

SPALDING COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

After Agenda

December 10, 2024

The regular meeting of the Spalding County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was held at the County Courthouse Annex, 119 East Solomon Street at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 10, 2024. In attendance: Chairman, Ben Johnson, presiding; James Newland, Jim O'Brien and Roy McClain. Also present were Elections Supervisor Kim Slaughter, Attorney Stephanie Windham, and Kelly Romero to record minutes.

Call to Order – Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Invocation/Moment of Silence – Invocation was given by James Newland.

Pledge to the Flag – Pledge was led by Jim O'Brien.

Citizen Comment – There were no citizens to sign up to speak. However, after the meeting began, Karen Mathiak requested to speak. Chairman Johnson asked the Board if they approved. There were not any Board members to object. Karen wanted to extend gratitude to Roy McClain. She is very proud of all he has accomplished, the foundation he has laid, his hard work and contribution to the Election and Voter Registration process.

Adoption of the Agenda – *Motion/second to adopt the agenda with no amendments. James Newland/Roy McClain, 4-0 motion carries at 6:03 p. m.*

Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2024 (Regular Monthly Meeting), October 15, 2024 – November 1, 2024 (Special Called Meeting) November 5, 2024 – November 12, 2024 (Special Called Meeting) and November 12, 2024 (Election Certification Meeting) Motion/second to adopt the minutes. Jim O'Brien/Roy McClain, 4-0 carries at 6:04 p. m.

Election Supervisor Report – Kim Slaughter

Voter Registration Update –

Registered voters per the Secretary of State (GARVIS) as of December 10, 2024 is 53,064.

The following is voter registration action from November 19, 2024, through December 10, 2024 with a reminder that preceding the November 5, 2024, General Election, there was an October 7, 2024 deadline for any new registrations, transfers, or changes being made to current registrations.

Mail in/Walk in to include Election day = 375 (Transfers into Spalding County 37, new voters – 29, Within county address changes – 177, Name changes – 25 and No changes – 65) Also processed were 24 vital records, 17 felons and 1 potential duplicate.

Our office has been delayed in processing Garvis Dashboard (daily work) due to the December Runoff, which included 12 Georgia counties. We will begin this considerable task on Monday,

December 16, 2024. Processing will include the following (DDS Applications – 2,211, Online Voter Registration- 719 and My Voter Page – 276)

November 5, 2024 General Election Review

- There is a copy for each Board member of the Official and Complete Election Summary Report.
- Advance, Absentee By Mail, along with Election Day voting operated efficiently with very little issues.
- Updates and new voter registration received late (after October 7th Voter Registration deadline) from the Secretary of State's office and the Department of Driver's services presented a few issues. We noticed on the first day of Advance Voting that there were some records related to this timing that the information updated into GARVIS on our end but did not flow over to E-Pulse data (Poll Pads) and this was recognized at the time of check -in for the voter.
- There were 108 poll workers trained and 105 served on Election Day with a minimum of 22 poll workers serving daily during Advance Voting.

November 5, 2024 Board Mandated Hand Count

- The Board mandated hand count of ballots cast in the November 5, 2024 Presidential and Clerk of Superior Court contests was successful and in full balance to that of the results which were loaded on Election night into the Election Management System.
- The Board mandated hand count costs the taxpayers of Spalding County \$11,500.00 and took 6 ½ days to complete. This time encompasses human error and returning to a batch and recounting. Each time a human error transpired, the batch was given to a different team and all mistakes were always found. Staff and poll workers alike were committed and were diligent in completing a significant task.
- The state mandated Risk Limit Audit was completed in ½ day and all results equaled that to the results which were loaded on Election night.

Advance Voting and Additional Space Update

- The newly acquired space proved to be more than advantageous for a successful Advance Voting period. There were 23,312 voters to cast their vote early in Spalding County with a maximum of a 30-minute wait time only on the first and last day and a 1-to-5-minute wait time at all other times. The voter participation turnout is an increase from the 2020 Presidential Election by 9,833 voters. It has been more than rewarding for the entire staff to hear and receive only praise for such a wonderful experience when casting their vote early in Spalding County. Dr. Ledbetter stated that we would begin looking at the acquired space and the redesigning thereof at the beginning of next year.

Website Update

- The County's newly designed website launched in early November. It is a vast improvement from our former webpage. However, after an in-depth conversation with Antoinette with Hammond marketing, there are concerns on my part as to timely postings on sensitive information and other updates which require County Administrative approval as to what can and cannot be updated or changed by Hammond Marketing. I will have a full report in January and probably a proposal as well. I need a little more time to dive into the information presented today so that I can better inform you, the Board, and formally present what I believe to be the best option.
- From speaking with Antoniette, it appears that they will be able to link the 2020 Ballot images. I will be working with her in the days ahead to bring this to fruition.

Board member Appointments

- The Republican party submitted their appointees for the next four years and they are Ben Johnson to continue serving and Chris Piland to fill the seat currently held by Board Member Roy McClain.
- The Democratic party submitted their appointee for the term now held by Board member Jim O'Brien and he is Lee Howell.
- I will follow up with each appointee with a date and time for the taking of Oaths with the Spalding County Probate Judge.

Precinct 10 Relocation

- The relocation of Precinct 10 was a success with no complaints received at all by voters and poll workers were elated to serve with a noise free, climate-controlled facility.

Ballot Image Audit Report

- This is the first time we've ever conducted a ballot image audit report. We had 15 ballots that needed to be validated.

Poll Worker Appreciation with Board Members Christmas Party

- This Friday, December 13, 2024. There has been a Notice of Possible Quorum posted.

Acknowledgement of Service

- Board member Jim O'Brien
- Board member Roy McClain
- A certificate of appreciation was presented to both board members above by Chairman Johnson and Election Supervisor Kim Slaughter.
- *Jim O'Brien* – Advised that you know when to hold them and when to fold them and this was his time. He also advised it is all the people working together that make an election happen.

- *Roy McClain* – Advised he began in December 2020 right after a contentious election, a dysfunctional office, and distrust ran rampant. It took a lot of people with a vision to step in and lay a new course. We still have concerns here and there, but this is a working Board. Going forward the Board can take their accomplishments and make them better. We have an attorney, and we say the pledge now. We’ve come a long way.

Kim also acknowledged her staff and the poll workers for a job well done, advising it takes all of us.

Old Business – None

New Business - None

Board Comments –

Roy McClain – Thanked the staff. He waited on Election night until time to go home. He advised he has been around a lot of special groups of people, and this is one.

Jim O’Brien – He was greeted warmly when he visited nine of the precincts on election day.

James Newland – To Roy and Jim – We all have our own opinions about what is best for the voters of Spalding County. We may disagree on some things, but we know what is needed. It has been a pleasure. He also advised that until you have worked on a Presidential Election, you have never really worked on one. He thanked the staff and Kim. Even if the staff is good, if there is no one at the top they will run in circles. He is glad Ben Johnson is Chairman and thanked Stephanie. He also thanked all who worked the election.

Ben Johnson – To Roy, you are leaving it better than you found it. You were great to work with and a good friend. To Jim, I’ve enjoyed working at the food pantry with you. We haven’t always agreed, but you have great intentions and are a fine human being. He will also be at the Christmas Party.

Adjournment - Motion/second to adjourn. Roy McClain/James Newland, 4-0 carries at 6:36 p.m.

Ben Johnson, Chairman

Kimberly Slaughter, Election Supervisor

