



## **APPROVED MINUTES**

### **BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS**

#### **REGULAR MEETING – AUGUST 12, 2021**

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

**Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

**FGTV YouTube Channel**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYH7E0jH6HxE-3KTRluH8SQ>

**Presiding:** Mr. Alex Wan, Chairman

**Other Board Members Present:**

Ms. Dr. Kathleen Ruth, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Aaron V. Johnson

Mrs. Teresa Crawford

**Absent Board Member:**

Mr. Mark Wingate

**Staff Attending:** Mr. Richard Barron, Director; Mr. Patrick Eskridge, Deputy Director; Ms. Nadine E. Williams, Elections Chief; Ms. Sharon Benjamin, Deputy Elections Chief; Ms. Shamira Marshall, Registration Manager; Ms. Brenda McCloud, Administrative Manager; Ms. Breauana Jenkins, Administrative Coordinator I; Mr. Johnny Harris, Elections Officer; Mr. Axiver Harris, Elections Officer; Mrs. Cheryl Ringer, County Attorney; Mr. David Lowman, County Attorney; Mr. James Reese, Production Manager; Jessica Corbitt, PIO; Regina Waller, Senior Public Affairs Officer

**Commissioners: Chairman Robb L. Pitts**

**County Personnel:** Jenn Thomas

**Guest Attending:** Janice Johnston, Nia Cortesu, Ann Tillman, John Nance

#### **#1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to adopt agenda. The motion was made by Mrs. Crawford, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

#### **#2– COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RESPONSE**

**Janice Johnston** commented about errors and election fraud.

**Anna Tillman** questioned the exorbitant cost amounts from Municipalities to conduct upcoming November elections. In the past refunds were made to cities for this cost for low turnout elections. Are there plans to do this again for this upcoming election? And does the IGA contract reflect this? Second question: Why does Mr. Barron want \$300,000 for Poll pads and incidentals? And does that mean there's missing equipment? And if so, where is it? Third question: What has the board done about the VoterGA's claim of falsified tally sheets? That's been public information, we just want to know If you've done anything about it, and if you're going to investigate them. Next question: Is \$300,000 really needed for truck rentals for low turnout municipal election.

**John Nance** asked the Board to allow zoom comments, like the Fulton County Board of Commissioners' meetings provide. Because Fulton County span is 70 miles from end to end, it would give equal access to all Fulton citizens to provide comments through Zoom rather than have to attend in person or citizens living at the ends of the county involves taking half a day of work and paying approximately \$12 for parking as well. It'd be great if we afforded equal access to all citizens within the Fulton County to give comment. Everyone has the right to be heard. So in addition to that request, I would also like to request that the Board reduce the county requirement for temporary agencies to perform election work. The board should do everything it can to train local volunteers to handle these tasks to avoid having conflicts of interest with temporary agencies.

**Nia Cortesu** on behalf of **Bridgette Thorne** commented on Happy Faces, Stacey Abrams and the lack of election integrity.

## OLD BUSINESS

### #3- APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Regular Meeting- July 8, 2021**
- **Executive Session Meeting- July 8, 2021**

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to approve the Regular and Executive Session minutes from July 8, 2021. The motion was made by Dr. Ruth, seconded by Mrs. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

### #4- MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR AUGUST 2021

**Mr. Barron** reported:

- Polling Locations 259 after changes during this meeting
- ESPLOST, Atlanta Public Schools and Fulton County School Board Pending
- WDS Inventory System training completed
- **SB 202** reduce the amount of drop boxes countywide
- **SB 202** made Mobile voting currently obsolete, **VEO** will utilize for Education and Outreach
- Rewrap of Mobile buses completed for Voter Education and Outreach (VEO)
- Revisions to training due to **SB 202**
  - Poll worker Manuals
  - Early Voting / Absentee Drop Boxes
  - Absentee Ballot Process
- SOS Forum in August cancelled
- A legal hold remains on the **DRE** voting units from the April 18, 2017 and June 20, 2017 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional Special Election and Runoff Special Election (**Relocated to offsite facility**)
- **555** randomly selected AMB envelopes for UGA Researchers Audit Match
- Total voter registration applications received in 2021: **55,883**
- **8,174** voter registration applications received in July
- As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, **848,903** (823,606 active and 25,297 inactive) registered voters reside in Fulton County
- SOS completed the NGE's- Inactive voters with no activity through (2) General Election Cycles
  - 32,460 Letters were mailed to for the no contact list maintenance

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- 11,770 remove from voter rolls on July 28, 2021
- SOS will run a National Change of Address (NCOA) late summer
- Total New Applications: **17,820**
- Felon Hearings: **0**
- Felon Letters Mailed: **72**
- Administration maintaining expenditures from Grant Funds and County Budgets
  - 2021 Processing Invoices
  - Auditor's report completed- Agenda items for discussion
  - CTCL Grant refund processed
- Weekly meetings with various Departments
- Contingency Plans for COVID-19
- Business Process Review will be discussed at the BOC, August 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting
- Election Communication Plan
- Personnel Vacancy:
  - Registration Chief
  - Registration Officer (2)
  - VEO Manager- [New](#)
  - Financial Manager-[New](#)
  - IT Manager-[New](#)
  - Absentee Manager- [New](#)
  - Absentee Supervisor- [New](#)
  - Absentee Officer (4)-[New](#)

## Elections Budgets

<b>Election Description</b>	<b>General Fund</b>
Municipal/Special Elections, Nov 2	\$ 7,384,191
Municipal Runoffs, Nov 30	\$ 4,266,390
<b>Total Election Costs</b>	<b>\$11,650,581</b>
Municipal Payments	\$ 4,251,151

### Personnel Changes during Barron's tenure:

<b>2013</b>	18
<b>2020</b>	37
<b>December 2021</b>	46
<b>By 2024</b>	58

**Mrs. Crawford** inquired about the date for absentee ballots applications to start

**Mr. Barron** answered applications will be accepted starting August 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Dr. Ruth** inquired about poll worker training and the number of trainers being utilized.

**Mr. Barron** directed **Ms. Williams** to respond.

**Ms. Williams** responded that the DRE will hire 10 to 13 trainers and we have (2) Election Officers. Train the Trainer starts Monday, so we can all review the training material to ensure that everyone is on the same page and all the SB 202 changes have been implemented in training.

**Dr. Ruth** commented:

We all know how important the poll worker training is and my comment is just that efforts need to really focus on high quality standardized training so that everyone is trained the exact same way and information is conveyed in the same manner. And I would also recommend, I know that Xavier and Johnny are leading this effort that after trainers are trained that either one of them are in the room during the training to make sure that training is done with fidelity.

**Ms. Williams** responded that all trainers will be monitored to make sure they're all on the same page. The trainers will receive the same guidelines and presentations to make sure everyone's consistent. They will be creating videos from training to assist managers that may need to refresh on any component of training. They will have access to log into the system and review training material.

**Dr. Ruth** requested the training material be uploaded to AchieveIT

**Ms. Williams** responded yes.

**Dr. Ruth** inquired about the (6) positions being advertised

**Mr. Barron** responded there are (9) positions. (See list on page #3)

**Dr. Ruth** inquired about the amount personnel under the Absentee Division

**Mr. Barron** responded that there will be (6) full time personnel in the Absentee Division:

- Absentee Manager
- Absentee Supervisor
- (4) Absentee Officers

**Dr. Ruth** suggested creating some type of flowchart or mapping that enables voters to see what happens to their absentee ballot once it's received by the department.

**Mr. Barron** mentioned the **DRE** does have a map prepared but the document needs to be updated to reflect changes to the procedures. The DRE will provide this item next month.

**Dr. Ruth** inquired about being adequately staffed by October with (9) positions that are vacant

**Mr. Barron** answered yes. The DRE already posted and received the registries for most of the positions. The DRE is reviewing the candidates and we are reposting one of the positions the Absentee Supervisor position. All remaining positions, management has selected candidates to interview for all of those positions.

**Mr. Johnson** inquired about the plan beyond our current process for Happy Faces, something like that takes time. And it's not something that's going to happen at our next board meeting, correct?

**Mr. Barron** responded yes and the DRE are going to be meeting with County Manager Executive Team to make some decisions about how to go forward with that. Whether it's going to be a hybrid model between staffing agency and HR, whether it will be all HR, whether it would be all staffing agency. Some of the other departments that are going to be involved have to put in budget requests for increasing their staff to be able to administratively handle another 300- 400 people that we would be bringing in that normally the staffing agency would process.

**Mr. Johnson** inquired about the mobile voting units? During voter education events will voters be able to request their application while they are there.

**Mr. Barron** answered the VEO team will have voter registration applications and absentee ballot applications during Voter Education events. And they can just take their license and go through the actual process.

**Mr. Johnson** asked if there is an issue at an early voting facility or location, that for some reason they're unable to vote would the DRE be able to utilize the mobile RVs under that emergency

**Mr. Barron** explained that mobile voting is prohibited now. The Governor must declare a state of emergency in order for us to use Mobile RVs now. Last year the DRE had a couple schools get Legionnaires disease. And we were able to just move the buses there. But we don't have that flexibility anymore. And we did actually move those buses during early voting to alleviate I think one of the sites was out of power for a couple of days. So we moved the buses out in front of Chastain Park. We're prohibited from doing that anymore.

**Mr. Johnson** inquired about the website information still reflects back to previous elections. Do you know how soon our website will be updated? Because the app seems to be pretty much updated with the current information, I noticed that we had the drop boxes on there and early voting times but the website is not reflecting the same information as the app.

**Mr. Barron** explained working with External Affairs team and we're updating some of the graphics on all of the forms. And I think within the next week, you should start to see all the updates on our site.

**Mr. Johnson** asked for clarification on the Secretary of State's portal for absentee ballot request being unavailable for the upcoming election.

**Mr. Barron** answered right, it is not available for counties that are conducting Municipal elections in the fall. The DRE's portal is active and it's been tested. The DRE is waiting until midnight on August 16<sup>th</sup> to put that on the site.

**Chairman Wan** surmised various Board members inquiries:

four buckets, which I like this framework, I think it really allows us to focus on kind of the key things that have been raised in terms of the absentee ballots, I really am going to echo Dr. Ruth's request for a flowchart of what happens after the DRE received the ballot. I'd like for us to discuss that next month. And I really would like us to lay out what happened in 2020 .

- Items in the areas where the elections process received a lot of criticism and scrutiny
- Why our process will address it or prevent it from happening going forward.
- In terms of the supplemental staff, if we've learned anything from the process that happened over the last 45 days
- Start weaning ourselves off to the extent that is operationally feasible, financially feasible, but also just what makes business sense for the DRE
- Think through carefully what are the critical processes and functionality and accountability pieces that we need to own as our permanent staff versus having some staffing agency do so
- RFP is approved for the consultant to come in, and that is something that we will elevate

So all that said, I do feel like you know, this is a great roadmap, I appreciate the time that you and the staff have gone into doing that. And like I said, it give us a framework. So when we come back next month, there are a couple things, I think we'll need to look into the absentee ballot, the training and the staffing situation, it will be key. And then also the kind of the voter information, I think at that point will be great to have an update on that.

**Mr. Johnson** commented:

“Anytime you need us to do anything, just let us know. We'll be more than happy they call us anyway. So we might as well be on the same page when we're talking to them”

**Mr. Johnson** announced **Mr. Ralph Jones'** absence:

**Ralph Jones** is not here. But I do want to say something about Ralph, I know he's not here. I hope he's watching. If not, we'll shoot him a text or something, but just want to thank him for his years of service. He always put the people the Fulton County in front and try to do all he can to help them. No matter the pressures around him, no matter the chatter around him. He always maintain a professional attitude. And we truly appreciate that. So I just wanted to make sure that we acknowledge the fact that the chair is empty. We want to get one more day with him but we understand

**Ms. Terri** commented:

He's kind of finding his way through not working. I believe the institutional knowledge that is leaving with him, I think we're going to miss him and I've enjoyed working with Ralph Jones for the past 4-5 years. And he's a very sweet man. And he always worked hard and kept long hours. Thank you, Ralph.

**Dr. Ruth** commented

He was just a tremendous asset to the department. And we will miss him. And he worked very hard and always had a smile on his face and did his work with joy.

Mr. Chairman agreed with the Board with regards to their well wishes for Mr. Jones, who has served Fulton County for more than (13) years.

**Mr. Barron** explained the cost of Municipalities the election costs increased last year because of the new voting system about three 300%. The Commissioners in 2019, passed a resolution to charge the municipalities \$2.96 per registered voter in the Municipal General \$2.46 per registered voter for the Runoff. After we determined how much the new voting system cost to run an election, I think at some point, next year, we're probably going to have to go back and determine whether those \$2.96 and \$2.46 per registered voter cost is still an effective amount because it used to be that the county didn't pay any portion of the Municipal Elections. And now it's paying about 2/3 of the cost of the Municipal Elections. The commissioners will need to look at making adjustments, at some point probably next year.

### Elections Budgets

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**Chairman Wan** inquired about no contact list

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**Ms. Shamira Marshall** greeted the Board and explained the VR Division has received approximately 2,000 of the confirmations, but they are non-responsive or returned mail. If the voter fills it out and they provide a response they will remain in active status. But if they do not respond within a 40 day clock, the voter will be placed into cancel status.

## **#5-BYLAWS DISCUSSION- CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PARTY LIAISON**

Chairman Wan announced:

There were two items Conflict of Interest and Party Liaison.

### **Conflict of Interest:**

Unfortunately Mr. Wingate is not in attendance today in his piece on the conflict of interest was something that he had raised previously, and then Ms. Ringer at our last meeting provided some language around what we might consider in terms of adding to our Bylaws. I took a look at what she prepared in our present. But then I kept thinking, what troubled me about it is that, to me, the county has a board of ethics. And the county has a code of ethics that we all are abiding by and there are processes around that. When folks feel like at any level, at any department and a position in the county that if there is a potential violation or concern, even as an individual if there's something I'm doing that I want to make sure doesn't is it wouldn't violate the code of ethics.

To be honest with you a lot of what Ms. Ringer crafted, covered a lot of I believe what Mr. Wingate was concerned about. But again, if you look at the code of ethics, it almost mirrors exactly the language that is in there. So I guess what I'm saying is I don't know that we need to insert this into our Bylaws and which really just to meet are more governance issues and how we operate with the recognition and understanding that that specific piece is already covered by the county. So I will put that out there. I don't know if anybody else wants to make any comments.

**Mrs. Crawford** agreed with **Chairman Wan**

### **Party Liaison:**

And I think there was some conversation around essentially establishing a new position. Where I started wrestling with this was that obviously, we don't have the authority to create a position in the department, all we have is the ability to create a position of on our board. And do we want to create a Party liaison position within our board organization, to accomplish the functionality that was brought up at our last meeting or the meeting before? I will personally say, I don't know that that is an area that I'm comfortable or feel like is necessary. Obviously, we have the parties that appoint the two positions, each on our board. And I feel like that within those people, if there's another way that operational functionality wise, they'll want to handle that I think that's really the more appropriate way. But that, again, is my opinion, I wanted to make sure it was on the agenda because it was brought up. And again, I wanted to make sure that we understand that we can create a position in the department. And that the only real path for us to do it on our board, if that is what is the intent.

**Mrs. Crawford** mentioned the Board's job is to be the liaison by adding someone else into the mix. We just add confusion, in my opinion. I am not leaning towards adding a liaison on to the Voter Outreach, any of us can talk to them or provide event locations. I just think it's another added step that we don't need by adding additional people that the BRE don't need in the chain.

## NEW BUSINESS

### #6- COUNTY AUDITOR REVIEW

**Mr. Barron** provided the Board an overview of the County Auditor's Report:

A few of the things to keep in mind is that last year, our entire budget before COVID-19 Pandemic began, our budget was supposed to be \$17 million. It ballooned to \$44 million. That was a major increase in our funding. And we still have the same two staff members that processed everything. We ended up not only just having our election budget in our general fund budget, or operations budget within our department, but then we also received money from cares. We had three grants, we got general fund money from the county, we had our election budget, there were an enormous amount of emergency procurements that happened working with the County Managers' Executive team, several departments were brought in to help us try to manage these procurements. So we had we had a lot of challenges. I don't think there were really not we disagreed with a lot of the findings, I think, sign some respects. We, I think what they don't show in the areas where I wouldn't call them disagreements, but I just don't think they fully show the challenges that we had when we have other departments ordering things that were being directed in these meetings. And so sometimes a purchase a purchase or an invoice was created before we had even the chance to do a purchase order. So sometimes there were things that were done out of order. And I think there were some times where we would get the invoice, you know, 30 days, more than 30 days past the original due date, which would be noted in there and nothing you can ask Brenda, but none of the vendors were I think most of them were pretty understanding last year, and it didn't affect any relationships in that regard.

#### **Finding 1: Lack of Departmental Standard Operating Procedures**

We understand the value of standard operating procedures (SOPs). As noted in the findings, we have many SOPs from which we draw guidance. In addition, we have some manuals that we follow developed by vendors that were not included in this audit report.

The implementation of a new voting system in the midst of a pandemic followed by new legislation (SB 202), all-encompassing in nature, has required us to re-evaluate, create, update or rewrite SOPs. During the 2020 election cycle year we had frequent changes to staff and changes in duties. Some tasks became irrelevant as others changed. With six elections in eight months, followed by several months of recovery duties, it was difficult to sustain conventional tasks such as regularly updating SOP's.

The department sent out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Business Process Review. A vendor that responded to the RFP was chosen, but later withdrew from consideration. A second vendor has been engaged who will provide for the development, restructuring, revamping, and rewriting of our entire department's SOPs to ensure that they are written simply, concise and with purpose. They will include updated procedures, scope, responsibilities, and accountability measures. They will add to what we are doing currently.

#### **Finding 2 - Inconsistent Procurement Procedures**

Several factors affected the manner and method by which purchases were made during the 2020 -2021 election year. After the 2020 Primary election and the challenges that arose we received much needed assistance from the County Manager's Executive team. The County Manager's office assisted our department to increase efficiencies by streamlining communication between departments. One area in which we had much help was in procuring items in emergency or quick turnaround situations in the middle of a pandemic. The pandemic created many emergency procurement situations. At times, the Purchase Order was created out of step with the Purchase Requisition or invoice.

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With the implementation of the new voting system by the SOS, the department was required to purchase and acquire many items to ensure the success that we achieved in 2020-21. Many items that we needed to support the new voting system or the purchase of additional equipment to supplement the inventory that the State of Georgia didn't provide in the initial purchase resulted in a significant amounts of emergency purchases.

Funding, as well as procurement approvals came from outside our department. We had multiple budgets that we used to cover costs of the election. These additional funding avenues were unavailable in the past and gave us significant resources from which to draw. Our budget increased 2.5 times over the original allotment at the beginning of 2020. The additional funding sources included General Fund, election budgets, CARES monies, multiple year non-agency funds and three different grants from Center for Civic and Tech Life and the Southern Poverty Law Center, which significantly affected our ability to keep up with normal purchasing procedures staffed as we were in the Administration Division.

When purchases were initiated externally, staff had to request invoices via the vendor in order to create purchase orders. In addition, invoices were submitted to us from other departments at the behest of the County Manager's team that was assisting us, which was a practice never used before.

We understand the importance of following the outlined steps of the process. In previous years, we were diligent in these matters. We have created SOPs to follow in the future to ensure this happens. State of emergency processes and procedures have been discontinued. This will require us to follow regular county procedures. No longer will invoices precede purchase orders. Once the post-election assessment plan is completed all roles and responsibilities will again be handed back to departmental personnel.

We are adding a Financial Systems Manager to our staff, as well. This will help us with our significantly larger budgets and demands upon department personnel. It will help us follow all established guidelines and procedures.

***(See supporting documentation)***

### **Finding 3 - Untimely Payment of Invoices**

As was stated in the response above, unprecedented circumstances and events of 2020-21 created scenarios in which it became difficult to follow Purchasing procedures as we were given invoices from other departments and other parties were involved with these transactions. At times it was more difficult to properly track certain purchase orders, and on a number of occasions, we were given invoices by vendors and other departments that were beyond the standard county required timeframes. Through the sure volume of transactions, Dominion Voting Systems, our main equipment vendor had oversight issues of their own, which resulted in untimely invoices.

Moving forward we will add the Financial Systems Manager which will allow us to maintain additional controls have someone focus on day to day processes and procedures associated with maintaining the budget and financial transactions.

***See supporting documentation)***

### **Finding 4 - Lack of Supporting Documentation**

Amidst the November 2020 election our department experienced a Covid-19 outbreak, affecting 26 warehouse employees in less than one week. Our warehouse staff is vital to preparing, testing, securing and delivering equipment for early voting and Election Day. In addition, warehouse staff prepares, packs and delivers supplies to precincts for early voting and on Election Day. Within a week we lost nearly 50% of our staff. The management staff was stricken with Covid-19. This required Fulton County to contract with Dominion Voting Systems (DVS) to provide technicians to replace our staff in order to complete Logic & Accuracy testing, a legally mandated procedure, and to prepare supplies. We relied on Dominion Voting Systems to track their staff.

An emergency PO was issued in order to hire DVS. The PO was issued for \$450,000. No communication from Dominion indicated that they had exceeded the PO amount, which was ultimately paid for with the help of CTCL grant funding.

We know we have to follow different protocols to track vendor staff, if the need arises, as we do with other staffing agency vendors, such as Corporate Temps, Happy Faces and Halo Innovations. DVS is a voting systems vendor rather than a staffing

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agency. Normal tracking protocols need to be applied to any vendor with whom we contract, even if it is in an emergency heretofore to track, monitor and approve time for all supplemental staff from vendors.

### **Finding 5 - Improper Payment:**

During the 2020 Election cycle Atlanta Public Schools requested their COVID-19 cleaning contractors be paid directly by Fulton County. APS stated that by waiting for reimbursement from Fulton County to pay their vendors would interfere with their budget. APS provided a list of their contracted vendors, and the vendors were provided Fulton County vendor registration instructions. Please see attached email correspondences. Atlanta Public Schools will forward a letter summarizing the request and procedure.

*See supporting documentation)*

### **Finding 6 - Inadequate Safeguarding of Assets**

Upon discovery of the misplaced routers, staff have been delayed in searching for the misplaced items. We have few personnel in the warehouse and an upsurge in open records requests and discovery items for litigation that have overwhelmed our department with unexpected workloads that take significant time and manpower. The items in question were used during early voting. We believe we know where these items are located. Staff has requested that KnowInk, the Poll Pad vendor, to track the routers.

We purchased a new inventory tracking system with grant funds. Training commences next week. The system is installed. It is a highly functional inventory system that will allow for every asset to be tracked, logged, and accounted. It will improve chain of custody and allow us to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century in how we track inventory.

### **Finding 7 - Failure to return unused grant funds**

We received and managed grant funds for the first time in 2020-21. Staff worked through a learning curve as we made our first attempt to properly execute grant guidelines. At the closing of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) grant our department notified the Grants division to inquire how to issue the refund to SPLC.

We received a response and staff believed the next steps were to be taken by the Grants division. When we followed up, responses and explanations were delayed due to turnover within the Grants division. In recent inquiries we discovered that the grantor had to be listed as a vendor before issuing a refund. Within that time SPLC has registered as a vendor, and we have created a payment voucher and submitted to Accounts Payable.

### **Finding 8 - Failure to report grant requirements on website**

The SPLC grant had a requirement that requested us to provide absentee ballot return information through the drop boxes to be posted on our web site. This was an oversight during the 2020 election cycle.

We will have the County Attorney review all grants in the future to alert us to any requirements. All future requirements to post information on the departmental website will be submitted in writing to all appropriate parties.

### **Finding 9 - Inadequate Departmental Accountability and Oversight of Financial Transactions**

Circumstances that required assistance from the County Manager's office in the areas of procurement, staffing (due to Covid-19 losses,) and budgeting (emergency purchases from various funds, CARES Act funds, etc.) created various situations where tasks were being handled and processed from parties other than our own internal staff. This created irregularities within our scope and ability to manage or oversee certain processes and procedures.

The Business Process Review will address every finding and concern, and develop and rewrite SOP's to prevent future oversight, establish and reaffirm personnel's responsibilities, which will in turn increase accountability throughout the department.

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## 7- COMMUNICATION UPDATE

### Overview:

- The November 2, 2021, Municipal General/Special Election will include municipal elections, school board elections, and E-SPLOST, T-SPOST.
- Fulton County Registration & Elections experienced significant disruption during the 2020 Elections cycle due to the impacts of COVID-19
- 2020 brought significant national focus to Fulton County elections, and that focus has continuing negative impact on perception of election operations.
- In 2021, the General Assembly passed SB 202 which will have numerous impacts on voting procedures beginning July 1, 2021, including several changes of specific impact to Fulton County.
- Fulton County seeks a robust communications plan to inform stakeholders about 2021 elections and their opportunities to participate.

### Communication Goals:

- Empower voters through accurate, timely and unbiased information that will allow them to successfully exercise the right to vote.
  - *Highlight procedural changes in the voting process brought about by SB 202.*
- Strengthen confidence in the integrity of Fulton County's Registration & Elections by inviting stakeholders to participate in the process
  - Support poll worker recruitment.
  - Highlight opportunities to observe the elections process.
- Aggressively address misinformation or other activity that degrades confidence in the election process or poses threats to election worker safety.

### Guiding Principles:

#### Clarity

Voters must clearly understand the steps required for them to exercise their right to vote – what to do, where to go, and when.

#### Integrity

Voters and other stakeholders must have confidence that the process is fair, unbiased, and legally compliant. Transparency into election operations should reinforce confidence in the election process.

#### Equity

Fulton County is a large and diverse county. Voters must be confident that resources are distributed equitably throughout the County and all Fulton County voters will have a similar voter experience.

### Key Audiences:

Fulton County Voters  
Poll Workers  
Political Parties  
Community Organizations

Elected Officials  
Journalists

### Tactics Overview:

FGTV  
Digital- Web, Email, Social, App  
Community + Influencer  
Outreach & Toolkits

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Media Relations

Direct Mail & Advertisement

### Primary Message:

#### 1. Vote by Mail

##### Deadlines & Procedures under SB 202

- Voters applying for an absentee ballot are now required to provide their Drivers License number or alternative ID on their ballot application.
- August 16, 2021 is the first date for a voter to apply for an absentee ballot for the November 2, 2021 General Election.
- October 11, 2021 is the first day that absentee ballots may be mailed.
- October 22, 2021 is the last day to apply for an absentee ballot for the November 2, 2021 General Election. (11 days earlier than deadline in previous years.)
- Absentee ballots may be turned in to drop boxes located in 8 early voting locations during early voting hours only.
- Fulton County Elections offices will have office hours during the weekend following the last day of early voting to provide voters additional hours to return ballots in person.

#### 2. Vote Early

- Voting early is the easiest and most convenient option for most Fulton County voters.
- Fulton County has the largest early voting program in the state with 24 locations.
- Fulton County voters can cast their ballots 7 days per week, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Fulton County voters may go to any early voting location.
- Find the full list of early voting locations at [www.fultoncountyga.gov/voteearly](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/voteearly) or by downloading the Fulton Votes app

#### 3. Vote on Election Day

**Under changes in SB 202, out-of-precinct provisional ballots will NOT count if issued before 5 p.m.**

**It is more critical than ever for voters to “Know Before You Go”**

- Voters who choose to vote on Election Day must report to their assigned polling place.
- Election Day polling place locations have changed for thousands of Fulton County voters.
- Voters must check their Election Day polling place before they go to the polls on Election Day
- Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Out-of-precinct voters cannot vote by provisional ballot before 5 p.m.

## #8- CALL FOR ELECTION: TSPLOST

### Chairman Wan announced:

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with O.C.G.A § 21-2-540, a special election shall be held in Fulton County for the purpose of submitting to the voters the following question for approval or rejection:

Shall an additional .75 percent sales tax be collected in that part of Fulton County, Georgia, outside of the City of Atlanta, for five years for the purpose of transportation improvements and congestion reduction?

The special election will be held on November 2, 2021.

All persons who are not registered to vote and who desire to register to vote in the special election may register to vote through the close of business on October 4, 2021. Advance voting will be held October 12<sup>th</sup> through October 29, 2021. Polls will be open from 7:00am to 7:00pm on Election Day with the exception of City of Atlanta precincts which will be open from 7:00am to 8:00pm on Election Day.

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to approve the Call for Special Election: TSPLOST. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Ruth and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**#9- Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement (IGAs) to Conduct General Municipal Election on November 2, 2021 and General Municipal Runoff Election on November 30, 2021**

Alpharetta  
 Atlanta  
 Chattahoochee Hills  
 College Park  
 East Point  
 Fairburn  
 Hapeville

Johns Creek  
 Milton  
 Roswell  
 Sandy Springs  
 South Fulton  
 Union City  
 TSPLOST

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to approve the IGAs to conduct the Fulton County Municipalities' Election. The motion was made by Mrs. Crawford, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**#10-APPROVAL OF POLLING PLACE CHANGES**

➤ 20/21, 23.21, 24/21

**Ms. Williams** greeted the Board and announced the (3) precinct proposals. All polling locations were surveyed for American with Disabilities Act (**ADA**) compliance and all impacted voters will be notified 30 days prior to the next scheduled election.

Proposal #	Precinct (s)	Facility Name	Reason	Proposed Facility	Number of Voters Assigned	Mile(s) to New Location
20.21	RW03	Vickery Mill Elementary 1201 Alpharetta Street	Decrease number of voters assigned to facility; split RW03A to be created and relocated to St Andrew Catholic Church; RW03 to remain at Vickery Mill Elementary	St. Andrews Catholic Church 675 Riverside Road Roswell, 30075	RW03 Vickery Mill Elementary (2886) RW03A St. Andrew Catholic Church (2352)	3.7
23.21	10P	Collier Park Recreation 3691 Collier Drive SW	Voter safety concerns	Harper Archer Elementary 3399 Collier Drive Atlanta 30331	10D1 & 10P Harper Archer Elementary (3644)	0.5
24.21	06D2	Haygood Memorial United Methodist 1015 E Rock Springs Road	Church no longer able to accommodate	Morningside Presbyterian Church 1411 North Morningside Drive	06D1 & 06D2 Morningside Prebyteian Church (4570)	0.7

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to approve the Polling Place changes as discussed. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**Attorney Ringer** interjected to provide an update the **Board** on the ESPLOST, Educational Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. There still in the negotiation process of the contract. There have been some new case law coming out with respect to whether or not the school should actually have to pay for putting the issue on the ballot. That's what's holding up the negotiations on the contract. Attorney Ringer asked the board to amend their agenda and approve staff to move forward with preparations for the ESPLOST.

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to amend the agenda to include the ESPLOST. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Ruth and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to authorize staff to negotiate contracts returning to us for approval at the September meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Ruth and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Chairman Wan entertained a motion to close the regular session and convene into executive session to discuss Pending Litigation. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

After executive session, **Chairman Wan entertained a motion to resume into regular session. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 3-0.\***

\*Dr. Ruth did not return from Executive Session.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no other items requiring the Board's action, **Chairman Wan entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Crawford seconded the motion.** Collectively, the Board agreed to adjourn at 12:41 p.m.

The meeting adjourned.

Prepared by,

Mariska Bodison, Board Secretary