

Meeting Minutes
Chatham County Board of Registrars
February 24, 2021

The WebEx meeting began at 12:01 p.m. with a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Board of Registrars members in attendance were Mr. McRae, Mr. Norse, Mr. Pannell. Ms. Andrews and Mr. Slay. Staff members in attendance were Ms. German, Mrs. Bostick and Mr. Pflager.

Mr. McRae called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2021 meeting. Mr. Norse moved to approve the minutes as circulated to the Board members. Mr. Slay seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business

Board of Elections and Board of Registrars Possible Merger:

There is presently no update on the status of a possible merger between the Chatham County Board of Registrars and the Chatham County Board of Elections. Local legislation would need to be introduced in the General Assembly and be passed by both houses of the Legislature for the merger to take place. The Board will seek to determine if the possibility exists that the legislation would be introduced by the legislative session's end in March 2021. The Board would also like to provide feedback on the composition of a merged Board if given the opportunity before the legislation is introduced.

Damaged Ballot Drop Box – City of Pooler:

Ms. German updated the Board members on the status of a damaged ballot drop box that was located at the City of Pooler's City Hall facility. Ms. German indicated that the ballot drop box was damaged in late January 2021 by a City of Pooler employee according to the City Clerk of the City of Pooler. The City of Pooler has provided video surveillance footage of the ballot drop box in question. Staff is currently determining how to view the recording to confirm these facts. The box will need to be replaced since it is not repairable.

New Business

State Election Board Case 2018-117:

Ms. German updated the Board about a recent ruling from the State Election Board. The case concerned two Chatham County voters who did not receive their absentee ballots in time to return them. Ms. German reported that the State Election Board has dismissed this case with no penalty or finding of fault.

Budget:

Ms. German provided an overview of the budget for the next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. The only item in the budget proposal sent by staff to Chatham County Finance that was altered were dollars for a County vehicle expenditure that may not be needed for the next budget cycle. Ms. German reported that she will be meeting with the Finance Department on March 15th to review and finalize the budget.

2021 Election Calendar:

Ms. German circulated the 2021 Election Calendar and highlighted upcoming elections this fall. These elections include a likely Board of Education ESPLOST referendum and regularly scheduled local elections in Bloomingdale, Garden City, Port Wentworth, Thunderbolt, Tybee Island and Vernonburg.

Possible New Election Laws:

The Board discussed potential new election laws being introduced in the General Assembly. In particular, two Georgia Senate bills were discussed. The first is Senate Bill 67, which would require voters to put down their driver's license or state ID card number on their absentee request. Second, Senate Bill 29 would mandate a voter to provide a copy of their ID with their returned absentee ballot.

Registration Totals

Ms. German reported 209,351 active, 19,719 inactive and 236 pending voters.

Challenges – Felon, Deceased, Voter Requested

515 deceased, 61 felons and 42 voters requested. These individuals were sent letters notifying them of today's hearing. No responses were received. At 12:39 p.m., Mr. Norse moved to challenge these voters based on felon status or their request to be removed from the voter rolls. Ms. Andrews seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Public Discussion

No members of the public wished to address the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.