

**COBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION
DECEMBER 3, 2020
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

736 Whitlock Avenue
4:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Phil Daniell
Fred Aiken
Jessica Brooks
Darryl Wilson, Jr.
Pat Gartland

Board Members Absent

Others Present: The following individuals were also present in person: Janine Eveler, Beau Gunn, Tara Crisp, Gregg Litchfield, and Crista Watson. Brenda Jemison participated remotely.

Chairman Daniell called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Director Janine Eveler presented the election recount report, detailed the anomalies identified as a result of the recount, and requested approval to re-certify the results of the November 3, 2020, Presidential Race Results.

Mr. Gartland made a motion to re-certify the November 3, 2020, Presidential Race results. Ms. Brooks SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.

Other Business: None

Board Member Comments:

Ms. Brooks asked Director Eveler for detailed information pertaining to the decision to decrease the number of advanced voting locations for the January 5, 2021 Runoff. Director Eveler explained this was not the intention but is also not an uncommon practice. She explained not all advanced voting locations previously utilized are available to be used during early voting for the upcoming runoff, the staffing limitations that have forced the department to consolidate, and the difference in processes between Advanced Voting Managers and Poll Managers that prohibit the department from being able to use them interchangeably to staff additional early voting locations.

Ms. Brooks asked Director Eveler how the locations used for Advanced Voting were determined. Director Eveler explained that locations are identified within the four quadrants of the county and detailed the necessary criteria including the requirement that locations meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility standards, facilities large enough to support the volume of voters while also providing ample parking, and the challenges the department has faced securing suitable locations that meet the criteria and are also available during the holiday season.

Ms. Brooks asked Director Eveler to address voter concerns regarding the different formats printed on the outer envelopes received for absentee voting. Director Eveler detailed the style change that occurred last year due to concerns over identity theft and explained, the only requirement on the envelope is the voter signature. Director Eveler also explained, the department was attempting to utilize the remaining inventory before distributing the new supply and stated because of citizen concerns, the department will discard the previous design and begin issuing the updated version.

Ms. Brooks inquired as to the number of applications for Absentee Ballots the department has received at this time. Director Eveler responded stating 50,000 have been issued by the State's vendor and the department has distributed about that many as well, for a total of about 100,000 issued currently.

Mr. Wilson asked Director Eveler to elaborate on what measures the department takes to verify the validity of signatures when mail-in ballots are received. Director Eveler detailed the training staff has received and the verification process. She explained when an application for an absentee ballot is received, the signature located on the application is verified against the signature on file within the voter registration system. The file signatures come from various sources, including the Department of Drivers Services system and paper registration applications previously submitted. Once successfully verified, the ballot is issued. When the completed ballot is received by the department, the signature on the outside envelope is then verified for a second time with the signatures on file. If any inconsistencies are identified, the department contacts the voter to have them provide a copy of their identification and complete an affidavit. If these are not received, the request cannot be verified and the ballot is not counted.

Chairman Daniell asked Director Eveler what complications she would foresee if identification were required to be included with each application for an absentee ballot. Director Eveler explained that there was a bill proposed to make this a requirement but failed to pass.

Director Eveler was asked when the department planned to begin testing the voting machines for the upcoming runoff. She detailed the current order prohibiting the department from beginning testing on the equipment. Director Eveler informed the Board of the concerns and challenges the department will face if the order is not lifted in a timeframe that allows for testing to be conducted and completed before the start of polling place deliveries on December 28. She explained that there is enough equipment that was not deployed in November to cover the Early Voting needs, but there is not enough to deploy to the election day polls.

The Chairman set the next regular meeting for December 14, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Aiken made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

Mr. Gartland SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.