall went good. It was the first time that administration had gone line item by line item and asked a lot of good questions which is good. It gives you the opportunity to explain some of the procedures. They didn't realize how city annexations affected Elections and Registrations. We still don't know where we stand with the budget but hopefully we will know this month.

Board Member Brown commented that he spoke with Commissioner Barham and told him we were excited to be moving to the Probate Court building and he also shared that we were getting away from using the schools for precincts because of the issues with the opening of the schools late and having to go before the judge when we are late. He didn't know that. Board Member Brown also mentioned that there are no lights in the back of the parking lot and the safety issues with the increased pedestrian traffic.

Chairman Callaway stated he will begin talking with the Commissioners individually to start conversations.

Board Member Moon asked how the visit to the (snapper) building went. Tina stated the building itself needed a lot of work. The county is not going to give us the money. She feels there are things being discussed.

Chairman Callaway commented that it's still not determined what the county is going to do with the Phillips Drive building. Tina responded that it's because the county doesn't have any money to make the necessary repairs.

Update on current office workload regarding voter applications, community outreach and voting unit maintenance

Tina stated we are currently up-to-date on the applications. Chris Harvey, Executive Director for the State sent an email of congratulations. There are 61 counties that are having a special election in March. That was the reason for the big push to get the applications completed. We are in the process of working the duplicate list (when voters are registered twice). The State is getting ready to run the No Act report, which is removing voters that haven't voted in the last two

General Elections. There's a lot of housekeeping to be done in the next couple of months.

We've partnered with the Solicitor General from Clayton County and we've had mock elections at two schools. There will be a third this Friday. Voting units are actually used and the students learn how to vote on them and we discuss elections.

Chairman Callaway asked what the total number of voters is for Henry County. Tina stated she will wait until we are done with the duplicates and she will run a query.

Board Member Schmelz asked what schools the mock elections were held. Tina stated Henry County High and Eagle's Landing High School. Stockbridge High School has one scheduled and the last school is Union Grove High School. Ola High and Luella High Schools have also reached out.

Tina informed the Board that Grayson has started the quarterly charging of the voting units. Once that's done we will check the units to see how many didn't make it after the November election.

We plan on trying to get a head start on the repairs with available funds from the current budget and send out more in July with the new budget. We will have to order signs for the upcoming election year. Also we will have to replace some tables and file cabinets will have to be replaced. Purchases have to go through purchasing and the vendors have to be on the approved vendor list.

Board Member Schmelz stated for the record, there is a procurement department.

Stockbridge early voting schedule for the November Election

Tina stated that the City of Stockbridge voted to pay our department \$23,500 to hold their November election and the runoff in December. Board Member Thomas asked if this was for their referendum. Tina responded no this is for their city elections for mayor and council. The referendum would be its own special election, so they were informed that if the legislation is passed there will be an additional cost. Right now the other cities don't wish to have extended times. The schedule for Stockbridge is:

Early Voting

October 16th – 27th

8am to 5pm

Henry County Elections Office

Saturday, October 21st and Saturday, October 28th
8am to 2pm Merle Manders Conference Center

Sunday October 29th
1pm to 5pm Merle Manders Conference Center

October 30th – November 3rd
7am to 7pm Merle Manders Conference Center
8am to 5pm Henry County Elections Office

Runoff Election

November 27th - December 1st
7am to 7pm Merle Manders Conference Center

Board Member Thomas asked if the referendum would be included in this election. Tina responded that it would be held at the same time. Board Member Thomas asked if the county precincts would be opened. Tina stated that would be a Board of Elections decision, but highly recommends it. Board Member Thomas confirmed that the referendum would only be open to the citizens affected not the entire county. Tina confirmed that was correct, only certain precincts would be opened. Board Member Moon asked if the City of Stockbridge would pay for that as well. Tina commented she would hope so.

Board Member Brown commented that his understanding was that all referendums are dead because they can't make the deadline.

Open Discussion

Board Member Schmelz stated, regarding the letter to the Legislative Delegation, she suggested that any correspondence that is issued the Board Members have a chance to review it. Chairman Callaway responded he was ok with that and he received responses from Representatives Welch and Strickland.

Tina encouraged Board members to use their county email.

Board Member Schmelz discussed the battering of the members of the Board of Elections by citizens at the last Board of Commissioners meeting. She didn't know if the Board of Elections needs to do a rebuttal at one of the Commissioners meeting. Since the Board of Commissioners has instituted the policy of not allowing people to do that to the members of the Commission and she would assume to other Boards in the County. This was not done at the last meeting where some of the Election Board Members were named.

Board Member Brown commented that his term expires July 1, 2017 so the Commissioners will have to either appoint someone or reappoint him. The Bylaws state that when a board members term expires they can continue to serve until reappointed or a replacement has been approved. However, the legislation creating the Board of Elections and Registration states that if the Board of Commissioners appointment is vacant, the Board of Elections can take no action.

Board Member Schmelz asked what the Board of Elections would like to do about the public comments at the Commission meetings. Board Member Thomas suggested that a letter be sent to the Chairman and the Board of Commissioners. Board Member Moon warned of the possible violation of the Freedom of Speech. Chairman Callaway suggested maybe contacting the County Attorney before taking any action. Board Member Thomas stated she feels the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners needs to be aware of this and if it takes place again someone needs to shut him down in the middle of the meeting. Board Member Moon suggested a phone call to the Chairman. The Board agreed for Chairman Callaway to call the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Callaway commented that at the last meeting it was discussed who would be the back-up person to Tina. Is there any conclusion? Tina responded that there are two people currently working on their certification. It takes a good ten (10) years to get to someone who can be an Election's Supervisor. The reason for ten (10) years is it gives them a presidential election cycle, a city election cycle and a referendum cycle plus the redistricting with the Census. When you have someone from within, they know the history, they've had the opportunity to work with candidates, elected officials and the governing authority. She has some ideas, she will just have to see how they will pan out. Right now the Board would probably have to hire someone outside that has experience. There would probably be an issue with the pay for the experience that would have to be worked out. Chairman Callaway commented that he would prefer to hire from within if possible. Tina stated she has ten (10) years till retirement. She stated it would be good to find someone in five (5) years and she step down and work under that person. With elections you want a smooth transfer. She also informed the Board that there is legislation that would make most seats nonpartisan. All but the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and the Commissioners. When that happens all those seats would then be determined by a runoff election.

Chairman Callaway recommended that the Board consider an assistant position that could then possibly become the Director. What will have to be done to initiate the position? Tina stated it would have to be done during the budget process. Currently Cobb and Fulton Counties have a director and an election supervisor and

a registration's supervisor. She also suggested the Board meet with the HR Director for guidance on how to create the position.

The Board revisited the discussion regarding having its own attorney.

Tina commented that she has started the process of an assistant. The position that Paul currently holds, when he leaves she plans on turning that into an assistant position at that time.

Board Member's Moon and Thomas' terms are up June 30, 2017.

Public Comment

There were no comments.

Adjournment

Board Member Schmelz made the motion to adjourn; Board Member Thomas seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.