

THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS OF CHATHAM COUNTY  
MINUTES

January 2020

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Thomas J. Mahoney - Chairman  
Malinda Hodge – Vice Chair  
Marianne Heimes  
Antwan Lang  
Debbie Rauers – not present

**STAFF:** Russell Bridges  
Lynn Trabue  
Caity Hamilton

**CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 3:32 P.M. by **Tom Mahoney** who gave an Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CHAIR ADDRESS** **Mr. Mahoney** thanked those assembled for appearing at the meeting. He noted that a sign-up sheet was available for the public who wish to speak during the Public Comment period. **Mr. Mahoney** also requested speakers during the Public Comment period keep their remarks to two minutes and to confine their statements to items on the current agenda. Discussion and deliberations are for the elected Board members. Questions from the public can be asked at the office during office hours.

**MINUTES** **December 2019**  
**Motion by Mr. Lang, seconded by Ms. Heimes**, that the Minutes of the December 19, 2019 meeting be approved. There was no additional discussion. **Motion passed.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT** **December 2019:**  
**Russell** presented the December 2019 Treasurer's Report for information.  
**Motion by Mr. Lang, seconded by Ms. Heimes**, that the December 2019 Treasurer's Report be accepted as information. There was no additional discussion. **Motion passed.**

**OLD BUSINESS** **Calendar for 2020**  
Date correction – a September 17<sup>th</sup> date that was erroneously added has been removed.

**New Voting System**

**Mr. Bridges** presented a staff report and invited the board to come to the warehouse after the meeting to see the progress being made in moving the old machines out to make room for the new machines. Staff started last Thursday and worked through the weekend to remove all shelves. The DREs and express polls were removed from the shelves and placed on the floor. This Thursday the equipment will be removed and securely stored, and when Judge Totenberg releases the court order holding it, it will be disposed of by a recycling company and not resold.

**Mr. Mahoney** asked about complete sets of equipment that we currently hold, and **Mr. Bridges** replied that we hold one complete and working set for training and Registrar holds another.

**Ms. Heimes** asked about the privacy shields and **Mr. Bridges** replied that the demo did not come with one but the rest of the units will have privacy screens. **Ms. Heimes** also asked about whether these ballot marking stations will be wider than the old machines. **Mr. Bridges** offered further description of the stations and said that there will be a lot of experimenting and creativity in order to figure out what works best for storage.

**Mr. Lang** asked when the new machines would be delivered and **Mr. Bridges** advised that one crew would work all day Thursday to remove the old equipment and another crew would arrive Friday morning and be here all day. If necessary, the failover day is the following Tuesday.

**Mr. Bridges** advised he would be attending training for key staff in Midway on January 21<sup>st</sup>. He stated that the county would be receiving the following in equipment: 876 BMDs, 106 scanning devices, 1 central count high speed scanner for absentee. Extra purchasing decisions will be made soon. He also advised that the state demo team will be able to come out within about two weeks from when we request them and do about two demos a day depending on the geographic locations of each demo. **Ms. Hodge** asked if it would be best to direct groups asking for demos to the office. **Mr. Bridges** requested that anyone receiving a request for a demo, especially from large groups, gather information on what the group's needs are and contact the office before having the group make contact. **Mr. Mahoney** asked if the state has taken the lead on education

regarding the new voting machines and whether they have made videos available. **Mr. Bridges** responded that they did produce a video along these lines, which we have posted to our website. **Mr. Bridges** also took this opportunity to discuss the new voting system materials we have posted to the website as well as present the pilot Board of Elections Facebook account and demonstrate some of the state materials linked there.

**Mr. Lang** asked if we will need more space for storage and if every piece is arriving on Friday and **Mr. Bridges** replied that he expects 100% of the equipment to arrive on Friday. Staff will need to then unpack each pallet and inventory every piece and once it is fully received we will have a better idea of how our storage and warehouse equipment needs will change.

**Ms. Heimes** brought up the changes that will be needed with our transportation company and **Mr. Bridges** agreed and stated that they have been advised of the increasing work load and will most likely be looking at a mid-course adjustment to their contract.

#### **Board Retreat**

**Mr. Mahoney** stated that Mr. McMillan will lead the board retreat on Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at The Mansion on Forsyth, expected to begin at 8 or 8:30 am, include a working lunch, and convene in the afternoon.

#### **Proposed Polling Place Change**

**Mr. Bridges** presented reports on changes to 4-10 Guard House Community Center to the Tybee Island Court House and 8-15 Garden City Recreation Center to the First Baptist Church on Milson Ave. He advised that the advertising requirements were met for both locations and once they are approved the state will be notified and the advertising process will begin.

**Ms. Hodges** motioned that the changes to both polling places be accepted, motion seconded by **Mr. Lange**. There was no discussion, motion passed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **2020-2021 Budget**

**Mr. Bridges** presented a staff report, including the budget package produced by the county. He advised that budget submission will be due to the county on February 10<sup>th</sup>, the day of the next board meeting, so it will be submitted following approval by the Board. **Mr. Bridges** stated this report does not project any dollar figures, but instead is a budget premise to be used as a framework for projecting the dollar figures.

**Mr. Bridges** presented two Staff Proposals to be voted on, one to establish the funds in the budget to support an Incentive Program for managers to commit to and complete the entire year of elections, and second to remove the current Committed Assistant level position and replace it with a new manager training program. **Mr. Bridges** stated that this program is meant to relieve some of the time Ms. Trabue and her staff spend on making phone calls to recruit, confirm, and schedule poll workers. As part of the program, the assistants and managers of each poll would commit at the beginning of the year to working all the year's elections and would receive a bonus, such as \$200 at the end of the year for fulfilling the commitment, to add an approximate total of \$55,000 to the budget. The second proposal would remove the level and title of Committed Assistant and convert all assistant managers to the same level at a higher rate of pay. A new poll manager training program would be introduced that would allow an assistant to train to be a "senior assistant". They would be required to undergo the same training as a manager and manage a poll in an election as part of the training. Once completed, these assistants would be expected to replace the poll manager should the need arise and manage a poll at least once an election cycle to stay current in the program.

**Mr. Lange** asked if there was a district manager in the poll structure we use and **Mr. Bridges** stated that is not a structure we use.

**Ms. Heimes** motioned that both Staff Proposals be accepted, motion seconded by **Mr. Lang**. **Mr. Lang** asked if workers had been polled to see if this change was something they would be interested in. **Mr. Bridges** stated that he would not propose this program to the poll workers without having it accepted first by the Board and built into the budget correctly. **Mr. Mahoney** stated he would like the incentive program to be restructured so that the bonus was tiered according to the level of responsibility – \$250 to the managers, \$200 to the senior assistant, and \$150 to the assistant – which would be in line with the \$55,000 budget request. Motion to accept the Staff Proposals was voted on with no amendments and passed unanimously.

**Ms. Hodge made a motion to increase poll worker pay across the board by \$25 and have staff return information on the effect this would have on the budget for review at the February meeting. Mr. Lang seconded and the motion passed.**

**Mr. Mahoney** asked for an update on the progress of the building request. **Mr. Bridges** advised that other considerations were being made on doing a major upgrade to the complex here. **Mr. Mahoney** asked if an architect could be involved since the current drawings being used are 12 years old and added that he would like to have that added to the budget if necessary as it involves security for the new machines. **Mr. Bridges** agreed and said it is possible that there is grant money available for this.

**Ms. Hodges** motioned to have funds for additional future retreat expenses included into the budget for review at the February meeting. **Ms. Heimes** seconded the motion and the motion passed.

**Mr. Mahoney** brought up the need for additional equipment in the current and next budget year. **Mr. Bridges** replied that some needs would fall into next budget year. **Mr. Mahoney** asked for a motion to be made to include a budget line for warehouse security and equipment for review at the February meeting. **Ms. Heimes** so moved and **Ms. Hodges** seconded. **The motion passed with no discussion.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Several members of the public addressed the Board.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Ms. Hodges, seconded by Mr. Lang, to adjourn the meeting.**

**ALL APPROVED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

*prepared by Betty Weston City Secretary and Russell Bridges*

*Russell Bridges*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Russell Bridges  
Supervisor, Secretary to the Board

*2/10/2020*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

*[Signature]*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas J Mahoney, III  
Chair

*Lynn F. Trabue*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Signature

*3-5-20*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Notarized

