



# BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS APPROVED MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING – SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Thursday, September 9, 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:** Dr. Kathleen Ruth, Vice Chairperson

**Other Board Members Present:**

Mr. Aaron V. Johnson

Mr. Mark Wingate

Mrs. Teresa Crawford

**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. Breauna 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

**Guest Attending:** Janice Johnston, Nia Cortsen, Julia Adams, Bridgette Thorne

**Madam Vice Chair Ruth** announced:

The Board expressed well wishes to the former Chairman of the Board, **Mr. Alex Wan**. **Mr. Wan** resigned to run for City Council in the City of Atlanta.

### #1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Mr. Wingate** proposed the addition of items #5.

**Vice Chair Ruth entertained a motion to add items under Old Business #5, Business Process Review and #6, Call for the Special Election ESPLOST to include a total of (8) items on the agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mrs. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

**Vice Chair Ruth entertained a motion to adopt agenda as amended. The motion was made by Mrs. Crawford, seconded by Mr. Wingate and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

### #2– COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RESPONSE

**Julia Adams** commented on the break-in at the EPC and the footage that

**Janice Johnston** commented about poll worker recruitment from the County and Happy Faces

**Nia Cortsen** commented on the Auditor's report and suggested removal of Richard Barron

**Bridgette Thorne** commented on Happy Faces, Election Group, and Dominion

## OLD BUSINESS

### #3- APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting- August 12, 2021
- Executive Session Meeting- August 12, 2021

Vice Chair Ruth entertained a motion to approve the Regular and Executive Session minutes from August 12, 2021. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

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

Mr. Barron reported:

- Election Day Polling Locations: 257
- (8)- Check-In Locations for Election Night with (1)- pending
- Advance Voting Locations submitted to SOS
- L&A Testing will begin September 18<sup>th</sup>
- WDS Inventory System training completed
- **SB 202** reduce the amount of drop boxes countywide
  - Formerly 38 reduced to 8
  - <https://fultoncountyga.gov/inside-fulton-county/fulton-county-departments/registration-and-elections/absentee-ballot-box>
- **SB 202** made Mobile voting currently obsolete, **VEO** will utilize for Education and Outreach
- Revisions to training due to **SB 202**
  - Poll worker Manuals
  - Early Voting / Absentee Drop Boxes
  - Absentee Ballot Process
- 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: **64,758**
- **8,875** voter registration applications received in August
- As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, **849,319** (824,319 active and 25,194 inactive) registered voters reside in Fulton County
- Total New Applications: **23,262**
- Felon Hearings: **0**
- Felon Letters Mailed: **189**
- Administration maintaining expenditures from County Budgets and submitting 2022 Budget
  - **Operations Budget** that reflect the same budget amount as the 2021 budget
  - **Capital Projects** – vehicles needed – box truck with lift, cargo vans, and two passenger cars & SUV's
  - **Enhancements** – request for 13 new positions, new voting equipment, forklift, and scanners
  - **Maintenance List** of existing and new annual warranties, licenses and fees
- Weekly meetings with various Departments
- Contingency Plans for COVID-19
- VEO Events listed in the monthly report
- Hired Personnel:
  - Registration Chief, Holly Smith
  - Absentee Manager, Mariska Bodison
- Vacancies:
  - Absentee Supervisor
  - Absentee Officer (1)
  - Registration Officer (2)
  - Financial System Manager
  - IT Systems Manager

- Executive Assistant/ Board Secretary

**Mrs. Crawford** inquired about the budget information submitted.

**Mr. Barron** directed Ms. McCloud to provide that information to the Board

**Mr. Wingate** asked for statistics of the onboarding for Happy Faces

**Mr. Wingate** inquired about the Mock Election

**Ms. Williams** responded the Mock Election involves the WDS Inventory System

**Mr. Wingate** requested more details on the Voter Registration statistics.

**Ms. Marshall** responded providing clarity to the report submitted and the statistics given during the meeting

**Ms. Benjamin** gave an overview of Advance Voting statistics and discussed the onboarding process with Happy Faces

**Dr. Ruth** mentioned the conversation regarding providing the board with the onboarding process, developing a list of expectations around the assessments that people will have to take when applying for certain positions

**Dr. Ruth** asked **Mr. Eskridge** about the liaison

**Mrs. Crawford** disagreed with assigning liaisons based on political parties.

**Jessica Corbitt** updated the Board:

#### **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.

#### **VOTE BY MAIL**

##### **Absentee Ballot Voters Need to Learn about New 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 12, 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 into 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.

**Dr. Ruth** commented on some of the graphics presented

**Ms. Corbitt** responded taking the suggestion back to the team to see what can be done

## **#5- BUSINESS PROCESS REVIEW UPDATE**

**Mr. Wingate** suggested tabling the Business Process Review

Mrs. Crawford disagreed with Mr. Wingate. Mrs. Crawford wants the department to move forward with process

**Mr. Johnson** discussed wanting the process to move forward

**Dr. Ruth** mentioned in it's current form the RFP does not benefit the DRE.

**Vice Chair Ruth entertained a motion to move forward with receiving BOC approval to request an agency to complete the business process review. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a vote of 2-2; Failed.**

Yea: Johnson, Crawford

Nay: Ruth, Wingate

## **#6-CALL FOR ELECTION: ESPLOST**

**Dr. Ruth** announced:

### **Call Special Election Question**

Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the Fulton County Board of Education and concurrently by the Atlanta Board of Education dated June 17, 2021

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with O.C.G.A § 21-2-540, a special election shall be held in Fulton County on November 2, 2021 for the purpose of submitting to the voters the following question for approval or rejection:

NOTICE OF CALL FOR SPECIAL ELECTION  
TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF FULTON COUNTY  
TO CONSIDER A SPECIAL ONE PERCENT SALES AND USE TAX

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on November 2, 2021, an election will be held in all of the election districts of Fulton County, at which time there will be submitted to the qualified voters of Fulton County for their determination the question of whether or not a special one percent (1%) sales and use tax shall be reimposed on all sales and uses in Fulton County beginning July 1, 2022, upon the expiration of the current sales and use tax, and continuing for a period of time not to exceed 20 calendar quarters to raise not more than \$1,831,543,155.40 to be expended for the following educational purposes:

**Vice Chair Ruth entertained a motion to approve the Call for Special Election: ESPLOST. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.**

## NEW BUSINESS

### #7-APPROVAL OF POLLING PLACE CHANGES

➤ 25/21, 26/21, 27.21, 28.21

**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
25.21	10D1	Harper Archer Elementary 3399 Collier Drive	Student Safety Concerns	CT Martin Recreation Center 3201 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr	5021 10D & 10D1 CT Martin Rec Center	1.6
26.21	10P	Harper Archer Elementary 3399 Collier Drive	Student Safety Concerns	Jackson Memorial Baptist Church 534 Fairburn Road	5970 09C & 10E & 10P Jackson Memorial Baptist	0.1
27.21	SC16A SC33	Sandtown Park Recreation Center 5320 Campbellton Road	Facility to undergo renovations	Sandtown Middle School 5400 Campbellton Road	5233 SC16A/B & SC33 Sandtown Middle School	0.6
28.21	SC08C	Gladys Dennard at South Fulton Library 4055 Flat Shoals Road	Proximity to voter residences	Welcome All Recreation Center 4255 Will Lee Road	1500 SC08C & SC17A/B/C Welcome All Recreation Center	4.2

**Vice Chair Ruth 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.**

### #8-GAVREO UPDATE

**Mr. Barron** mentioned:

**The Phoenix Award** presented to Fulton County Registration and Elections for recognition and appreciation of their dedicated service, devotion, and commitment to elections, the voters, and county.

**Conference Items:**

- SB 202 Changes
- Open Records Requests
- Municipal Qualifying

- List Maintenance
- Redistricting
- Changes in Absentee Voting.

**Attendees:** Vice Chair Ruth, Ms. Crawford, Richard Barron, Patrick Eskridge, Nadine Williams, and Dominic Olomo

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board did not convene into executive session

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other items requiring the Board's action, **Vice Chair Ruth 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