

COBB COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION
MARCH 14, 2022
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

100 Cherokee St.
3:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Tori Silas
Jessica Brooks
Jennifer Mosbacher
Steve Bruning
Pat Gartland

Board Members Absent

Others present: Janine Eveler, Kara Pringle, Daniel White and Norma Estevez.

Chairperson Silas called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Boyd Parks (in person) He lives in historic downtown Acworth and is concerned about the 2020 election missing ballot images. Asked how election can be certified without them.
- Shelly Northrup (virtual) She lives and works in Smyrna. Shelly asked to expand voter access. Stated that the county must provide early voting on Sundays. Cobb County should expand to 20 early voting locations that are open from 7 – 7 pm. She would like Cobb County to consider large locations such as Truist Park or Cobb Galleria. If poll workers are overwhelmed Cobb County should consider Gwinnett’s model to have workers on shifts such as every other day.
- Lindsay Favero (virtual) She is based in Kennesaw and expressed her concern about voting accessibility. Asked for more opportunities to have voting locations close to the voters. Requested to increase voting hours 7 days a week 7am -7 pm and open large voting locations. Asked to streamline hiring process to get hired quickly and use shift-based work system to mitigate burnout and encourage participation for poll workers.
- Genevieve Carroll (in person) She has attended several board meetings and inquired about an email she sent to Chairperson Silas regarding drop boxes, chain of custody and alleged ballot harvesting. Asked what election is doing to safeguard ballot drop boxes. Would like to know why voting images were not available for the 2020 election.
- Pam Reardon (in person) She is managing voter election integrity process for the Cobb GOP. Pam mentioned that during the first day of early voting she observed that there were 26 early voters. The first person voted 10 am. Said that the voters will not show up

at 7 am to vote during early voting, and that it's a waste of resources to open early voting locations for long periods of time. She stated that another problem is in person drop off of ballots. Ms. Reardon stated this is a needless expense to have at libraries and leaves them open to fraud.

- Amy Brown (in person) She lives in Smyrna and said the idea that we can all get off work to vote is a middle-class concept. The poorest people in our society don't have means to get off work. She understands the poll workers are overtasked. She urged Cobb County to keep early voting hours 7 am -7 pm. Requested to expand access to early voting for everyone in our society. Wants early voting to be held on Sundays. Stated that voting locations need to be expanded. Suggested using Gwinnett model alternating poll workers' schedule.
- Richard Brown (virtual) He would like to reiterate things that have been mentioned to make sure voters can cast ballot. Stated that the BOE must provide Sunday voting. In addition to hiring adequate poll workers, he asked to consider expanding early voting opportunity. He said Cobb County should be innovative and expand voter access. Mr. Brown also stated the County could address poll worker voting conditions by offering shifts as they do in Gwinnett County.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Ms. Bruning made a motion to approve the February 14, 2022, meeting minutes. Ms. Mosbacher SECONDED. APPROVED 5/0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

- a) To request approval to change the polling place location for precinct Bells Ferry 03 (BF03) from Noonday Baptist Church, 4121 Canton Rd., Marietta, GA 30066 to the Catholic Church of the Transfiguration, 1815 Blackwell Rd., Marietta, GA 30066 beginning March 14, 2022.

Mr. Bruning made a motion to APPROVE. Ms. Brooks SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.

- b) To request approval to change the polling place location for precinct Dobbins 02 (DI02) from Calvary Baptist Church of Smyrna, 1243 Bellmont Ave. Smyrna, GA 30080 to Cobb County Adult Education Center, 1595 Hawthorne Ave. SE, Smyrna, GA 30080 beginning March 14, 2022.

Mr. Gartland asked if the new polling location will accommodate the number of voters.

Mr. Gartland made a motion to APPROVE. Mr. Bruning SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.

- c) To request approval to change the polling place location for precinct Fair Oaks 02 (FO02) from Milford Baptist Church, 1030 Milford Church Rd., SW Marietta, GA 30060 to Christ Anglican Church, 844 Smyrna Powder Springs Rd., Marietta, GA 30060 beginning March 14, 2022.

Mr. Bruning noticed that previous locations are churches that are bowing out. Asked if there a reason for the change that we can try to address and fix? The inconveniences for all our voters having to change location, find new place is highly undesirable.

Ms. Brooks mentioned that she appreciates Janine for supplying historical statistics. Said that it gives us context how these voting locations have performed. Stated that staff could identify what is available other than churches.

Ms. Eveler said that there are various reasons why churches don't want to continue to serve as polling location. Said that one of the churches, Noonday Baptist Church, is selling their property. Stated that staff has been trying since last year to find suitable replacements for the churches.

Mr. Gartland asked if county's properties were identified as possible voting locations.

Mr. Gartland made a motion to APPROVE. Mr. Bruning SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.

CHAIRWOMAN SILAS OPENED THE FLOOR TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jaquelyn Bettadapur (in person) stated that she understands the complexity but wants to make everyone aware that FO02, DO02 and BF03 have undergone many changes since 2016. She said that FO02 & DO01 seemed to be constantly undergoing changes. She asked for locations to be accessible to voters who don't have the time and resources. Asked for long term strategy to solve the problems. She also stated that other counties are looking at voter centers to accommodate multiple polls and to help stabilize. The precinct structure is problematic because it is relying on private businesses and landowners.
- Pamela Reardon (in person) reiterated that super voting centers won't work, since voters will have to travel longer distances.

DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS (Janine Eveler)

- a) Review draft advance voting schedule and drop box distribution plan for May 24, 2022.

Director Eveler talked about the map where the proposed location will be for the May 24 election. Proposed ten locations with six drop boxes.

Mr. Gartland made a motion to APPROVE. Mr. Bruning SECONDED. APPROVED 5-0.

b) Review in-person absentee drop-off locations (aka Library pilot)

Director Eveler explained that they're trying to drop the name Library, so they can use other facilities for in-person ballot drop off. She also said that this program is most needed on the Saturday and Monday prior to the election when it is too late to mail. She is proposing 7 locations.

Ms. Brooks: This program needs a marketing campaign.

Mr. Bruning: Is the main office one of these locations?

Director Eveler: There will be a team of 3 at each location. Yes, the main office can always be a drop off location

Ms. Silas: Directs staff to find a location in most southern portion of Cobb.

Ms. Mosbacher made a motion to APPROVE. Ms. Brooks SECONDED. APPROVED 4/1. Mr. Gartland OPPOSED.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Gartland stated the need of promoting mail in ballot.

Ms. Brooks stated that she is not in favor of focusing on mail in voting. Said that there are three ways to vote and should focus on developing voting plan and not to focus on a technique to vote.

Mr. Bruning mentioned that he did not see Sunday voting included in the agenda. Recommended two Sundays to be open for early voting. Stated that there will be a demand for Sunday voting. Suggested same hours as on Saturdays.

Ms. Mosbacher mentioned the feedback she got from poll workers and the majority is not in favor of working on Sunday.

Mr. Bruning suggested the change to be made for the November election.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

- Mr. Bruning emailed Director Eveler with four questions:
 - What is the status of renovations at the new Elections office location?
 - Reply per Director Eveler: The final inspection is expected in mid-May. Once the CO is obtained prep center equipment can be moved. All poll worker training will be there at the end of March through May. Final occupancy at end of June.
 - Asked if we will be conducting the general election from the new location.
 - Inquired about the status of redistricting and revision of voter database

- Reply per Director Eveler: Cobb redistricting is complete and had to be done because of qualifying but it was a struggle. There was lots of overtime. 109 counties were not done on the Thu/Fri before qualifying. There is still the QA with the new tool to complete. There are some problem areas, and they are having to make very detailed assessments i.e., where new city of Vinings is splitting apartment complexes. They are trying to make the best decision, but it is on a one-by-one decision.
- Ms. Silas encouraged documentation of each resolution since there is an absence of guidance from the Secretary of State.
- Director Eveler: In the process of QA with the new tool. Hopefully will be finished in a week or so. She is targeting the end of this month to order the precinct cards.
- Asked when the new districting information will be accessible on the SOS website.
 - Reply per Director Eveler: Now. All voters can check MVP now for updated information. Still working on getting maps updated on Cobb's website. She will get back to the board with a timeline for when this is up.
- Inquired regarding April 5th election and plan for executing it.
 - Reply per Director Eveler: Enet has been redistricted and the special election is being conducted based on old district. She did a capture from the old district. Added voter registration changes. There are four check in windows at each location by alphabet. The windows are using a spreadsheet. Confirming that no absentee ballot was issued. Check in is taking longer. But able to issue cards upon check in. BMD and voter access card has not changed. Only difference is marking voter on the list.
 - Ms. Brooks: Would a new resident of old HD45 district who registered properly get a precinct card?
 - Director Eveler: Yes, but they probably would not have received it. All voters registered but they would not be able to check on the MVP. If a voter thinks they are eligible they really need to contact Cobb during early voting. Poll pads will have downloaded data on election day. Old map is on website and will be at polling location.

NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING

- April 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. (At West Park to observe election returns only)
- April 11, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. (certification)

ADJOURN

Chairman Silas adjourned the meeting at 4:27 pm