



BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS APPROVED MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING – NOVEMBER 14, 2023

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

**The meeting was recorded and is available for your review on
FGTV YouTube Channel**

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

Board Members Present Mrs. Patrise Perkins-Hooker, Chairperson
Mr. William Michael Heekin, Vice Chair
Mr. Aaron Johnson
Mrs. Teresa Crawford

Absent Board Members
Vacant Seat 8.2023

Staff Attending: Mrs. Nadine E. Williams, Director; Mr. Patrick Eskridge, Deputy Director; Mr. John Ross, Election Chief; Mrs. Sharon Benjamin, Deputy Election Chief; Mrs. Kathryn Glenn, Registration Manager; Mrs. Jodi Brittan, Absentee Manager; Ms. Janice Dickenson, Administrative Manager; Mrs. Janell Barganier, Financial Systems Manager; Ms. LaShandra Little, VEO Manager; Mr. Thomas Johnson, Registration Supervisor; Mr. Corey Henson, Elections Equipment Manager; Mr. David Lowman, Supervising County Counsel; Mr. Chad Alexis, Senior County Counsel; Mr. James Reese, Production/ Film Manager; Ms. Regina Waller, Communications Division Manager; Mr. Darryl Peek, Mr. Tyree Spencer, Mr. James Artis

Guest: Vanessa Waldon (COA), Theresa Payne (COA), Evelyn M. Scott (COA), Jim Kopple, Corey Adams (COSF), Brian K. Jones, Helen McLaughin (ACLU), Maey Lee (Common Cause), Grace King (11Alive/ WXIA)

ACRONYMS:

BRE- Board of Registration and Elections
DRE- Department of Registration and Elections
EHOC- Elections Hub and Operations Center
BOC- Board of Commissioners
ABM- Absentee by Mail
L&A- Logic and Accuracy Testing
VEO- Voter Education and Outreach
REIF- Reporting Elections Systems Issue Form

BMDs- Ballot Marking Devices
SOS- Secretary of State's
SEB- State Election Board
DDS- Department of Driver Services
CERA- Certified Elections Registration Administrator
GARVIS- Georgia Registered Voter Information System

Chair Perkins-Hooker commended the staff for their attendance after a long evening.

#1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was made by **Mrs. Crawford**, seconded by **Vice Chair Heekin**, and carried by a vote of 4-0.

#2-COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RESPONSE

Mr. Jim Kopple complimented the County on running excellent elections. **Mr. Kopple** expressed concerns from a poll worker point of view of Poll Pads in disarray (missing cords) and lack of security

OLD BUSINESS

#3– APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting – October 12, 2023

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to approve the proposed minutes of October 12, 2023. The motion was made by **Mrs. Crawford** and was seconded by **Vice Chair Heekin** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

#4– MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2023

Director Williams greeted the Board members. She provided a brief overview of current operations:

- Provided several updates throughout the Election cycle
 - Redistricting concerns, GARViS Challenges, margin of victory
- Recount administered and ongoing
 - due to missing ballot batches
- Post-Election Action plan will be provided to the BRE

Mrs. Brittan reported on the activities in **Absentee Division**:

- Weekly Meetings with the Division’s personnel
- Processed all applications and ballots received
- Accepting applications for the Runoff Election
 - Deadline for submission is November 27, 2023
- Ballots will be mailed for the Runoff as soon as possible

ABSENTEE BY MAIL STATISTICS: 699

BALLOTS ACCEPTED	618
PROVISIONAL	81

Ms. Dickenson reported on activities in the Administration Division:

Performed routine administrative functions:

- Processed requisitions to establish purchase orders to provide good and services
- Submitted invoices for payment.
- Process P-Card purchases and T-Card travel / training expenses.

Performed various HR functions:

- Processed payroll
- Processed requisitions for recruitment
- Processed separated employees from HR system

PERSONNEL VACANCIES:	POSITION TYPE	STATUS OF RECRUITMENT
Registration Officer	Existing Position	Requisition submitted to recruit for position.
Registration Chief	Existing Position	Requisition processed and awaiting register from HR to prepare to interview candidates.
Absentee Supervisor	Existing Position	Filled and onboarded on November 8, 2023
Courier (Time limited position)	Existing Position	These are temporary positions to end December 31, 2023. Interviews conducted. Onboarded 8 candidates – September 27, 2023. The remaining expected to onboard – October 11, 2023.

Mrs. Benjamin reported on activities with Advance Voting/ Early Voting:

- 20,000 voters participated in this election
- One of our main objectives was to make sure that we provided support to AV Staff in the field since majority are new to the Cellular Poll Pad and GARVIS
- Review and assessment of the newly implemented Poll Pad voter processing system along with GARVIS, to see what worked and what did not work
- Increase process and procedures focused on scenarios
- Preparing for the Runoff Elections

Vice Chair Heekin asked **Mrs. Benjamin** to provide an example of a scenario that AV intend to expound on in training

Mrs. Benjamin answered one scenario that will be implemented “what is the procedure for cancelling a voter in the Poll Pad?”.

Director Williams reported on the activities in the Election Division on behalf of Chief Ross:

Summary of our key activities:

- Preparing for the Runoff election
- Finalizing recounted tabulation
- Provide the results to all Municipalities
- Municipalities will identify if they have a Runoff, the race(s), candidates and sign-off
- The Ballot will be built from the information provided
- Ballot Proofing with commence as soon as possible

Chair Perkins-Hooker highlighted the delays in completing the recount. The DRE wanted to make sure all ballots were scanned and when it was determined that some Absentee In-Person (Advance Voting) ballot batches were missed, personnel conducted that count again. **Madam Chair** commended the staff on their efforts and acknowledged the need for additional equipment. **Madam Chair** thanked the monitors and observers for their feedback/recommendations and they have been taken into consideration.

Director Williams reported on the planning activities for Election Day (Elections Division) on behalf of Chief Ross:

- All precinct opened on-time
- Preparing for the Runoff election
- Commended Election Day Poll workers and Advance Voting
- Confirming staff and precinct locations for the Runoff Elections
- Locations are reserved in advance

Mr. Johnson asked **Director Williams** to speak on mapping in various cities and how that impact voters.

Director Williams explained that the Registration Division reviewed all records and a follow-up memo regarding the City of East Point and South Fulton. The detail memo will outline the DRE's findings.

- East Point 16 voters
- South Fulton 6 voters

Madam Director explained that the DRE provide the Cities with Street maintenance file and voters list to verify and confirm accuracy. The DRE will add a procedure to check what the cities submit and sign-off.

Mr. Johnson asked "How do you it was only 16 in East Point and 6 and South Fulton"

Madam Director explained that the DRE looked at every vote cast to see which ballot the voter received. Madam Director mentioned that the information will be clearly outlined in the memo that is forthcoming at the conclusion of the recount.

Chair Perkins-Hooker highlighted the geographical concerns previously mentioned and explained how the DRE and BRE were in constant communications with Cities (Clerks and Majors) to get their data corrected and that helped mitigate what could've been a larger number.

Mr. Johnson expounded on **Madam Chair's** comments, on the DRE mitigating impact and the amount of effort to ensure that every possible remedy was in place to ensure voters were not negatively impacted.

Vice Chair Heekin asked about complaints that he received from voters about being in the right precinct but believing they voted the wrong ballot.

Director Williams explained if the ballot is cast there is no remedy, but the DRE is currently implementing safeguards due to concerns with redistricting and GARViS.

Mrs. Barganier reported on the Department’s Finances:

- Reduced the 2023 November election budget to meet the \$5.14 Million available.
- Tracking the 2023 budget to actual costs analysis to ensure we adhere to the budget
- Issued a refund to Alpharetta, as their candidates are unopposed thus no election will be held
- 2024 Fulton County entire budget is to be presented by the Finance executives to the BOC on November 15, 2023.
- Final BOC approval of all 2024 Fulton County budgets is expected to occur at the BOC meeting on January 17, 2024.

2023 Budgets as of 6/30/2023:	
Operations Budget- Approved by BOC	\$4.9 Million
General Election Municipal Budget NOV 2023	\$5.47 Million
General Run-off Election Municipal Budget DEC 2023	\$2.45 Million

Proposed **2024** Elections and Operations budgets:

2024 Budgets as of 8/31/2023:	
Operations Budget	\$5.27 Million
Presidential Preference Primary (PPP) MARCH 12, 2024	\$9.7 Million
Presidential Primary MAY 21, 2024	\$8.9 Million
Presidential Primary Run-off JUNE 18, 2024	\$5.1 Million
Presidential General Election NOV 5, 2024	\$12.9 Million
Presidential General Run-off Election DEC 3, 2024	\$5.9 Million

Mr. Gilstrap reported on the activities in the Information Systems (Elections Division):
November 7th General Municipal Election:

The Information Systems staff begin preparation for the November 7th General Municipal Election. The main items completed for October are listed below:

- **Logic & Accuracy Testing** – Performed Logic & Accuracy Testing and programed all equipment to be used for Advance Voting. Logic & Accuracy testing on voting equipment for Election Day Sites will continue throughout the month October until its completion date of November 2nd.
- **Technical Support** – The Information Systems staff will provide technical support for Advance Voting which starts on October 16th and ends on November 3rd.
- **Poll Tech Training** – The Information Systems staff conducted weekly technical training for the technicians that are going to be stationed at each polling location on Election Day.

Mrs. Crawford expressed some concerns with the Poll Pads received at another location, suggesting the equipment be thoroughly check prior to sending out.

Director Williams explained that the technician training will be enhanced.

Chair Perkins-Hooker expressed similar concerns during her site visits. **Madam Chair** directed Director Williams that the equipment needs to be neatly packaged and all cords need to be in the poll pad case, a charger for every device.

Mrs. Crawford asked can the DRE work on their communications with Fulton County Schools?

Director Williams explained that the DRE speak to every school Operations Center and they speak directly to the schools. Unfortunately, there appears to be an internal breakdown.

Vice Chair Heekin referenced his experience as a former poll worker and cords not fitting.

Mr. Gilstrap mentioned the equipment is checked prior to dissemination but the Information Systems team is implementing a Quality Control team.

Mr. Henson reported on the activities of Supplies and Logistics (Election Division):

- Delivered and pick-up Advance Voting
- Delivered and pick-up Election Day
- Preparing Supply boxes for Advance Voting and Election Day for December 5, 2023, Runoff

Mrs. Crawford commended **Mr. Henson** on Election Day pick-up in the North, it was a great experience.

Ms. Little reported on the activities of Voter Education and Outreach (Administration Division):

- Focused on civic engagement holidays and outreach to senior centers, colleges, universities, and municipalities.
- Partnership with all Fulton County Libraries to conduct voter education and outreach.
- Focused on the partnership with Atlanta Public Schools to host events in each school.
- Conducted Deputy Registrar Training for all new staff members and offering training to the public.
- Conducted the elections overview for the Fulton County Citizens University and assisted in updating election information.
- Conducted National Vote Early Day
- Legislative Update:
 - Judge ruled on State's Congressional, Senate and House district lines. Special session will be held on November 29th for revisions.

- Burn Bill regarding optional voting (paper ballot or machines)
- October Events: 75

Chair Perkins-Hooker asked **Mr. Henson** about the procedure for damaged equipment being dropped and poll workers unable to open the units. Who's responsible for reporting and tracking damages to equipment?

Mr. Henson responded that personnel is required to report the incident and return the equipment to be replaced, if needed.

Mrs. Glenn reported on the activities of the Voter Registration Division:

The primary activities the VR staff worked on in October:

- Researched street issues
- Prepared for municipal street audits, redistricting, identifying, and merging duplicate records
- Concluding the Recount

Chair Perkins- Hooker asked **Mrs. Glenn** are you having any more problems with GARViS

Mrs. Glenn responded hesitantly always.

Director Williams informed the BRE that GAVREO Region 3 submitted a letter regarding on-going concerns with GARViS and the State Elections Director has responded, all members were provided a copy.

Chair Perkins- Hooker expressed concerns on the statistics that **Mrs. Glenn** reported in the monthly report. **Madam Chair** directed **Mrs. Glenn** to work with their colleagues at the Secretary of State's (SOS) office to provide specific examples to ensure the updates address all the concerns. The DRE cannot have this same conversation on GARViS and the impact on an election in 2024, it will be disastrous.

Mrs. Glenn agreed with Madam Chair's assessment. **Mrs. Glenn** outlined steps taken to ensure that SOS is privy to all issues/concerns that the DRE uncover through the REIF process. **Mrs. Glenn** mentioned that she knows the SOS is working diligently on resolutions to all concerns.

Chair Perkins- Hooker directed **Director Williams** to develop a Plan A, B, C and D; to counteract any possible issues the GARViS system may have during the 2024 election cycle.

Vice Chair Heekin asked if the SOS has a data map of where the information being entered in the system and where it should be routed to in the system. Vice Chair noted that they can't be serious about this project, if they do not have a data map and a data model.

Director Williams referenced some of the contingency plans for upcoming elections:

- Partnering with Knowlnk to provide a check and balance of the data in the Poll Pads
- Provisional Manager Station

Mr. Johnson asked did other Region 3 counties document their concerns with GARViS

Director Williams responded yes, during our weekly meetings, on the BUZZ, the letter sent to the SOS. **Director** reiterated yes, Region 3 has been documenting all issues all year regarding GARViS.

Chair Perkins- Hooker inquired on **Mrs. Glenn** timeframe to complete the Voter registration applications that needs to be processed.

Mrs. Glenn responded that as soon as the DRE is authorized to process the applications her team will get it done.

NEW BUSINESS

#5– FELON HEARING

➤ MR. M. FRANKS

Mrs. Glenn provided background on this Felon hearing. **Mrs. Glenn** provided the elector marked as a felon their options to resolve this matter but the elector requested a hearing to talk to the board.

Mrs. Crawford asked if we have the ability verify that he's off parole/ probation?

Mrs. Glenn answered no, according to SOS the elector was identified as a felon (sentenced incomplete). The DRE identified the elector then follow all process and procedures to remove the voter from the voter roll.

Mrs. Crawford suggested that the BRE postpone it an additional month or vote to remove the elector.

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to removed Mr. Franks from the eligible voter list. The motion was made by **Vice Chair Heekin** and was seconded by **Mrs. Crawford** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Director Williams requested the Approval of Advance Voting Locations be moved to follow the Certification of the Election results.

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to amend the agenda to realign the Approval of Advance Voting Locations to follow the Certification of the Election results. The motion was made by **Mrs. Crawford** and was seconded by **Mr. Johnson** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

#6-REVIEW OF 2024 BRE MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Johnson suggested some consolidations of meetings during the 2024 Calendar year.

The Board collectively reviewed the tentative schedule and discussed adjustments to the 2024 meeting calendar.

Attorney Alexis reminded the BRE of the By Laws that determine some of their meetings

Chair Perkins-Hooker requested the attorneys draft an amendment for the next regular meeting.

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to approve the 2024 calendar with the changes agreed upon during discussions. The motion was made by **Mr. Johnson** and was seconded by **Mrs. Crawford** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to close the regular session and convene into executive session to litigation matters. The motion was made by **Vice Chair Heekin**, seconded by **Mr. Johnson** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

After executive session, **Chair Perkins-Hooker** entertained a motion to reconvene from executive session. The motion was made by **Mrs. Crawford**, seconded by **Vice Chair Heekin** and carried by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

The Board agreed to recess to allow personnel to complete final tallies for certification.

[Return from Recess Session:](#)

#7-CERTIFICATION OF NOVEMBER 7TH, GENERAL MUNICIPAL/ SPECIAL ELECTION

- **City of:** Atlanta (Atlanta Public Schools), Chattahoochee Hills, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Johns Creek, Roswell, South Fulton, Union City

Vice Chair Heekin commented:

In Georgia, the Secretary of State and Georgia counties generally share responsibility for the conduct of elections. For example, State provides the backbone computer program the counties use to run elections and count votes.

In April 2022, the Secretary of State announced an ambitious project to update election software. The Georgia Registered Voter Information System, or GARVIS, was planned to be ready for the 2022 midterms. It was not ready, and Georgia had to rely on the old system for the Midterms.

Since then, the team at State has made much progress, but GARVIS is still not operating as envisioned or required for the conduct of Georgia's elections.

Georgia's counties were fortunate that the turnout in the municipal elections was light, as is usually the case. There were problems in Fulton and other counties in getting reliable data from GARVIS, which was easier to manage in the light municipal turnout.

However, the presidential election season starts in less than four months. State needs a plan and competent team who can complete GARVIS immediately. The alternative is unthinkable for Georgia and the nation.

Chair Perkins-Hooker entertained a motion to certify all election results except the City of Mountain Park. The motion was made by **Vice Chair Heekin** and was seconded by **Mr. Johnson** and carried by a unanimous vote of 3-0.

The Board agreed to recess to allow personnel to complete final tallies for certification of the City of Mountain Park.

Return from Recess Session:

Presiding: *Mr. Michael Heekin*

#7- CERTIFICATION OF NOVEMBER 7TH, GENERAL MUNICIPAL/ SPECIAL ELECTION:

➤ **City of:** Mountain Park

Director Williams affirmed that the election results presented are a true and accurate count of all the votes cast in the General Municipal and Special Election held on November 7, 2023.

Vice Chair Heekin entertained a motion to certify the election results of the City of Mountain Park. The motion was made by **Mrs. Crawford** and was seconded by **Mr. Johnson** and carried by a unanimous vote of 3-0.

#8- APPROVAL OF ADVANCE VOTING LOCATIONS FOR THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL RUNOFF ELECTIONS:

- Buckhead Library
- CT Martin Natatorium
- East Point First Mallalieu United Methodist Church
- East Roswell Library
- Gladys S. Dennard Library
- Joan Garner Library at Ponce de Leon
- Roswell Library

Mr. Johnson inquired about the cities that have a runoff election.

Director Williams responded the City of- Atlanta, East Point, Roswell, and South Fulton has a runoff election.

Vice Chair Heekin entertained a motion to approve the Advance Voting locations for the December 5th Runoff Elections. The motion was made by **Mr. Johnson** and was seconded by **Mrs. Crawford** and carried by a unanimous vote of 3-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Heekin entertained a motion to adjourn. **Mr. Johnson** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Mrs. Crawford** seconded the motion. There being no further business on the agenda, the Board adjourned the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

The meeting adjourned.

Prepared by:

Mariska Bodison, Board Secretary