

**THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS OF CHATHAM COUNTY
MEETING MINUTES**

November 12, 2019

BOARD MEMBERS: Thomas J. Mahoney - Chairman
Malinda Hodge – Vice Chair
Marianne Heimes
Antwan Lang
Debbie Rauers

STAFF: Russell Bridges
Lynn Trabue

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m. by **Tom Mahoney** who gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAIR ADDRESS: **Mr. Mahoney** thanked those in attendance for coming to the meeting. He noted that a sign-up sheet was available for individuals to sign up for Public Comment later in the meeting.

MINUTES: **October 14, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Mahoney requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the October 14, 2019 meeting. **Mr. Lang made a motion** to approve the minutes with an alteration to be made of his last name to correct it from **Mr. Lange** to **Mr. Lang** where it appears incorrectly in the text of the Meeting Minutes. **Ms. Heimes** seconded the motion to direct staff to make the requested corrections and approve the minutes from October 14, 2019. The question was called and **ALL APPROVED**.

**TREASURER'S
REPORT**

October 2019:

Mr. Bridges presented the October 2019 Treasurer's Report for information. **Motion by Mr. Lang, seconded by Ms. Heimes** to approve. The question was called and **ALL APPROVED**.

OLD BUSINESS

Nov 5 Municipal/General Special Election

Mr. Bridges presented a staff report document and summary document of the results of the election. **Mr. Bridges** indicated that 90 precincts had voting operations and that there were approximately 600 poll workers employed to work the polls during the election. **Mr. Bridges** also commented that the polls in the municipality of Pooler were less congested due to the new Advance Voting location in Pooler which handled approximately one third of the total voters who participated in the election. Regarding absentee by mail ballot processing, **Mr. Bridges** indicated that this process is being refined but that it worked better with this election than it has before.

Mr. Lang requested clarification of the standard by which election winners are declared. **Mr. Bridges** indicated that the standard is 50% + 1 vote in Savannah, but the other municipalities in Chatham County are able to choose to operate under a plurality standard rather than the 50% + 1 vote standard.

Mr. Lang also posed a question about if any irregularities were reported with the election. **Mr. Bridges** said that there were none. **Mr. Lang** also spoke about some activities that he observed which were concerning including individuals entering the enclosed voting space who were seeking counts of people who had voted, as well as a lack of clarity about the boundaries around polling places where signs can be placed. **Mr. Mahoney** indicated that the poll manager has maps and measurement guides to assist with campaign signage as well as aid from their techs. **Mr. Bridges** indicated that there will be a renewed focus on preventing or managing the activities of above-mentioned individuals in future elections to resolve these issues.

Ms. Hodge requested an overview of absentee and provisional voters, and an explanation of how runoff races occur and how plurality versus majority applies to municipalities and cities. **Mr. Bridges** provided this information as well as information about voter challenges which was asked by **Ms. Heimes**.

CERTIFY Nov 5 Municipal General/Special Election

Mr. Mahoney suggested that if there was no further discussion that a motion be put forward to certify the results of the election in each municipality. **Mr. Lang made a motion to approve, the motion was seconded by Ms. Heimes and ALL APPROVED.** Each Board member and staff member signed the relevant certification documents for each municipality.

Precinct Realignment 2019

Mr. Bridges read a proposal to realign precincts in the municipality of Pooler and provided the Board with the written proposal as well as advertisements that had been run in the Savannah Morning News, the legal organ, to inform voters of the proposal and to invite comments and objections. **Ms. Rauers** objected, indicating that she was concerned that the schedule of advertisements had not met the legally mandated requirements. **Mr. Bridges** referred back to the advertisements, which display the dates on which they had been run, and confirmed legal requirements had been met. **Mr. Mahoney** asked that a motion be made to accept the precinct realignment. **Ms. Hodge made a motion to approve, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lang,** and the question was called. **The motion carried; Ms. Rauers voted NO.**

New Voting System

Mr. Bridges gave an updated report on the new voting system from Dominion. **Mr. Bridges** said that this system will have a ballot marking component, printing component, polling place tabulators and at least one high-speed central scanner. He addressed some of the differences between the old and new system as well as some of the things that will be worked out over time. **Mr. Bridges** also spoke about a conference in Savannah on December 9th, 10th, and 11th that will focus on presenting information regarding the new voting system.

Board Retreat

Mr. Mahoney addressed the topic of the Board Retreat that had been requested previously. **Mr. Mahoney** confirmed that work had already begun to put the Retreat together and suggested that an invoice from **Charles McMillen** be paid for services rendered. Several Board members requested to see the invoice and **Mr. Mahoney** apologized that he did not have the invoice with him at that time but indicated it was about \$1,000. **Ms. Heimes made a motion to approve paying the invoice for \$1,000,** but after further discussion, it was determined that the invoice was more than \$1,000. **Ms. Heimes amended her motion to approve payment over \$1,000, Ms. Hodge seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Ms. Rauers voted NO.**

NEW BUSINESS

December 3 Runoff Election

Mr. Bridges presented a staff report on the upcoming runoff election for the City of Savannah Mayor and City of Savannah 6th District Alderman on December 3. Fifty-three of fifty-five precincts will be open. **Mr. Bridges** mentioned that, due to a small number of voters in some precincts, those voters have a different assigned municipal precinct than their county level precinct. **Mr. Bridges** said these voters would be sent a post card to inform them of this before the Dec 3 election. **Mr. Bridges** further stated that preparations for absentee by mail and the DRE machines will be underway as soon as possible. Staffing preparations for the runoff election has already begun and early voting will begin as soon as possible in three locations.

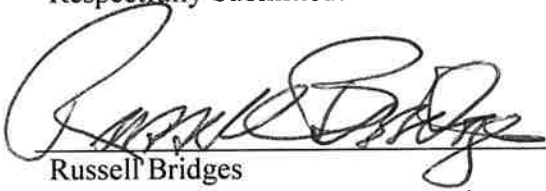
PUBLIC COMMENT

Several members of the public addressed the Board.


ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Ms. Hodge to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by **Mr. Lang.**
ALL APPROVED. The meeting was adjourned at **5:22pm.**

Respectfully Submitted:




Russell Bridges
Supervisor, Secretary to the Board



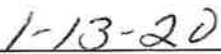
Date Approved



Thomas J. Mahoney, III
Chair



Notary Signature



Date Notarized

LYNN F TRABUE
NOTARY PUBLIC
CHATHAM COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA
My Commission Expires April 03, 2020