

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION OF JASPER COUNTY

## BOARD MINUTES

December 12, 2019 – 5:00 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Joseph Arzillo; Chairwoman Pamela M. Williams; Ms. Carrie Fair; and Director Jeanine Bostick. New Board Members were sworn in, Mrs. Cheryl Dopson, Dr. Rhonda Edwards and Mr. A. Russell Cannick.

**ABSENT:** Mrs. Denise Davidson; Mr. Rodney Catterton and Mr. John Kemp.

**NOTIFICATION TO MEDIA:** Chairman Arzillo confirmed the media had been notified.

**INNOVATION:** Ms. Fair.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Motioned by Chairwoman Williams, seconded by Ms. Fair, to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motioned by Ms. Fair, seconded by Chairwoman Williams to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2019 Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** Judge Buster Kleckley administered the oath and swearing in of new Board members, Mrs. Cheryl Dopson; Dr. Rhonda Edwards and Mr. A. Russell Cannick.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Motioned by Ms. Fair, seconded by Chairwoman Williams to go into executive session to discuss the City of Hardeeville election. Chairman Arzillo notified the public there were no motions taken while in executive session. Chairman Arzillo called for a motion based on the discussion in executive session. It was motioned by Mrs. Dopson, seconded by Mr. Cannick to charge the City of Hardeeville \$4,000 for the 2020 and 2022 elections and revisit the ordinance to include any increase and the City of Hardeeville is required to pay the past due invoice in the amount of \$3,982.63. Motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS: RELOCATION OF THE TILLMAN PRECINCT:** The Director informed the Board per the motion at the November Board meeting her; Mr. Kemp and Chairman Arzillo visited the St. Matthew Baptist Church, Social Hall, located at 1454 Tillman Road, Ridgeland, SC to determine if the facility met our needs. The Director stated the mileage distance between the two precincts is 1.9 miles. St. Matthew Baptist Church has adequate parking and it meets ADA compliances. The Director stated she would like to send a letter to the Jasper County Delegation requesting to move the Tillman precinct from the Tillman Fire Station to the St. Matthew Baptist Church, Social Hall. It was motioned by Ms. Fair, seconded by Mrs. Dopson to send a letter to the Jasper County Delegation requesting to move the Tillman precinct from the Tillman Fire Station to the St. Matthew Baptist Church, Social Hall. Motion carried unanimously. The Director stated the Tillman precinct will remain at the Tillman Fire Station for the PPP election, but hoped to have the new location approved in time for the June Primary.

**NEW BUSINESS: FLYERS AND MEMO OF HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATION OF THE NEW VOTING SYSTEM (MS. FAIR):** Ms. Fair stated a demonstration of the new voting system will be held at the Robertville Community Center on January 16, 2020, 5:30pm to 7:30pm. Letters will be sent to the churches in the area. Everyone is invited and we are hoping for a successful turnout and our goal is to educate the voters on the new voting system. Chairwoman Williams asked how a blind voter would use the new system. The Director stated like the prior iVotronic voting system the new Express Vote voting system is equipped with an audio system for those voters wanting their ballot read to them. It would be the voter's decision.

**NEW BUSINESS: FLYERS AND MEMO OF HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATION OF THE NEW VOTING SYSTEM, CONT'D. (MS. FAIR):**

The voter would be given a headset to listen to their ballot and a handheld push button panel to make their selections. Once the voter completes their ballot the voter can review the ballot using the audio system. The voter is given instructions by audio on how to make selections, review their ballot and how to print their ballot. Once the ballot prints the voter is escorted by the person(s) assisting the voter to the ballot scanner. The voter will be instructed to turn their ballot card over to ensure their privacy and will be assisted with inserting their ballot card into the ballot scanner. If the voter qualifies for assistance and asks one of the poll workers to assist them, two poll workers would assist the voter through the entire process. Chairwoman Williams asked how the voter knows audio is available. The Director stated the State of South Carolina introduced the audio ballot system to South Carolina voters with the prior iVotronic voting system, therefore South Carolina voters are very much aware that audio is available. The Director stated the audio information is also talked about during the new voting system demonstrations and during poll workers training. Dr. Edwards suggested having a demonstration of the new voting system at St. Matthew Baptist Church, Social Hall since this location could possibly be a new voting precinct. Chairman Arzillo stated that any Board member wanting to schedule a demonstration of the new voting system please get with the Director. It was motioned by Chairwoman Williams, seconded by Dr. Edwards to publish the public announcement in the newspaper of the upcoming demonstration and send letters to the Pastor and churches. Motion carried unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT: UPDATE: HARDEEVILLE SPECIAL ELECTION:** The Director informed the Board two candidates have filed for the Special City of Hardeeville City Council Member At Large election, Mr. David Rosenblum and Mr. Bo White. The Director informed the Board there are five precincts involved in this election four are in Jasper County (Hardeeville 1; Hardeeville 2; Okatie and Sun City Lakehouse) and one in Beaufort County (Sun City 8 Pinckney Hall). We will be combining the following precincts, Hardeeville 2 Fishers Chapel Church (160) will vote at the Hardeeville 1 St. Stephens A.M.E. Church located at 710 Main Street, Hardeeville, SC the two distance between the two precincts is 1.9 miles. Sun City 8 Pinckney Hall (5) will vote at Sun City Lakehouse the distance between the two precincts is 1.2 miles. The Okatie precinct will be open at its regular site St. Luke Baptist Church. The Director stated letters will be sent to the Hardeeville 2 voters and the Sun City 8 Pinckney Hall voters advising them their precincts will not be opened and where they are to go to cast their ballots on election day or they can choose to vote inhouse absentee at the Voter Registration Office or request an absentee application to receive their absentee ballot by mail. The Director stated the reason the precincts are being combined is due to the small number of eligible voters in the two precincts. Flyers will be posted Election Day on the two precincts doors instructing the voters where to go to cast their ballots on Election Day. It was motioned by Dr. Edwards, seconded by Mr. Cannick to send letters to the eligible voters advising the voters of the change in their precinct location for this election *only* and post flyers on the door of the two precincts affective by the change, the flyer will instruct the voters where to cast their ballots on Election Day. Motion carried unanimously. The Director reviewed and discussed with the Board the invoice to be sent to the City of Hardeeville for the special election. The Board discussed and Chairwoman Williams suggested adding the word estimated cost to the invoice. It was motioned by Mrs. Dopson, seconded by Mr. Cannick to send the special election invoice to the City of Hardeeville adding the wording estimated cost to the invoice. Motion carried unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT: SATELLITE OFFICE IN HARDEEVILLE:** The Director stated that she and Chairman Arzillo spoke with the Mayor of Hardeeville and other members of the City of Hardeeville about the possibility sharing the Hardeeville Chambers Office to set up a satellite office and an absentee precinct. The Mayor gave the ok to share the office space. The Director suggested forming a committee to meet and discuss cost and what's needed to set up a satellite office and absentee precinct at the Hardeeville Chambers office. Chairwoman Williams mentioned ensuring we set up security measures for this location.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONT'D.:** The Director informed the Board in their packet are procedures of how to duplicate a ballot, please familiarize yourself with those procedures. The Director informed the Board poll workers training for the upcoming City of Hardeeville Special election is scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2020 at 9am at the Late Senator Clementa Pinckney Government Building in the Council Chambers. Clerks for this election will receive two (2) trainings to include electronic poll book training on the laptops.

The Director presented the Board with the assignment list of poll workers for the City of Hardeeville Special election. It was motioned by Mrs. Dopson, seconded by Dr. Edwards to approve the assignment list of poll workers for the City of Hardeeville Special election. Motion carried unanimously.

The Director reminded the Board filing their ethics forms with the State Ethics Commission. The filing deadline is March 30, 2020. The Director informed the Board the county is looking at leasing vehicles and she has requested a van for the Voter Registration Office to transport the voting equipment. The Director informed the Board in their packet is a copy of the 2020 Election Calendar for **INTERNAL USE ONLY**. The Director instructed the Board if, anyone from the public wanted a copy of the 2020 Election Calendar, please have them contact the office, there is a separate calendar for members of the public. Per the State Election Commission office, please **do not** distribute the **INTERNAL USE ONLY** calendar to members of the public.

The Director informed the Board the next scheduled meeting is January 9, 2020 and the Director will be traveling to Columbia for the 2020 PPP Workshop. The Board suggested January 8, 2020 at 5pm. Chairman Arzillo instructed the Director to check the availability of the Chambers and let the Board members know.

The Director informed the Board in their packet is a copy of our current budget expenditure. The Director informed the Board the office supplies funds is over the budgeted amount, reason being the invoice for the new office furniture came in too late to apply the funding from the prior budget per Kim Burgess, Finance Director.

Ms. Fair asked were there any updates on the SCARE conference. The Director stated no training classes has been added to the agenda as of today. Chairman Arzillo asked the Director who is attending the 2020 SCARE Conference. The Director stated Ms. Fair; Mr. Catterton; new Board members, Mrs. Dopson; Dr. Edwards and Mr. Cannick.

Total registered voters as of November 17, 2019: **19,942 an increase of 110.**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The Chairman stated he and Mr. Kemp would be demonstrating the new voting system at the Republican Party meeting on January 14, 2020 at 5pm at Hardeeville United Methodist Church. Chairman Arzillo also stated he has reached out to Mr. Bostick, Chairman of the Democratic Party to offer the same. Chairman Arzillo stated anyone is welcome to attend the demonstration.

**BOARD ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** Ms. Fair stated she had concerns regarding school Board elections being there were issues during the 2018 election. The Director responded the issues that were raised during the 2018 school board election were not the fault of the Voter Registration Office. Voter Registration followed the State Law concerning petition candidates and the Jasper County School Board along with the Jasper County Delegation needed to amend the School Board policy to mirror the State Law petition candidate procedures. The Director stated a letter has been sent to the Jasper County Delegation requesting the school board policy be amended. Chairman Arzillo concurred.

Ms. Fair stated she also had concerns how absentee ballots were being returned in stacks by one individual. The Director commented the law does not say an individual has a limited number of ballots they can return on behalf of voters.

**BOARD ISSUES AND CONCERNS, CONT'D.:** The Director stated the voter can have their ballots returned by another individual, the individual returning the ballot must have the completed and signed return authorization form along with the voter's ballot. There are laws in place about candidate's dos and don'ts when it comes to returning a voter's ballot. The Director also stated the same witness signatures are often found on numerous ballots, but that doesn't mean the witness returned that voter's ballot.

The Director informed the Board the quarter ends December 31, 2019, and stipends are issued the first pay day following the end of the quarter and the first pay day for the new year is January 10, 2020 and checks will be issued on that day and Board Members wanting to enroll in direct deposit, please let the Director know.

The Director informed the Board the County Offices will be closed December 24<sup>th</sup>; 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2019 for the Christmas Holiday and January 1, 2020 for the New Year's Day Holiday.

**TOPIC(S) OF DISCUSSION FOR NEXT MEETING:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business it was motioned by Ms. Fair, seconded by Chairwoman Williams to adjourn. Meeting adjourn at 6:22pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by, Jeanine M. Bostick, Director.

cc: File; Board Members; Mr. Andrew Fulghum, County Administrator; Jasper County Delegation