



BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS APPROVED MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING – January 13, 2022

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 10:01 a.m.

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Presiding: Cathy Woolard, Chairwoman

Other Board Members Present:

Ms. Dr. Kathleen Ruth, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Aaron V. Johnson
Mrs. Teresa Crawford
Mr. Mark Wingate

Staff Attending: Mr. Richard Barron, Director; Mr. Patrick Eskridge, Deputy Director; Ms. Nadine E. Williams, Elections Chief; Dominic; Ms. Shamira Marshall, Registration Manager; Ms. Brenda McCloud, Administrative Manager; Janell; Mrs. Cheryl Ringer, County Attorney; Thomas; LaShandra; Mr. James Reese, Production Manager; Regina Waller, Senior Public Affairs Officer

Guests Attending: Earl Ferguson; Lucia Frazier; Julie Adams; Sarah Burkhardt; David Baker; Dr. Janice Johnston; Jeff De La Mejora

#1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to adopt agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Ms. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

#2– COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RESPONSE

Bridgette Thorne:

Hello. According to the state auditor report, Fulton has leaned heavily upon an army of temporary workers to fulfill the litany of tasks that must be completed from logistics to processing ballots to scanning final results. It would perhaps be best to offset this number of workers with stakeholders from the community who would like to get involved in the electoral process. By conducting multiple interviews with temporary staff, it was made clear that some have no keen interest in participating in this immensely important process which is perhaps to blame for some of the sloppy clerical errors and logistical shortcomings that have plagued the complicated electoral process. So

why? Why are you continuing to use temp workers? Richard Barron doesn't know who these temp agencies hire. It's immensely important that we know who Michael Harriston and Tony Dozier hire. They are handling our precious votes. Let's be hypothetical, a temp worker in English street making 15 dollars an hour is approached by someone offering them 10 dollars for every blank absentee ballot he brings them. The temp worker sees 400 blank ballots packaged that belong to precinct JC13; they should work. The manager at JC13 on election day receives 400 photocopied sample ballots with a cover sheet and a rubber band around them saying JC13 400. She sends a clerk to the English street warehouse to find her missing ballots. The clerk is told they don't have any absentee ballots here in English street. The manager reports her missing ballots; she is fired. Months later, it's reported that deputy director Dwight Brower ordered millions of extra absentee ballots just in case they couldn't use the machines after the election. They shred that three hundred thousand dollars worth of ballots. Where are these ballots? Where were they on election day? Where are JC13s ballots? Could this happen? Absolutely. Under the current system. You see the use of temp agency allows anyone to slip in and out of our election process undetected. We want a system that is easy to vote and hard to cheat not easy to cheat.

OLD BUSINESS

#3- APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Special Meeting- December 4, 2021**
- **Regular Meeting- December 9, 2021**
- **Executive Session Meeting- December 9, 2021**
- **Special Meeting- December 17, 2021**
- **Executive Session Meeting- December 17, 2021**

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to table approving the minutes for the next regular session on February 10, 2022. The motion was made by Dr. Ruth, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

#4- MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2021

Mr. Barron reported:

- ❖ Elections Division
 - November 30th Runoff Election
 - Equipment pickup complete
 - Post-election supply sorting inventory and reconciliation in progress
 - Polling locations for 2022 elections
 - All locations have been reserved
 - Polling locations will be presented at next BRE meeting (February)
 - Change proposals due to redistricting
 - Will use all 9 check-in locations for May election
 - Requesting BRE to approve advanced voting and absentee drop box locations, dates, and hours for May 2022 election.
 - Elections officer positions have been filled and start this month.
- ❖ Voter Registration Division
 - 2021 – Received 96,045 voter registration applications
 - 5461 applications in December
 - Received via department of driver services online, voter registration portal, SOS applications from third party vendors, and applications mailed or dropped off in office.

- Total registered voters: 851,089 as of 31 December 2021
- 757,702 active voters
- Mailed out 55,563 NOCA notices to voters
 - 40 days to respond to notice began on 4 January 2022
- Voter challenge hearing
 - December 66 challenges
 - January 593 challenges
- Front desk operations
 - Tracking number of visits to desk for yellow tickets
 - Temporary Voter ID cards – 66 in December
 - 33 walk-ins to register to vote
- ❖ Administration Division
 - Vacancies
 - January Recruitments
 - Registration Chief
 - Registration Officers
 - Absentee Officer (reposting)
 - Administrative Manager
 - Filled Positions
 - Administrative Coordinator 1
 - Election Systems Assistant Supervisor
 - Systems Specialist
 - 2022 Qualifying Fees were submitted to BOC for approval
 - March 7th – 11th: Qualifying Period
 - 2022 Budgets
 - Approved Funding
 - General Primary Election
 - General Election
 - General Election Runoff
 - Unapproved Funding
 - General Primary Runoff Election
 - Risk: Will more than likely occur
 - Issue: Not funded/Pulling funds from General Election Runoff budget; will not have funds if
 - Action: Request more funding from the BOC
 - Mitigation: BOC should fund this budget when presented
 - 13 new positions to reduce reliance on supplemental staff
 - Additional equipment for efficiency and process improvement
 - Financial Management
 - Managing and tracking invoices and balances of staffing expenses against budget.
 - Poll facilities
 - Procurement activities
 - Purchase orders
 - Submitting invoices received to Account Payable in a timely fashion.
 - Campaign Contribution Disclosure Report – reminder emails sent
- ❖ Voter Education and Outreach Division
 - Planning the 2022 cycle
 - Events begin in February
 - Using mobile buses
 - Partnership with disABILITY Link for voter education events
 - LaShandra Little has meet with the commissioners to tailor voter education and outreach needs.
 - Working with public affairs and FGTV to enhance the department's brand and footprint.
 - Working with the Latin American Association to host the first Spanish speaking VEO event in January.

- Deputy Registrar training has been revamped to a hybrid approach.
 - In-person and group trainings available
 - Next training on January 17, 2022
- Reaching out to every municipality in Fulton County to include schools, communities, nonprofit organizations, and government officials to schedule future events.
- ❖ Absentee Division
 - Unable to mail out absentee ballot applications due changes with SB202
 - Target Audience: Age 65 and older or disabled persons
 - New process: Apply for absentee ballot

Ms. Crawford inquired if the state was changing the software or program concerning voter check in.

Mr. Barron stated that he hadn't any information in reference to changing the process.

Dr. Ruth inquired, in reference to the vacancies, how the department will be recruiting for the unfilled positions. The positions could impact the department if they aren't filled in a timely manner.

Mr. Barron stated that the department is looking to have the position filled this month to close the positions. Two of the eight positions needed to be reposted either through lack of interest in the position or lack of qualification. The registration officer and the absentee officer positions have had interviews. The registration chief will be posted by the end of the week. The goal is to be complete by the end of the month.

Dr. Ruth asked if logistics applied to any of the roles that need to be filled.

Mr. Barron answered that the election systems assistant supervisor and the election systems specialist prepare equipment in the warehouse. None of the positions listed are involved in the delivery portion. The employee that arranges the deliveries is John Ross, he is in the warehouse; John schedules and arranges deliveries to all polling locations.

Dr. Ruth asked if the department was still using a moving company.

Mr. Barron stated the department only uses a moving company if there are too many deliveries to make. In 2019, the Department of Real Estate and Asset Management assisted. In 2020, some delivery companies were used but the deliveries are most done internally.

Dr. Ruth emphasized that in the past there have been logistics issues with getting equipment delivered and set up in a timely manner. She stressed the importance on focusing on logistics management and planning to ensure the precincts have what they need.

Ms. Woolard asked Mr. Barron if the statement made by Dr. Ruth would be addressed by the request to the Board of Commissioners for additional equipment funding.

Mr. Barron stated that it would help. The issue is that the warehouse has to turnaround the equipment used for early voting in the weekend between the end of early voting and election day (Friday night to Monday morning). From 30 sites, it is a monumental task requiring an excessive amount of time and labor. This issue wasn't present with the previous voting systems. The current system can take hours between updates, testing, and preparation.

Dominic [Olomo] has created a system to attempt to mitigate the bottlenecks but they still occur.

Ms. Woolard asked if the requirements that are making the process difficult due to the new machinery and/or legislation.

Mr. Barron stated that the department used the grant funds that they were given to purchase more equipment, but the early voting program is large enough that there is still not enough equipment, and space, to cover early voting, election day, and training in a timely and effective manner. The department is seeking additional funding to purchase additional equipment to reduce the stress on resources.

Dr. Ruth clarified that not only is larger space required but also the board of commissioners need to approve additional funding for equipment. Dr. Ruth then asked about the use of a logistics company. Stating that there needs to be a concrete proposal for preparation for efficiency.

Ms. Woolard stated that the proposal would be to purchase additional equipment. Ms. Woolard asked Mr. Barron what the cost for additional equipment would be.

Mr. Barron stated that there are two requests were submitted. One for 2.4 million and another for 500 thousand plus an additional 300 – 500 thousand for the carriers.

Dr. Ruth asked if there would also be a need to purchase more cache boxes.

Mr. Barron stated that additional cache boxes and access points would not be needed. The warehouse is covered. The issue with the warehouse is space. When all the equipment returns from early voting, the space isn't able to accommodate the necessary processes to effectively turnover equipment.

Mr. Wingate asked if the department still had the old systems available.

Mr. Barron stated that they were either picked up by the state or turned into central maintenance.

Dr. Ruth asked how many deputy registrars the department has and how are they utilized.

Ms. Little stated that there are none in place currently. The certification is annual, and the department needs to conduct recruitment. The previous year there were 60 deputy registrars, and 175 in 2019. The deputy registrars assist the department by conducting voter registration drives.

Mr. Wingate asked about the new voter application numbers.

Mr. Barron clarified in the past they were labeled as new applicants, the format has been changed. The format will be reverted before the next meeting.

Mr. Wingate asked about the Standard Operating Procedures, requesting a copy of the updated items.

Mr. Barron stated that they will be emailed to the board.

Mr. Wingate asked if 33 million dollars was a realistic budget for the election year.

Mr. Barron asked if Mr. Wingate was asking if it was enough to cover the elections.

Mr. Wingate clarified if it was enough, too little, or too much.

Mr. Barron stated that the department calculated the budget based on the 2020 election costs, but the costs have gone up 300%, especially because of the new voting system. The department tries to complete the elections under budget. If there are only 3 elections, it will be enough. If there are four elections, an increase will be needed.

Ms. Woolard asked a clarifying question concerning the budget, asking for the total amount and whether it included the additional equipment requests.

Mr. Barron stated that the total budget is a little over 38 million, with the operations budget of 5 million. The budget does not include the additional equipment requests.

Ms. Woolard asked if the annual maintenance and the travel and training was covered.

Mr. Barron stated that the annual maintenance was covered. The travel and training budget was not submitted for approval. As a result, the budget the department is currently using a budget for 18 employees despite departmental growth. The request for increase was submitted but it was not recommended for approval for funding.

Ms. Woolard asked if there were any certifications that employees won't receive then rescinded the question stating that the specific details could be discussed later.

Mr. Barron stated that most of the staff try to attend the training to become the certified elections registration administrator through election center. The small budget limits the number of people that can attend that training along with the annual state conferences. The department can usually have two employees attend CERA training.

Ms. Woolard stated that they will have a follow-on conversation so as not to derail the meeting. The goal is to ensure there is enough funding for all employees to receive the required training as well as additional equipment. Ms. Woolard asked for the status of the capital projects on the vehicles.

Mr. Barron stated that there is no update on the vehicles.

Mr. Wingate asked how much additional funding would be needed.

Mr. Barron stated that the number is around 5 million which includes additional employees and the additional requested equipment.

Mr. Johnson asked concerning the budget, due to the high probability of a general primary runoff, would the potential savings be enough to cover a fourth election.

Mr. Barron stated that the department would have to transfer funds from the general election runoff budget to cover the general primary runoff election then request additional funding for the general election runoff in the fall if necessary.

Mr. Johnson asked about the probability of moving the primary election back because of redistricting. Recognizing that the other counties are also experiencing some issues.

Mr. Barron stated that the issue is that some of the lines are running through homes.

Mr. Johnson asked if the additional lines, county commission and city council, have been established yet because their lines haven't been established yet.

Mr. Barron stated that their lines haven't been completed.

Ms. Crawford asked when the lines needed to be set for qualification.

Ms. Williams stated that the SOS deadline for apportionment is February 18, 2022.

Mr. Barron stated that the department could forward the board an example of how the line issues. Essentially the lines are set that one voter could be in their bathroom and fall under one district but then fall under a different district when they are in their living room.

Mr. Wingate asked for a repeat of the date that the districting lines need to be set.

Ms. Williams reiterated February 18, 2022.

Ms. Woolard clarified the mathematics of the budget request. Noting that the operations budget is 5 million, the elections budget is 33 million not including the probability of a fourth election, the capital projects budget rounded to 1 million, and the additional equipment at 3.5 million. The total budget of 38-43 million budget needs to increase to 53 million to cover what is needed to successfully operate the department this year. As a lot of the requirements to be met are required by law. The additional equipment is essential is excellence in operation and that the board needs to be admonished to approve the increase the funding.

Ms. Woolard noted that it's heartbreaking that the department can no longer send unsolicited ballots to elderly and disabled voters. Asked if there was any option to inform voters of the change.

Mr. Barron stated that the head of household mailing would inform voters of the change. The department is currently attempting to consolidate the mailings. The exception to the law is that with the general primary election, if there is a runoff, a runoff ballot will be sent to the voters; if there is a general election runoff, the voter will need to request an absentee ballot.

Ms. Woolard asked if it's possible to ask the county to add that to their legislation, while there are political differences concerning SB202, this is about ensuring the senior citizen and disabled population can be facilitated.

Ms. Crawford stated that it's about consistency.

Mr. Barron stated that the change will cause confusion in the voter population.

Mr. Wingate asked since the department is prohibited in mailing an absentee ballot, are they prohibited from mailing a letter explaining the change.

Mr. Barron stated that the information is in the head of household letter. The mailing currently explains that a primary runoff ballot will be sent without request. The department will have to send an additional mailing for the general to inform that the voter must apply for a general runoff ballot if it is needed.

Ms. Crawford asked how much it costs to send additional mailings.

Mr. Barron stated that the department is trying to consolidate the mailings to save on costs, but it requires permission from the state. The cost is somewhere around 350 thousand dollars.

Ms. Crawford asked if that amount is for each mailing or for the three separate mailings.

Mr. Barron stated that is for the head of household mailing. The postage would slightly increase to add the additional two mailings.

Ms. Crawford stated that the cost information is valuable if the request to change the rule is to be considered.

Mr. Johnson stated that too much mail in one packet could have the counter effect where it is viewed as junk mail.

Ms. Woolard asked if the outreach staff could consider partnering with community organizations that work with people who are senior citizen and people with disabilities to figure out if there are some additional things that can be done to creatively focus on that audience specifically.

Ms. Crawford suggested the department looks into partnering with retirement homes as they are everywhere and that many senior citizens are moving into the Atlanta area because their children are bringing them. Aside from getting a drivers license, many of them don't have the opportunity to vote. If the elections department is going to the homes and setting up a registration office, instead of a specific political party, it would be a great way to get the message out.

NEW BUSINESS

#5-APPROVAL OF EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

Ms. Williams stated that the department has been unable to confirm the High Museum of Arts and that it may be removed from the list. At the present meeting, the department is requesting approval of 29 advance voting locations and 7 drop boxes due to the active voter count being under 800 thousand, the department is limited to 7 drop boxes. Also seeking approval of the hours listed.

Ms. Woolard asked what the difference from the current list is different from the past early voting locations.

Ms. Williams stated that the locations have been used previously. To stay within budget, the locations listed have a high voter turnout for advanced voting and are evenly distributed throughout the county.

Ms. Woolard asked if the locations were less or more than normal.

Ms. Williams stated that the number of locations used depend upon the type of election, there will be an increase in November.

Mr. Barron stated during the November 2020 election there were 31 sites plus 2 buses for a total of 33 sites operating per day.

Ms. Williams suggested that the department replaces High Museum [of Arts] with the [Fulton County] government center to remain at 30 but it would have to be with board approval.

Mr. Barron stated that if High Museum [of Arts] is not available the department should utilize the [Fulton County] government center to remain at 30.

Mr. Johnson asked for clarification concerning the High Museum [of Arts] status.

Ms. Williams stated that the site is currently pending but the department is running out of time to send notice of the advanced voting locations.

Dr. Ruth asked about the voter registration numbers.

Ms. Williams clarified that the number was referencing the number of drop boxes allow. The county currently has less than 800 thousand voters, so the department is limited to 7 drop boxes.

Dr. Ruth asked what the requirements were for early voting location. Understanding the requirements for election day, is there a specific requirement for early voting.

Ms. Williams stated that there is not a specific requirement for early voting aside for the limitation on hours and dates. It is the departments discretion where to place the polling locations. The elections team chose the listed locations to evenly distribute them throughout the entire county.

Mr. Barron stated that Fulton County usually has more sites than Gwinnett, Cobb, Dekalb, and Clayton County combined which is why the department attempts to blanket the county with sites so that everyone has the opportunity to vote.

Ms. Williams added that all sites are handicap accessible.

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to approve the advanced locations with use of the Fulton County government center as an alternate location if the High Museum of Arts is unavailable. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

#6-REVIEW BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS BY LAWS

Ms. Woolard stated that the review is to update the new board members of the board by laws and to sign them as the previous signature were of members who no longer serve on the board. Also stated that an amendment would be in the works concerning Public Comments at the next meeting.

The current by laws as stated in Article III Section IV states:

“Each meeting shall provide time for public comment, during which citizens may voice voter registration and election-related requests, concerns, questions and opinions to the Board, provided that the total time for public comments shall not exceed one hour, provided further that each speaker must fill out a speaker card, prior to the commencement of the meeting, and shall not be allowed to speak for more than two minutes (or such longer period as the Board may approve), and further provided that speakers are required to refrain from abusive, profane or derogatory language. “

Ms. Woolard stated that the changes to be made would disallow public comments apart from Board approval for efficiency.

#7-HAPPY FACES PRESENTATION

Mr. Eskridge presented to the Board the Happy Faces Presentation to discuss the departments staffing model.

1. Current Staffing Model: 3700 Personnel Needed for a successful election cycle.
 - a. 22% sourced from temporary staffing agency
 - b. 77% sourced from community and Fulton County employees
 - c. 1% sourced from Fulton County staff
2. Alternative options as requested by the BOC and via public comments.
 - a. Option A: Maintain current staffing model
 - b. Option B: Work through [Fulton] county purchasing to solicit a new bid for staff and services.
 - c. Option C: Work with the [Fulton] county HR department [to fill positions needed]
3. Monthly breakdown of staff needed and budget compliance. March influx is due to training for advance voting workers.
4. Positions needed, title, quantity, start and end dates, and work responsibilities.
5. Breakdown of pros and cons of options

Ms. Woolard asked for clarification for the temporary staffing agency numbers.

Mr. Eskridge stated a little over 800.

Ms. Woolard asked for the number of community volunteers.

Mr. Eskridge replied 2700.

Mr. Wingate asked if the community volunteers are staffed through Happy Faces.

Ms. Eskridge stated that they are community members that have indicated their willingness to be poll workers.

Mr. Wingate asked if the community were onboarded via Happy Faces. Stating that the last election cycle, several poll workers were onboarded via Happy Faces.

Mr. Eskridge stated that the advance voting worker are from Happy Faces, which the presentation will reflect.

Mr. Barron stated that in the 2020 election, the department used Happy Faces to staff security and the technicians. Sometimes the line monitors are Happy Faces. For the poll workers, the department receives the applications then the department coordinators recruits and places them at district locations.

Dr. Ruth asked if Happy Faces provided staff for the advanced voting.

Mr. Barron replied for advanced voting the department uses a staffing agency.

Mr. Wingate stated that a discussion was had that the county did not have the facility to onboard the large influx of people, along with issues of time allotment and federal regulation requirements. Posing the question are the regulations considered when multiple agencies are used to onboard. Will it create budget issues?

Ms. Woolard interjected stating that some questions will be answered in the presentation.

Ms. Crawford asked if there was a proactive action in place to recruit personnel in the event of personnel shortages.

Mr. Eskridge stated that the department has already sent out a survey for solicitation to the county employees.

Ms. Crawford clarified that last minute pulling has posed a problem for the department and the board in the past.

Mr. Eskridge reiterated that the efforts that the department was doing currently is to alleviate that issue.

Ms. Williams stated that the department has reached out to other municipalities for volunteers as well as the polling sites for congregational members to ensure the department doesn't have to pull from human resources at the last minute.

Ms. Crawford asked for clarifying information regarding option B, use staffing contracts for other temporary agencies, if the staffing contracts were contracts the county already had in place.

Mr. Eskridge stated that the department would go through purchasing to use the contracts that are already approved.

Ms. Crawford asked why it would be difficult to move from one agency to another.

Mr. Eskridge stated that in the past the other staffing agencies could not adequately service the department.

Ms. Crawford asked if the same situation would apply if the department were to take that route.

Mr. Eskridge stated that it is a potential risk.

Ms. Woolard stated that the purchasing department choose from a list that the state already has but still must consider the request for proposal which is where the 4-6 months poses an issue.

Mr. Barron stated that due to this process, the price of the state contract will go up as well as the risks of vendors that will not want to fulfill the contracts due to the high-profile attention the Registration and Elections department receives.

Mr. Johnson commented that it is appreciated that stakeholders are interested in continuous improvement, but the conversation isn't focused on continuous improvement. It's seeming to be focused on removing Happy Faces. Happy Faces appears to be receiving the greatest portion of the blame. There were all levels of issues during the 2020 election; the department, Covid-19, etc. were all contributing factors to the election not being as successful as it could have been. The county is not equipped to handle to personnel requirements needed for a successful election, which is why a temporary agency is significant to the process. The county cannot operate the way a private entity could. There are governmental systems/processes in place. The process is just not easy if the county (government entity) is handling the hiring process because of the laws, rules, and regulations concerning employee management. The board needs to look at the changes from a perspective of what's in the best interest of the county in addition to the increase in funding required to implement and time constraints.

Mr. Wingate stated that according to the presentation the department would have to continue with Happy Face through the general primary because there isn't enough time implement an effective replacement strategy.

Dr. Ruth stated that the Secretary of State submitted a report that recommended that the department not rely so heavily on staffing agencies as some of the staff were not heavily invested in the [elections] process. While there has been improvement from the department to better recruitment for invested staff, there still is some improvement needed. Standardization should be implemented for consistency. Requested a risk proposal for remaining with Happy Faces.

Mr. Eskridge referenced the Secretary of State report stating the the report also noted that there was not enough middle management; to which the department has increased to adequately supervise the temporary staff.

Dr. Ruth stated that the point should be reflected in the presentation.

Ms. Eskridge stated that department feels that the current staffing model works although there is concern over the 2020 elections, three of those elections were marked successful.

Ms. Crawford in agreement with Dr. Ruth stated that the risk factors, or positives, should be noted in the presentation. Reiterated that a survey needs to be sent for last minute poll worker requests in case someone doesn't show up.

Ms. Woolard suggested that a survey also be sent to the city of Atlanta employees.

Ms. Williams stated one has been sent with a suspense date of January 18th.

Ms. Woolard stated that the current presentation being presented is what will be presented to the Board of Commissioners at their following meeting. While there are requests to not rely so heavily on temporary agencies, the Fulton County HR department simply cannot handle the load. There is also a request to change temporary agencies, but the agency the department is using is very familiar with the processes and procedures needed to assist the department successfully. The current discussion is to explore adding more vendors, while there are risks to managing multiple vendors, it can be done. The recommendation is to proceed with the current staffing model because the primary election preparation is happening now. In the process of proceeding with the current staffing model, the purchasing department can begin to reach out to other vendors in the background to see how to diversify the departments options.

Dr. Ruth stated that it is important to distinguish that the Board doesn't want to see the same process Happy Faces was using. There needs to be more oversight and middle management embedded in Happy Faces from the department to ensure consistency across the board and to ensure that the right people are being selected. Consistency is the main concern.

Ms. Woolard noted that there is a request for 13 additional employees that would fill some of the positions that are consistently being requested with year-round functions that have not been moved forward for approval by the Board of Commissioners. The challenge is that the elections department wants to do better but other departments have an impact to where the resources needed cannot be implemented.

#7-VOTER RESIDENCY CHALLENGE HEARING

Ms. Woolard called Mr. David Hill Hubert to come forward with 403 voter challenges.

Mr. Hubert stated he was present to answer any questions the board has concerning the challenge as all voters were registered to vote in Florida.

Ms. Marshall stated that the department concurs with the findings and recommends removal from the voter rolls. 348 are currently in inactive voter status, 55 are active but they were verified registered to vote in Florida.

Ms. Crawford asked for clarification on the recommendation.

Ms. Marshall clarified that the recommendation is for removal.

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to remove the 403 electors challenged from the voter rolls. The motion was made by Ms. Crawford, seconded by Dr. Ruth, and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Ms. Woolard called Mr. Earl Ferguson to come forward with 170 voter challenges.

Mr. Ferguson stated the challenge presented was in reference to section 229. He is present to answer any questions to the board had. He also noted that he added the date of birth to his findings to simplify the process. Also stated that some of the challengers were removed because their NCOAs were submitted with Post Office Boxes.

Mr. Johnson asked for clarification of the Post Office Box statement.

Mr. Ferguson stated that some of the electors when submitting their NCOA used post office boxes and therefore could not be verified as to their voter registration status.

Ms. Marshall stated that the department concurs with the findings and recommends the removal of the 170 electors from the voter rolls.

Ms. Woolard asked for information concerning a previous elector with questionable status. Whether or not the elector had been verified and added to the challenge.

Mr. Ferguson stated that the elector was added to the current challenge.

Ms. Marshall stated that in the verification process, the department verified whether the electors had military designation as requested in the previous challenge. It was found that none of the electors presented had military designation.

Mr. Johnson asked if there were any college designations.

Ms. Marshall stated that the department did not check for college designation, but they will add it for future challenges.

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to remove the 170 electors challenged from the voter rolls. The motion was made by Ms. Crawford, seconded by Dr. Ruth, and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Ms. Woolard called Ms. Christine Propst to come forward with 20 voter challenges.

Ms. Propst stated that she is challenging 20 electors and described her process for identifying the voters, was present to answer any questions the board may have.

Ms. Marshall stated that the department concurs with the findings and recommends the removal of the 20 electors from the voter rolls.

Mr. Johnson asked if any of the voters that were listed for North Carolina voted.

Ms. Propst stated that of the 3 voters on the challenge, they all have voted in North Carolina.

Ms. Woolard asked about the last 5 electors on the list that shows the last election voted was in Georgia, last January. How is it determined that the electors have moved and aren't intending to vote in the current election.

Ms. Propst stated that the voters have submitted a National Change of Address based upon that the voter registration shows that they are in active status in their new state.

Ms. Woolard clarified that she was referring to voters that voted in the last election as Ms. Propst had used an example from a voter with longer leave time.

Ms. Propst stated that she could not see when the voter last participated in an election only whether they were currently active.

Ms. Marshall stated that the department can see voter history and were able to verify the last election and compared that to the registration status in the other state.

Mr. Johnson asked if the department could see when a voter has registered in a new state, would the voter residency problem alleviate itself when the rolls are cleaned up.

Ms. Marshall stated that it would which was the case with the last NCOA mailing which totaled to around 56 thousand.

Mr. Johnson asked how often the list maintenance occurs.

Ms. Marshall stated every two years.

Mr. Johnson asked if the process is occurring monthly because of the challenges.

Ms. Marshall stated yes because the citizens have that right. Also, there will be a deadline implemented for submitting challenges. There is an uptick in challenges being submitted but the department is 90 days out from the next election so February will be the last month available until after the election.

Mr. Barron asked Ms. Marshall to put together an information sheet to allow people that are interested in submitting voter challenges to have a resource to know how to submit them as well as an optimal timeline. In 2020 there was a blackout period for the federal elections which prevented NCOA mailings. Now that the blackout has been lifted, the mailings can commence.

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to remove the 20 electors challenged from the voter rolls. The motion was made by Ms. Crawford, seconded by Dr. Ruth, and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NO EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Ruth seconded the motion. Collectively, the Board agreed to adjourn at 12:18 p.m.

The meeting adjourned.

Prepared by,

Jessica M. Robinson, Board Secretary