

BOARD OF ELECTIONS
AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MEETING CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM
May 18, 2020

Item #1 - Chair Tim McFalls called the meeting to order. Present were Board Members Terence Dicks, Bob Finnegan, Sherry Barnes and Marcia Brown. Also present were Executive Director Lynn Bailey, Assistant Director Travis Doss, and Board Attorney Rachel Mack.

Item #2 - Update on the June 9, 2020 General Primary and Nonpartisan Election. Ms. Bailey reported the following:

Absentee Voting by Mail

- Through the close of business on May 18th, approximately 27,000 ballots had been issued by mail with approximately 10,000 of those having been returned, verified and placed into the vault for tabulation.
- The staffing level has been increased to 12 temporary, full time employees in order to provide the workforce necessary to timely process mail in absentee ballots.
- To date, the requests for absentee ballots by mail have a one day turnaround time.

Advance Voting

- Advance Voting opened up Monday, May 18th.
- The voting process went well and without issue.
- The Beazley Room set up provides proper distancing of voters and is able to accommodate 9 voters at any given time. Six voters completing paper work can be accommodated, and there are 3 check in stations available for ballot issuance. There are 8 poll workers.
- So far, voters have not had to wait in line during any part of the voting process.
- Turnout was light for the day with 107 voters voting during the day.

State Election Board Emergency Rule for Early Processing of Absentee Ballots by Mail

- In a special called meeting of the State Election Board, an Emergency Rule was adopted permitting the opening of and scanning of absentee ballots by mail beginning as early as the second Monday prior to Election Day.
- The Rule procedures in the Rule are clear and require that ballots be scanned and subsequently stored in small batches and provides for very strict reconciliation procedures to ensure that all ballots and ballot envelopes are accounted for.
- During the voting system equipment allocation, Richmond County was provided with two high speed scanners to scan ballots.
- The tentative work plan is to begin early processing of absentee ballots by mail on Monday, June 1st from 10 - 3 and expand or contract the hours as needed through Friday, June 5th. At that time, a determination will be made as to what time the work will

need to resume on Election Day in order to have all ballots in the possession of the Board of Elections scanned and tabulated on Election Night.

- All ballots received in the Board of Elections Office by mail, personal delivery or in deposited in an absentee drop box by 7:00 PM on Election Night will be accepted provided the ballot can be validated.
- A space assessment of the Warehouse/Tabulation Center has been completed and it has been determined that 4 work stations containing 3 workers each for early processing of absentee ballots by mail can be set up with proper distancing. The room must also have space for, elections personnel, security officers, vote review panelists, and other individuals required to direct the work of the team members.
- Pursuant to the Emergency Rule, each party is permitted two monitors and each nonpartisan candidate is permitted one monitor. All party monitors are to be appointed and credentialed by the State party and not the local parties.
- The Emergency Rule sets up strict guidelines for what monitors can and cannot do and prohibit the use of any photographic or recording devices within the early processing area.

Election Day Voting

- All polling locations will be open for voting. To date, no existing polling site has refused to host voting on Election Day
- Many poll workers, including managers, have opted not to work during the June Election. The Board of Education was contacted with a request that they reach out to educators or employees out for summer break with information about working at the polls. To date, 30 Board of Education employees have been placed at a polling site.
- A new State Election Board Rule provides an exception for using electronic devices inside the polling place when used by visually impaired or blind voters for reviewing their voted paper ballot.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mrs. Barnes made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Dicks seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brown, Secretary for the Board

Approved:



Timothy McFalls, Chair