



GLYNN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION

Work Session, July 9, 2020

The July work session was called to order by Chairman Gibson at 2pm.

Present were Patricia Gibson, Chairman; Patricia Featherstone, Vice Chairman; Sandy Dean, Member; Tommy Clark, Member; Christopher Channell, Supervisor; Christina Redden, Assistant Supervisor

Work Session

Political Activities of Board Members

The Board has previously asked the Assistant County Attorney, Jason Wilbanks, to look into the legal constraints regarding Board Member political activities. His report revealed clear restrictions while actively performing Board duties. However, there are few guidelines on personal and private activities such as yard signs, campaign contributions, party auxiliaries, and familial activities.

Ms. Dean requested the Board establish a written policy for political activities. Mr. Clarke concurred with the need for written policy. Ms. Gibson commented the guidelines must take into account that four members are appointed by the parties and have related responsibilities. Ms. Gibson also stated the guidelines ensure there is no perception of partisanship on Election Night.

Action Item: Ms. Dean and Ms. Gibson will meet before the regular Board meeting to develop a political Code of Conduct for Board review and approval.

Poll Workers

All Board members agreed poll worker payroll must be reevaluated. Early voting poll workers will now receive two pay installments, the initial installment after the first two weeks of voting. Previous payroll delays may have been resolved with the county's new accounting system. Board Members will wait to evaluate payroll processing after the August runoff. If delays persist, Ms. Gibson and Ms. Featherstone will meet with the County Manager to find a solution.

Action Item: Evaluate payroll timeline after August runoff and, if necessary, schedule meeting with County Manager to resolve issues.

All members agreed poll worker salaries need reevaluation. The current budget is based on current salaries, pay raises would need to be included in the FY21-22 budget. Ms. Featherstone commented on the lack of comparison data needed to make this decision. Ms. Dean expressed a desire to see data from counties with similar populations and income.

Action Item: Staff will survey counties with similar populations, registered voters, cost of living, and per capita income to provide data for budgeting poll worker salaries. Board will reevaluate this topic once the data is available.

Poll worker recruitment is an ongoing challenge. Mr. Channell reviewed the current staffing needs for the August and November elections. Ms. Dean recommended exploring half-day shifts to accommodate younger poll workers who may have a job or young children which prohibit serving a 14 hour day. Ms. Featherstone and Ms. Dean explained how Monday night set-up staff is



essential to relieve poll workers on Election Day. Mr. Clark suggested meeting with individual poll managers to encourage them to recruit staff. Mr. Channell listed current staffing sources and members recommended additional sources.

The Board discussed the potential of a “Poll Sponsorship”. This program would ask a community organization or church to staff the clerks at a poll in exchange for a donation of the poll worker salaries. Mr. Channell recommended testing the program on one precinct. Ms. Featherstone and Ms. Gibson suggested approaching Golden Isles Presbyterian or CenterPoint Church due to their new and eager participation with elections. If the program is initially successful, the Board will consider expanding the program to more polling locations.

Action Item: Staff will reach out to Golden Isles Presbyterian about poll sponsorship and create a list of other organizations which may consider this program.

Additional team training is planned before the August runoff. This training will be completely hands-on training. Poll teams will set up equipment, complete forms, vote ballots and troubleshoot voting, close polls, finish forms, and put equipment away. Mr. Channell presented a draft of an instructional and troubleshooting equipment guide. The finished document will be laminated on thick card stock as a quick reference tool at the polls.

Voting Locations and Early Voting

Extended hours voting on Mondays has not resulted in significant turnout. Between the three early vote locations, only 26 voters voted during those hours. The Board had initially committed to extended hours throughout the 2020 Election Cycle. Ms. Dean noted the Ballard voting site had increased turnout since the Presidential Preference Primary. All Board members expect Ballard turnout to increase with voter awareness and for the large November election.

Action Items: Reevaluate extended voting hours at the end of the 2020 Election Cycle.

Voting locations will continue to be reassessed based on the county’s growing needs. Ms. Featherstone commented on proposed changes at the Fire Station which would make it no longer available for voting. Ms. Gibson remarked on the importance of finding a suitable replacement. Mr. Channell presented general ideas for precinct consolidation to be considered in 2021. Ms. Featherstone endorsed the proposals to combine the Brookman and Satilla Marshes precincts at CenterPoint Church and to combine Hampton River and St. William at St. William.

Action Items: Mr. Channell will compile an official list of potential consolidations for Board consideration in October. Office staff and Board members will explore ideas for replacing the SSI Fire Station #2 as an Early Voting location.

Budget Procedures

Mr. Channell presented the current budget which began July 1. Mr. Channell also provided the county’s budget milestone for FY21-20 planning.

Office Space

The office currently contains 4,786 square feet which includes office, machine storage, training, meeting, and early voting space. Mr. Channell estimates the office immediately needs 2,500-3,000



more to accommodate the Board's current needs. In order to plan for county growth, which would include additional equipment needs, Mr. Channell proposed asking for approximately a 8,500 – 10,000 square foot space on one level with easy machine delivery access. Ms. Gibson and Mr. Clark stated the Board should directly ask the County Commissioners for the needed space, specifically regarding plans for the vacant CVS building. Mr. Clark recommended demonstrating the needs with office tours for each commissioner. Ms. Featherstone requested data regarding equipment space and voter registration growth to justify space needs.

Action Items: Mr. Clark was tasked with setting up tour appointments with commissioners. Office staff was tasked to provide data to support space requirements.

Statement of Votes Cast Report

The Dominion election night reporting did not provide the same information Glynn County voters are accustomed to. Office staff have been testing the software to develop a useful report. Mr. Channell presented the revised version. Board members agreed to this version of the Statement of Votes Cast and tasked Mr. Channell with publishing this report countywide.

Supervisor Job Description

Mr. Channell presented the existing job descriptions. Ms. Featherstone expressed a need to update the job descriptions from the existing 2014 version, to include Dominion terminology and current duties. Ms. Gibson observed office tasks are often interchangeable between the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor based on the strengths and weaknesses of the current staff. Therefore, new job duties should allow jobs to be delegated to the appropriate employee.

Action Item: Mr. Channell will compile a list of all office duties and his recommendation for job assignments by the February meeting. Board members will use that list to finalize job descriptions.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Clark commented there are community concerns about ballot harvesting in local nursing homes. Ms. Featherstone stated she has received similar concerns from citizens. One local nursing home is known to have strict guidelines on assisting residents with registration and voting, this policy could be adapted into literature to help all of the local nursing homes understand their responsibilities. Ms. Gibson also commented on the need to meet with the County Manager to discuss many of the issues and ideas considered in this work session.

Action Items: Staff will reach out to Magnolia Manor to receive a copy of their voter assistance policies for Board review. Ms. Gibson and Ms. Featherstone will make an appointment with the County Manager to discuss general issues such as space, payroll, and planning.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion was approved 5-0.

Patricia Gibson, Chairman

Keith Rustin, Secretary