



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

PRESENT: Elections and Registration Board Members Jerry Lee, Corey Townsend, Pam Peters, Gary Stamper, and Ralph Davis, Jr.; Interim Assistant Elections Supervisor Vanessa Waddell, County Attorney Virginia Harman, Assistant County Clerk Hollis Barton, Steve Miller, Pete McDonald, County Manager Jamie McCord, Public Safety Division Director John Blalock, Major Carl Lively

- I. **Welcome** – Chair Jerry Lee called the meeting to order.
- II. **Pledge**
- I. **Review Minutes from Previous Meeting** – Mr. Townsend made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2021 meeting, seconded by Ms. Peters, motion carried 5-0.
- III. **Order of Business**
 - a. **Introductions** – Chair Lee stated the members of the newly formed Elections and Registration Board were sworn in earlier that morning. Ralph Davis Jr., Pam Peters, Corey Townsend, Gary Stamper, and Jerry Lee then introduced themselves as members of the Board.
 - b. **Rules and Regulations** – Chair Lee stated while they had not yet established a set of bylaws, they are working with that along with the help of County Attorney, Virginia Harman. Ms. Harman then gave an overview regarding the process with the new legislation. Stated Ms. Harman has submitted to the Board several examples of similar Boards, both in size and structure, for consideration. Stated these would not apply exactly to the structure required by the local legislation, and establish a set of bylaws that will best suit the new Board. Stated she distributed a document prepared by the Secretary of State's Office that gives some guidance regarding the structure and registrations, particularly joint boards like ours, where the board itself holds the position of supervision and registration. Stated in the past, these have been two distinct structures, and this is no longer the case. Stated while the bylaws are not required, they will provide guidance in giving an outline in decision-making, and operational issues and does recommend the Board establish them. Stated during this time, the Board is able to nominate an Interim Vice Chair and Secretary and that it would be appropriate to do so today.
 - c. **Status of New Location/Move** – Chair Lee stated the Elections office is in the process of a move during this time, and asked County Manager Jamie McCord to give an update on the construction and the move itself. Mr. McCord stated he wanted to thank Steve Miller, Pete McDonald, and Vanessa Waddell during this transition. Stated he visited the Health Department this morning, and everything was going well. Stated Facilities Manager Ryan Davis was doing a good job of



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

ensuring everything is running on schedule and smoothly. Stated he is fairly confident it will be substantially complete by early February, and moving will be able to start at that time. Stated there was \$ 213,000 budgeted for the renovation. Mr. Davis asked if the new facility will have space for the growth that is expected in regards to storage and for the use of Early Voting. Mr. McCord stated while there is some room from growth, there are limitations with it being a joint use building, however there is some potential there.

Chair Lee stated that the County was budgeted to spend \$ 60,000 on security and surveillance, including the storage area upstairs. Stated this was an important item that would be well covered. Additionally, there is a designated observation room for the L & A Testing.

- d. **Staffing of Elections Office** – Chair Lee stated all of the positions have been reevaluated, and they are currently looking for an Elections Supervisor. Chair Lee then asked Mr. McCord to give an overview on its current status. Mr. McCord stated they have revised the Supervisor position per the Act that was effective December 1, 2021, and approved by the Commission last week. Stated the Board of Elections would be able to begin reviewing those in the near future. Stated the current positions remained intact, with the exception of a possible title change of the Deputy Clerk position, changing to the title of Deputy Supervisor or Assistant Supervisor, but does not foresee any further changes at this time.
- e. **Budget** – Mr. McCord stated the 2022 Budget was adopted at the previous Commission meeting. Most of the increases in this year's budget were due to it being an elections year. Additionally, they reclassified the Supervisor position twice, as well as the other positions. Stated there is a \$ 100,000 increase to the Salary line item, and a \$ 150,000 increase to the temporary poll workers due to it being an election year. Stated the total budget for 2022 was \$ 619,115, and should be a sufficient estimate, but could change if there are run-off elections. Mr. Townsend asked if this included the improvements to the Health Department, Mr. McCord clarified that this did not, that item would be under the Capital budget. Ms. Peters asked how many of the new employees would be provided with benefits. Mr. McCord stated that all who were full-time employees would receive benefits and eligible for the retirement system. The permanent part time employees would receive vacation, holiday, sick, etc. which is consistent with all permanent part time positions in the County, but would not meet the requirements to qualify for retirement. Mr. McCord then thanked the Board and congratulated them on being sworn-in that morning.
- f. **Election Calendar** – Chair Lee stated on the Secretary of State's website there is an extensive Election Calendar available for anyone to review. Stated on February 18th, there is a deadline of completing and submitting the redistricting to the Secretary of State's Office. Stated they have been waiting on receiving the maps from the Secretary of State's Office and cannot proceed until they receive



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

those. Stated they will be submitted as soon as it is received and are comfortable they will meet that deadline.

- g. **Voting Locations** – Chair Lee stated Garden Lakes Baptist Church would not be available to them as an Early Voting location, and once everything is set up at the new Elections office, that will become an Early Voting location. Stated they are also looking at utilizing the Anthony Center as well. Stated these have not yet been finalized, with the exception of the new Elections office, and believes this will be a vast improvement.
 - i. New West Rome Precinct
 - ii. West Rome Early Voting Location
- h. **Board Attorney** – Chair Lee stated Ms. Harman has been working with the Elections Board, and he understands the previous Board had their own attorney on retainer, due to a possible conflict of interest being a separate entity from the County regarding Elections issues. Stated with this, they will be soliciting for a law office that would serve as a representative for the Election Board.
- i. **Training** – Chair Lee stated each of the Board members would be attending training in Marietta provided by the Secretary of State's Office, and several Board members have completed it already, with the rest scheduled to attend in the upcoming weeks. Stated while they will not be performing these duties, it is an excellent opportunity to gain a perspective of the duties and responsibilities of the Elections staff. Stated they are also scheduled to attend Georgia Voter Registration and Election Officials (GVREO) Training.
- j. **Poll Workers** – Chair Lee stated they roughly have about 160 poll workers who would be at each of the precincts running the machines and elections operations. Stated they are looking at hiring and training for those positions in the near future as well, and looking at the training process beforehand.

IV. New Business

- a. **Appointment of Vice-Chair** – Chair Lee asked for a nomination for Interim Vice-Chair. Mr. Stamper nominated Mr. Townsend, seconded by Mr. Davis. Seeing no more nominations, the Chair called for a vote. Motion carried 5-0.
- b. **Establish Meeting Details** – Chair Lee stated the Board would meet the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 pm, and temporarily hold meetings at the County Administration Building until they are able to hold meetings at the new location. Mr. Stamper made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Davis. Mr. Townsend asked Ms. Harman, with respect to this meeting, if they are required to designate a specific time for every meeting, or would there be some flexibility. Ms. Harman



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

stated the general meeting requirements and notice for that is different from a special meeting, a different notice requirement would be required for a different time. Ms. Peters stated she would like to revisit this item in the future due to those who work during daytime hours being able to attend. Mr. Davis asked Ms. Harman if it could be a rolling schedule where the time could change each meeting if needed. Ms. Harman stated if the Board wanted to establish a schedule with a year-long calendar while stating, for example, every third meeting, that could be established in the bylaws. However, any time the Board needed to change the date or time that could be handled through notice and publication. However, it is certainly much easier to have an established calendar. Ms. Harman clarified when she says rolling, she means an established schedule of the time that may vary from the 2:00pm time. Mr. Davis agreed with Ms. Peters that the time should be revisited at a later date as they adjust to the new changes and location. The motion carried 5-0.

- c. **Resolution for BOE** – Chair Lee presented the item. Mr. Townsend made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion carried 5-0.

V. Public Participation

1. **Mark Swanson:** "Thank you and I have a question for the Board that I would like to answer not included in my time since I'm asking y'all to answer, and that is the prior Election Board had recommended a peer review of the prior couple of elections activities and I have not heard about the status of that and I'd like an update on the status of that peer review."

Ms. Peters: "I had asked that question in November, and I was told it was up to the County Commissioners and I was told that by the previous Chair of the Elections Board but I have not heard anything."

Mr. Swanson: "So the County Commissioners, they voted to approve it in a meeting in a called meeting, and we were told that it would be put together within thirty days and the results would be back faster than a SB202 performance review which is now well past that time, so I wanted to get an update on when that occurred or what the status of that is."

Mr. Townsend: "What I would say is that review was being conducted and administrated by the County, the Elections Board, in order to make sure that we don't have any undue influence over the process, was not involved in it. So your question should be directed to the County Commission."

Mr. Swanson: "But the answer appears to be that there was no peer review as approved by the County Commission."



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

Mr. Townsend: “I can’t speak to that because I’m not on the County Commission.”

Mr. Swanson: “Alright in continuing my comments I have made a formal complaint to the Secretary of State’s Office for the appointment of Corey Townsend to this Board, I gave extensive reasons why not the least of which is that he participated on a Board on a prior Board that was dissolved by legislative activity, and the primary reason for that was the over 150 violations of Elections law during the January election; those have never been responded to by the Election Board of which he represents, so I hereby formally request this body to innominate him to serve as Vice Chairman until the results of that formal complaint have been answered by the Secretary of State’s Office.”

Chair Lee: “Any other conversation?”

Mr. Swanson: “And I would respectfully request the meeting time for this meeting to be after hours just like the County Commission so that other citizens can participate in this affair.”

2. **Steve Miller:** “Good morning and congratulations to the Board, I hope you do well, Pete and I are here to help in any way that we possibly can. I’ve got a recommendation regarding poll worker training, I would suggest that as soon as possible that date be set, set the date for the training, and location, notify the poll workers, it needs to be done thirty days prior to the election of course, which our first primary is going to be in March, so that needs to be set as soon as possible and those poll workers contacted. I know the office has more than enough to do at this point in time with redistricting and to my knowledge, we’re still waiting on that information from the Secretary of State’s Office regarding maps, which we don’t have yet, I’m going to make an attempt to call today to see if we can get that expedited. In regards to a future meeting date, I would highly suggest that you do consider what Ms. Peters suggested and that’s an after-hours time, possibly not permanently, but at least on a schedule where there’s an opportunity for the general public to be able to attend the meetings, those that work until 3 or 4 in the afternoon, possibly scheduled after 5 PM so if you would consider that in your next meeting that would be great, and that’s all I have, good luck guys and gals.”

Chair Lee: “I’d like to go on the record as to thanking Pete McDonald and Steve Miller they have served as an interim capacity kind of a combination of the Board and Elections Supervisor along with Vanessa during these last few months and they have been very instrumental in helping me personally and I know helping the Board and Vanessa and Jamie getting us through these last few months so gentleman, thank you very much for your service we are very, definitely, appreciative.”



Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration

January 18, 2022 10:00 am

Floyd County Administration Building – Community Room

VI. Other Business

Chair Lee stated one final thing that needed to be taken care of was to appoint an Interim Secretary for the Board. Stated this would be a limited term position for now, due to the utilization of the staff of the County Clerk's Office that reports to Mr. McCord. Chair Lee asked for a motion that the Board elect a Secretary from the County Clerk's office until someone from the Elections staff could take on that role. Ms. Peters made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Townsend. The motion carried 5-0.

VII. Adjourn – There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.