



## BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS UNAPPROVED MINUTES

### REGULAR MEETING – January 12, 2023

The Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections met in Regular Session on Thursday, January 12, 2023, 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:** Cathy Woolard, Chairwoman

**Other Board Members Present:**

Mrs. Teresa Crawford, Vice Chairperson

Dr. Kathleen Ruth

Mr. Aaron Johnson

Mr. Mark Wingate (virtual)

**Staff Attending:** Mrs. Nadine E. Williams, Interim Director; Mr. Patrick Eskridge, Deputy Director; Ms. Shamira Marshall, Registration Chief; Mrs. Sharon Benjamin, Deputy Election Chief; Ms. Mariska Bodison, Absentee Manager; Mrs. Janice Dickenson, Administrative Manager; Mrs. Janell Barganier, Financial Systems Manager; Mrs. Jodi Brittan, Absentee Supervisor; Mr. Thomas Johnson, Registration Supervisor; Ms. LaShandra Little, VEO Manager; Mr. James Reese, Production Manager; Ms. Regina Waller, Communications Division Manager; Patrick O’conor, Supervising Attorney; Chad Alexis, Attorney; Mrs. Patrise Perkins-Hooker, Legal Counsel

**Guests Attending:**

#### **#1– APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Vice Chair Crawford, and carried by a vote of 5-0.**

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

**Jason Frazier** requested a status update on the Challenges submitted in December and he continues to express his concerns of the voter’s roll in Fulton County

**Lucia Frazier** expressed her concerns with the elections all 2022: voter list maintenance, training, shift work, PII of poll workers released and certification of election.

**Matt Rowan** expressed concerns similar to Lucia Frazier.

**Earl Ferguson** expressed his ability to work Early Voting but not all 19 days. Also, he expressed concerns of the equipment allocation not accurately calculated.

## OLD BUSINESS

### #3– APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Special Meeting- December 6, 2022**
- **Regular Meeting – December 12, 2022**

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to approve the Special Meeting- December 6, 2022 & Regular Meeting – December 12, 2022. The motion was made by Dr. Ruth and was seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

### #4– MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2022

**Mrs. Williams** greeted the Board and called on Division Leadership to provide their report to the Board. **Mrs. Williams** acknowledged the format change of the monthly operation report.

**Ms. Bodison** reported for the Absentee Division:

- Successfully conducted the Runoff Election
  - Manually mailed Absentee Ballots on November 21<sup>st</sup> for the **December 6<sup>th</sup>**
- Discussions with various vendors: Tattball Ballot Solutions, OPEX, HBSolutions, and Fort Orange
- Absentee Early Processing scheduled date: November 30, 2022
- Early Processing began on December 2, 2022
- Completed Reconciliation of the November 8<sup>th</sup> Election on December 12<sup>th</sup>
- Manually Scanned Oath Envelopes for Retention of the Runoff Election
- Participated in the Risk Limit Audit (RLA) on December 14, 2022
  - 13 Batches pulled for RLA: **12** Absentee Batches and **1** Provisional Batch
- Continuing to retain all Absentee records from the General & Runoff Election

**Mrs. Dickenson** reported for the Administration Division:

- **Positions Vacant:**
  - Director, Executive Assistant, Registration Manager, (6)Registration Officer, and Absentee Officer
- Processed and submitted invoices for payment
- Preparation to Close out all 2022 Expenditures
- Processed campaign contribution disclosure reports

**Mrs. Benjamin** reported for Advance Voting- Election Division:

- Conducted a successful Early Voting
- Reconciling
- Conducted a comprehensive review and Lessons Learned session
- Migration from ElectionNet to Jarvis, we will be developing new training materials, manuals, and training curriculum for implementation

- Implementation of alternate scheduling of Early Voting (EV) staff
- Preparing and planning for the 2023 Municipal Election

**Madam Chair** commented on the **DRE** making changes to introduce and implement an alternate **EV** scheduling platform.

**Vice Chair Crawford** commended **Mrs. Benjamin** of the **EV** locations and how they performed in the field.

**Mrs. Williams** reported for Election Day- Election Division:

- Finalizing Poll Worker Payroll for the December 6, Runoff Election.
- Updating Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of Regional Coordinator work duties
- Completing Poll Manager documents and recap sheets
- Completing report cards to be disseminated to Poll Managers
- Efforts to reduce election cost:
  - Election Day precincts with less than 2000 registered voters assigned to a polling location are being reviewed for merges with neighboring precinct locations.
  - Merges will be permanent and effect all election types. Attachment provided
  - The merges will also be forwarded to the BOC and municipalities for review and comment.

**Mr. Wingate** requested the report cards be disseminated to the **BRE**

**Madam Chair** asked to also summarize the findings submitted to the **BRE**

**Mrs. Williams** explained one of the reasons for report cards is to catch patterns and ensure adequate training has occurred. **Mrs. Williams** will provide the BRE with an update

**Chair Woolard:**

Thank you very much, I you know you all have had a very busy year and implemented a lot of changes and managed a lot of difficult circumstances including redistricting and change in Staffing and more. We appreciated and noticed (I certainly noticed) the improvements that have come over time in the course of the year and look forward to some goal setting with you and your team about the focus that we want to have as we move into 2023 to prepare for the big election in 2024.

**Mr. Johnson** recommended devising a plan to discuss the polling consolidations with the Municipalities and Organizations. Mr. Johnson suggested

**Ms. Williams** agreed with the suggestion and responded that **VEO** can assist with a campaign of informing and educating voters

**Mr. Johnson** suggested involving the Board of Commissioners

**Vice Chair Crawford** requested talking points on the polling place changes.

**Mr. Wingate** expressed challenges of Public schools as polling locations and some libraries being too small

**Mrs. Williams** agreed with **Mr. Wingate** comments. **Mrs. Williams** explained the efforts to avoid schools as much as possible and coordinating with the schools to adjust their calendars to accommodate Election Day

**Dr. Ruth** asked are there any thoughts on using Mega Sites again, noting that most of the locations are currently fully operational

**Mrs. Williams** explained that the **DRE** will explore Mega Sites and Event Spaces for the 2024 Election cycle

**Mr. Johnson** inquired if the schools are informed of Runoff Election

**Mrs. Williams** explained yes, schools are informed of all elections. The **DRE** use their reservation system to include all dates for the year and Runoffs are included

**Dr. Ruth** recommended a full assessment of all Polling place locations

**Madam Chair** educated the public on the criteria for polling locations:

- Adequate power supplies due to equipment requirements
- Americans with Disabilities Act (**ADA**) requirements to be compliant

**Mrs. Barganier** reported for Finance- Administration Division:

- 2023 Elections budget
- Temp agency files were submitted to Purchasing to request bids from personnel agencies

<b>2022 Financial Results:</b>	
Operations Budget	Budget \$4,391,024 Actual \$4,618,115
Elections Approved Total Budget	Budget \$33,026,729 Actual \$20,896,054
General Primary	Budget \$10,475,096 Actual \$6,529,584
General Primary Run-off	Budget \$9,852,568 Actual \$2,709,816
General Election	Budget \$12,403,864 Actual \$8,968,460
General Election Run-off	Actual \$2,688,194 (Funded by underruns)
2022 TOTAL Actual Costs:	\$25,514,168
<b>2023 Proposed Budget:</b>	
Operations Budget	\$4.6 Million
Elections Proposed Budget	\$12.4 Million

**Madam Chair** commended the **DRE** for their efforts in managing the 2022 Budget.

**Mr. Olomo** reported for Information System-Election Division:

- System Specialist worked on post-election procedures
  1. Equipment reconciliation
  2. Testing of all equipment were reported to be having issues on the field during the Dec 06 Runoff and separating such equipment for RMA.
  3. Arrange equipment and asset at the Philip lee warehouse in readiness for relocation to Election Central.

- Information Systems is working with the WDS Inventory System team to create an Event within the warehouse management system that will make asset relocation from the current warehouse to the election central efficient
- **Voting Equipment Inventory:**
  - Total number ICX/BMD – **3,560**
  - Total number ICP Scanner – **411**

**Mr. Eskridge** reported for Voter Registration Division:

- Processed voter registration applications
  - Processed registration issues,
- Researched street issues,
- Preparation for municipal street audits
- Prepared notices to voter registration applicants
- Scanned and indexed registration cards
- Registered Voters **860,157** – total
  - **755,345** - active
  - **104,812** - inactive
  - **10,913** applications
  - **1,126** new registrations
  - **0** transfers to Fulton County
  - **0** removals from Fulton County

**Mr. Wingate** asked will the GARViS implementation resolve the list maintenance concerns

**Mrs. Williams** responded yes, GARViS should resolve the issues that the **DRE** is currently experiencing. For example: Duplicate records on ENet Dashboard will show 400 and the public will send a document with 6,000 Duplicates. GARViS will also, identify business address, which prevent staff from registering a voter at that particular address. All personnel will complete training this month.

**Mr. Wingate** asked when will the GARViS conversion occur

**Mrs. Williams** responded GARViS launch will occur on February 6, 2023.

**Dr. Ruth** recommended a Mock Election after the GARViS implementation to ensure proper procedures are in place

**Mrs. Williams** commended the recommendation of **Dr. Ruth** and informed the **BRE** that the **DRE** will plan and provided updates

**Ms. Little** reported on Voter Education and Outreach Division:

- Contacted schools, communities, non-profit organizations, government officials, and all c to schedule future events across the county.
- Contacted all Municipalities to schedule events before the Voter Registration deadline,
  - Consideration on low voter turnout areas and cities with low voter registration to plan events.
- The VEO team also assisted in the RLA after the Runoff election.
- Planning monthly Deputy Register training, certifications must be renewed yearly
- Legislative updates
- **2** deputy registrars trained, **400** for the year
- **0** voters registered, **2,359**
- **0** poll workers to assist with runoff, **958** for year
- **0** voter id cards, **66** for year
- **0** absentee applications, **435** for the year (starting counting mid-year)

- **200** connection, **2,636** for year
- **700** event interactions giving us over **23,070** for the year
- **2** media inquiries, **50** for year

**Ms. Little:**

The bulk of our events are in Atlanta, it's the capital, and if you take Atlanta out and put North Fulton against South Fulton the events are equal in terms of how much time we spent in each of those cities and North Fulton actually has less cities than in South Fulton and it was still even as it relates to those cities.

Outreach:

- VEO are going to be working on looking at the population sizes of a lot of the cities to determine voter registration drives that can be done so we'll be looking at that as we determine how we're doing events across the county.
- VEO intend to contact the Planning and Zoning Directors in the economic development to see what new subdivisions are going to be popping up prior to the October 10th deadline.
- VEO working to get drives out there

We're going to try to take that type of comprehensive approach across the county as well as when we have some brainstorming sessions to see what other mechanisms we can use to make sure that people see it as being Equitable because at no point are we trying to just be in one part of the county and not the other we are making every effort to be everywhere and I think you can see that when you look at the map and sort of where we are and then I also again reach out to Commissioners I never waited for any commissioner to schedule an event we just if they request we will do it and as well as with our the Mayors and city council and the municipalities this is a municipal year we'll be sure to be reached out to all of them as I'm sure they'll want us to make sure we're coming out there to get folks do poll worker Recruitment and get folks educated on the election

**Mr. A. Johnson** agreed with **Ms. Little** comment regarding events being evenly distributed throughout the county with the exception of Atlanta. I still think it's unfortunate that we measure everything based on North versus South. **Mr. Johnson** commended **Ms. Little** on her great work.

**#5–COST TO MUNICIPALITIES TO CONDUCT THEIR ELECTIONS**

- Resolution#:19-0630 passed on August 17, 2019
- New Resolution

**Mrs. Williams** outlined a PowerPoint presentation to the BRE:

**2019 MUNICIPAL COST RESOLUTION**

With the conclusion of the 2022 General Elections, the Fulton County Department of Registration & Elections has diligently analyzed Election cost for all Election types.

The 2022 November and December Elections are the first General Elections to have all new legislative requirements in place to illustrate voter turnouts for Advance Voting and Election Day for future Elections.

Voter turnouts for all Election types from 2020 to 2022 were reviewed.

With this data, Fulton County Registration & Elections will continue to streamline processes for efficiency and Election cost reductions.

In the interim, Election Cost have increased since the Municipal Cost Resolution was established. Therefore, we are seeking approval to have the resolution revised to not have the County incur Municipal Election Cost.

## 2019 MUNICIPAL COST RESOLUTION

Municipalities pay a cost per voter flat rate based on calculations of Election cost from **2017** Election Budgets

- » The resolution was to be re-evaluated upon the installation of the new voting equipment
- » The resolution is based on cost sharing with the County which contradicts election code

***O.C.G.A. § 21-2-45(c) requires municipalities to pay all costs a county incurs while conducting the municipality's requested elections services***

## ELECTION COST INCREASES

The Election Budget has increased due to various factors throughout the years. Following are examples of increases outlined in the memo forwarded:

	2017	2019 ATLANTA DID NOT HAVE A MUNICIPAL	2021	2022 GENERAL ELECTION	DESCRIPTION OF INCREASE	2023 ADJUSTMENTS IF APPLICABLE
TOTAL ACTUAL NOVEMBER EXPENSES:	\$ 3,032,909	\$ 818,672	\$ 7,404,971	\$ 8,968,460		
Rent/Lease Equipment	\$ 57,678	\$ 25,983	\$ 243,841	\$ 329,208	Increase in vehicle rentals due to voting equipment size and legislative requirements. Example: 15 ft to 26 ft box trucks needed verses cargo vans. Rental vehicles needed to empty absentee ballot drop boxes daily verses on the last day of advance voting, per Senate Bill 202 (SB202) requirement	n/a
Rent/Lease Facility	\$ 43,681	\$ 15,535	\$ 92,434	\$ 115,969	Increase in Election Day polling locations	Cost should decrease as Election Day polling sites are reviewed for
Printing	\$ 44,565	\$ 11,748	\$ 235,375	\$ 319,169	Increase in quantity of ballot printing for emergency / provisional ballots forms and recaps sheets for new voting equipment	n/a
Photocopying	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,150		
Office Supplies	\$ 65,080	\$ 28,691	\$ 146,596	\$ 95,215	New voting equipment requires purchase of printer ink cartridges, ballot paper, and seals for Ballot Marking Device (BMD)	n/a

## COUNTY INCURRED COST

In 2021, Fulton County incurred **over \$2 million in election cost**, since the cost per voter rate is insufficient to cover Election cost.

### PRIOR TO THE 2019 RESOLUTION:

- » Cost to each Municipality was based on percentages of Election cost
- » The County would draft a budget for the current year and municipalities would pay a percentage based on their number of registered voters.
- » The County would not incur cost and municipalities were refunded any unexpended funds.

## REQUEST FOR RESOLUTION TO BE REVISED

Therefore, to not have the county incur cost in conducting Municipal Elections, Fulton County Registration & Elections is requesting approval to have the Municipal Cost Resolution revised

- » **Reverting to the percentage of election cost distribution based on the Municipalities number of registered voters**
- » **Reinstating refunds to Municipalities of unexpended funds**
- » **Elimination of a set cost per voter rate will allow the County to adjust the budget due to possible fluctuations in cost caused by legislative changes, vendor rates, etc.**
- » **Elimination of a set cost per voter will allow the Department of Registration & Election to continue to evaluate and implement cost reductions annually without continually revising the resolution**
- »

## MUNICIPALITY VOTING METHOD CHOICES

While Fulton County is happy to conduct Municipal Elections, Municipalities have the option to conduct their own election. They have the freedom to choose which method of voting works best for them. These options may allow for cost savings. County conducted Elections are not allotted these options.

### **County Conducted Election**

The county conducts the election according to the Intergovernmental Agreement

### **Contracting Use of Voting Equipment**

Contracting use of county owned state mandated voting machines without county involvement

### **Paper ballots – Optical Scan Count**

Counting with use of the Optical Scanners with no county involvement

### **Paper ballots - Hand Count**

Counting the ballots by hand with no county involvement

### **Shoup Machines**

No county involvement

We encourage Municipalities to explore these options for cost saving measures

**Chair Woolard** thanked **Mrs. Williams** for an excellent report and before we get into the debate of this item. **Madam Chair** recognized **Mrs. Williams** on her many hours dedicated to resolving this cost estimate, getting through the election, the runoff, and preparing our budget proposal for next year and then dealing with this all through the holiday season where one might want to rest after a very busy year. I just want to acknowledge this was many hours of work many hours of meetings to figure this out.

**Mr. Johnson** recommended contacting the Municipalities to discuss the resolution and to get feedback

**Mrs. Williams** agreed with the recommendation

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to support the revision of Resolution for the Cost of Municipal Election. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson and was seconded by Vice Chair Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

February 1, 2023 the BOC resolution, Item#: **23-0045**, was amended and approved.

## **#6- APPROVAL OF 2023 BRE MEETING SCHEDULE**

**Ms. Bodison** updated the **BRE** on the 2023 scheduled Meetings:

- March 9, 2023 Assembly Hall is not available
  - Suggested date: **March 16, 2023** (3<sup>rd</sup> week in March)
- June 2023 Meeting will conclude BRE meetings in Assembly Hall
  - Meetings will begin July 2023 at Election Central
    - Unless the BRE wants to take alternate action

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to approve the 2023 BRE Meeting Calendar. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson and was seconded by Vice Chair Crawford and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **#7- CARTER CENTER REPORT REVIEW**

**Mrs. Williams** shared the Conclusion of the Carter Center Report:

**Conclusion** Overall and within the parameters of its observation efforts, The Carter Center did not observe any election administration irregularities that would call into question the ability of the Fulton County Department of Registrations and Elections to administer secure and accessible elections for the citizens of Fulton County. The minor issues observed and noted in this report are consistent with the kinds of small hiccups that occur within any complex election administration process; Fulton County residents should feel confident these snags did not affect the election results. The aspects of the election process the Center observed were clearly improved from 2020 and

demonstrated the implementation of best practices (for example, frequent reconciliation and prioritization of chain of custody and security).

Election processes are complex logistical exercises. As such, there are always opportunities for continuous improvement of processes to bolster efficiency and maximize appropriate and contextualized transparency. This process of continuous improvement relies on the observation of systems and processes and the creation of monitoring feedback loops so that lessons from one election can be integrated into systems to improve future elections. It is in this spirit that the Center has offered recommendations and suggestions for improvement throughout this report.

Finally, The Carter Center notes that the Fulton County Department of Registrations and Elections cooperated fully with the observation effort and demonstrated an openness to transparency and learning that is to be commended. The Carter Center thanks the Performance Review Board and Fulton County Board of Elections and Registration for the invitation to observe the 2022 general election.

**Vice Chair Crawford** commended the **DRE** on their cooperation and performance.

**Dr. Ruth** thanked the **DRE** for their hard work. **Dr. Ruth** inquired about privacy screens for the BMDs.

**Mrs. Williams** mentioned the **DRE** will revisit and review the cost to reach to a solution.

**Mr. Johnson** commended the **DRE** on their performance.

**Chair Woolard** expressed many thanks for participating in this requested of **DRE/BRE** and as we continue to improve and be responsive to the request from the Secretary of State's office and The Performance Review Board. We were happy to participate we'll use this report as some guidance as we go into our work plan for next year

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Chairperson Woolard entertained a motion to close the regular session and convene into executive session to discuss personnel matters. The motion was made by Vice Chair Crawford, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

After executive session, **Chairperson Woolard entertained a motion to resume into regular session. The motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Ruth and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

### **Regular Session:**

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to approve Nadine Williams as the finalist for the Director of Registration and Elections' position. The motion was made by Vice Chair Crawford and was seconded by Dr. Ruth and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

## ADJOURNMENT

**Chairwoman Woolard entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Crawford seconded the motion.** Collectively, the Board agreed to adjourn at 11:46 a.m.

The meeting adjourned.

Prepared by  
Mariska Bodison, Absentee Manager