

DeKalb County Board of Registration and Elections

Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2023

Start Time: 4:30 p.m.

End Time: 4:58 p.m.

Board Attendees: Chair Dele Lowman Smith
Anthony Lewis
Susan Motter
Karli Swift

Other Attendees: Keisha Smith, Executive Director
Viviane Ernstes, County Attorney
Terry Philips, Deputy County Attorney
Irene Vander Els, Assistant County Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Lowman Smith called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Ms. Austin read the roll by calling each board member by name. Mr. Lewis, Ms. Motter, Ms. Swift, and Chair Lowman Smith were present.

Motion by Ms. Swift, seconded by Ms. Motter, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Motter, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2023 meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Austin read the rules for public comment:

Public comments may be made in person or submitted by sending an email of one page or less to electionspubliccmnt@dekalbcountyga.gov which must be received between 1:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The body of your email must include your first and last name, followed by your address. Abusive, profane, or derogatory language will not be permitted. By submitting an email for public comment, you agree to have your name, address and the email broadcast on the UStream and entered into the record and minutes. The DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections reserves the right, at the DeKalb Board of Registration and Elections' sole discretion, to (1) add your email to the record/minutes without reading any of it into the broadcast or (2) read all or a portion of your email into the record/minutes.

No comments were received in person or by email.

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ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A) Director's Report

Director Smith updated the Board on department activities related to registration, elections, budget, and documentation. She invited the public to attend a county Operations Committee meeting February 21 at 1:00 p.m. to discuss the budget.

Mr. Lewis asked what process had led to the Center for Election Excellence designation. Ms. Ernestes responded that the grant process had been led by county COO Zach Williams and the county's Deputy Director of Finance Preston Stephens. She stated that the normal open records request procedure was available to the public and that the Law Department could help direct questions to the appropriate person.

Mr. Lewis noted that many questions he had received involved the process's compliance with Georgia law. Ms. Ernestes responded that the Law Department had approved the agreement as to form.

B) Legislative Update

Ms. Vander Els reported on several bills affecting elections: HB 17, HB 116, HR 110, SB 53, SB 101, SB 54, HR 18, SB 87, SR 89, HB 2, HB 200, HB 10. There were also several bills involving the process by which certain local officials would be elected.

Mr. Lewis and Ms. Vander Els discussed SB 54, which would allow poll workers to work in any county in the state, and HB 200, which would allow ranked choice voting in municipal elections.

Chair Lowman Smith and Ms. Vander Els discussed the chain of custody requirements of HB 17. The Chair asked about if the division of responsibilities between the General Assembly and the State Election Board is codified. Ms. Vander Els responded that the General Assembly sets the laws and typically delegates rule-making authority to the State Election Board. The Chair stated that she would like the assembly to consider what level of detail was helpful for it to get into. She commented that SEB rules were meant to change more rapidly than the law itself.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

A) March Meeting Date

Motion by Ms. Swift, seconded by Ms. Motter, to move the March meeting to March 9 at 4:30 p.m. The motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Swift, to adjourn. The motion carried by a vote of 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.