

**SPALDING COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
January 13, 2026**

The Regular Monthly meeting of the Spalding County Board of Elections and Voter Registration was held at the Spalding County Courthouse Annex at 119 E Solomon St. Room 108 Griffin, GA 30223 at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 13, 2026. In attendance: Chairman Ben Johnson presiding, Board members James Newland, Chris Piland, Dexter Wimbish and Lee Howell. Also present were Elections Director Kim Slaughter, Attorney John O’Neal substituting for Attorney Stephanie Windham, and Kelly Romero to record minutes.

Call to Order – Chairman Ben Johnson called meeting to order at 6:03 pm

Invocation/Moment of Silence – Invocation was given by Chris Piland

Pledge to the Flag – Pledge was led by James Newland

Adoption of the Agenda –

Motion/second by James Newland/Chris Piland

Motion passed: 3-0

Voted for: Chairman Ben Johnson, James Newland, Chris Piland (Dexter Wimbish and Lee Howell arrived late)

Citizen Comments – The following voters spoke either supporting the precinct consolidation or were opposed to it:

- **Margaret Blue**, 620 Windy Hill Rd, Manager at current P-5, She is here to support our director. You may ask why we are doing this in 2026, and it is because this is crucial election time. There are a lot of primaries and possible runoffs with high energy. There are many people, poll officers, and office staff that are involved in preparing and setting up for each election as well as taking equipment to precincts along with deputies for safety.
- **Cindy Phillips**, 4463 W Ellis Rd, Manager at current P 9, She is over one of the first precincts to get merged. The voters were happy with it. They didn’t have to worry about steps and their safety and received no complaints. People drive further to come early vote than they do to drive to their precinct. Everyone needs to work at early voting or election day. Best thing is to combine precincts instead of them being spread out all over the county.
- **Geraldine Mangham**, 114 Ruby Way, Manager at current P-1, Her precinct is in the city along with others in the city and they are not that far apart. It would be more efficient if we had those precincts together manpower wise and cost wise. At fire stations, poll officers are required to arrive even earlier on election day to set up because you cannot set up the day before. It gets very hot at times and very cold.
- **Jennifer Massengale**, 668 Brook Circle, Manager at current P-10, has volunteered for 5 years and worked at three different precincts as a manager. She worked at P-10 when it was at the fire station and now at Oak Hill Church. At the fire station, poll officers arrive on Election Day to set up at 4:30 am and often stayed until 10:00 or 11:00 at night to break down. They had to deal with the heat, cold and wasps. She hasn’t gotten anyone saying it was better back at the fire station. Many voters have to pass by a polling location closer to their home to get to the one they are assigned to. Voters come into Griffin to run errands, doctor visits, etc. If voters are unable to get to their polling location on Election Day, they can come to early vote.

- **Paul Anger**, 1226 Bartam Dr, He and his wife are new to Georgia and love Griffin. He believes this is too severe. It's not good for democracy, it's not good for letting people vote at the time they want to vote on election day at a polling location that is convenient to them. The sick, the elderly, those that lack transportation. You will disenfranchise a certain number of people. He believes it is a math problem and needs more volunteers. The number of polling places on election day is very important. Not good for democracy and not good for the people of Spalding County.
- **Linda Rotti**, 110 Jasper Ct., Understands the job is big. This is not the year to introduce this radical of a change because she believes the goal will be unobtainable. Will be high turn out elections. If absentee by mail is ever taken away the polls will be inundated. This could be damaging to the very people we are trying to protect. No matter how you communicate the polling location changes, there will be a large segment that you do not reach. If someone shows up at a closed poll, it can deter them from voting.
- **Gloriann O'Brien**, 817 Dusky Sap Ct., She doesn't agree with the consolidation proposal at least at this time. If this was going to happen, the voters should have been notified at the November 4, 2025 election of this change. Putting a sign on the street or a notice in the paper isn't enough for those that have voted at the same place for years. This should be phased in, not rushed in to. This is a form of voter suppression. There are many changes going across the states now, why bring attention to Griffin and possibly have a legal challenge.
- **Jim O'Brien**, 817 Dusky Sap Ct, He was a board member for four years. For the last six years we had all elections with enough money. What has changed? If we do the consolidation it means longer lines and will diminish the number of people voting. He noted that there are four counties that are consolidating precincts. What is really behind this? Consolidating is a tactic for suppressing votes.
- **Jewel Walker-Harps**, 103 McEthel Dr, She will never agree to take any of her comforts of voting away. Doesn't want to see anyone stand in a long line. She doesn't believe we could ever get the polling places back if we end up needing them. "You've got problems, yes, it's your job to fix them."
- **Ebony Kompelien**, 195 Steele Rd, This is about integrity that matters, the community and our voice that matters. If these precincts are reduced it will cause the voters to fear the longer lines, the distance to travel, parking spaces, and will be a greater burden for seniors and those with disabilities, and no transportation.
- **Veronica Crutches**, 1223 Bartam Dr, Believes the problem is we do not have enough resources whether it be funding or people. She believes that where the proposed precincts will be placed it will hurt residents to go vote. Speaker advised she has worked in Henry County volunteering with elections and some people there had to wait in line 8 hours and doesn't want that to happen to Spalding County. We need to serve the people and not just the workers.
- **James Moore**, 299 Courtland Rd, Neighbors are not happy about having to drive an addition 15 miles to vote on election day.
- **Deborah Hibben**, 106 Magic Lily Dr., She has served as a poll worker for Spalding County in 2024 and has also worked for Henry and Fayette Counties. Her daughter has a disability, and she wants to represent those that can't speak for themselves. This is the largest minority group in America. Access is everything especially for the disenfranchised and the marginalized. Reducing the amount of polling locations would place an undue hardship on these special voters of whom some don't have the resources to get to the polling places.
- **Dr. Yoshunda Jones**, When polling locations are consolidated, voting becomes harder. People have to wait longer, travel further and navigate through unfamiliar places just to exercise a fundamental right. For many this will prevent them from voting at all. No one should have to choose between voting and caring for a loved one, family or getting back to work. Consolidation also creates confusion. Voters show up at the wrong location and receive unclear information.

This can be seen as voter suppression whether intentional or not. The result is unequal access to the ballot and that undermines the fairness of our elections. We should be expanding access not limiting it if we care about elections. Spoke on using the website and searching for maps. Also spoke on when we are talking about transparency and integrity she is not comfortable with a lot of the decisions made by members that miss half the meetings. Believes this should be addressed.

- **Patricia Parks**, 1019 Dirr Dr, Moved here from Miami, Fl. She has two points to talk about. Getting the word out and transportation to the new polling places. Social media was mentioned but not everyone participates in this. When the polling places are shut down, many may not be able to get to the new polling place across town because they have small kids to pick up after work. Also, individuals with disabilities that rely on rides may not be able to get one. It may not be safe to drive further. This is a form of voter suppression.
- **Kathleen O'Halloran**, 540 Beautyberry Dr, She is a northerner and has been in Griffin for about 4 years. Up north they hear a lot about the "New South" This proposal to shrink the number of voting sites of almost half smacks of nothing else but voter suppression and reminds her of the "Old South."

Approval of Minutes: Approval of December 9, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second by Chris Piland/Lee Howell

Motion Passed: 5-0

Voted for: Chairman Ben Johnson, James Newland, Chris Piland, Dexter Wimbish and Lee Howell

Election Director Report –

Voter Registration Update: Sandra Hardy - (Total number of Registered Voters as of January 11, 2026 – 53,429.)

Summary of Processed files:

- New Voters – 223
- Transfers into County -421
- Address Change - 254
- Name Change - 57
- No Change – 876
- Vitals – 63
- Request to Cancel – 2
- Moved out of County - 236

Card Audit Update – The office has completed 81% of the physical card audit.

- **Qualifying for the May 19, 2026 General Primary**
 - Qualifying week will begin March 2, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. and end at 12:00 noon on March 6, 2026.
 - Local seats up for Election this year:
 - County Commission Districts 2 & 5 Qualifying fee: \$695.96
 - State Solicitor General Qualifying fee: \$4,587.50
 - Board of Education Districts 1, 3 & 5 Qualifying fee: \$289.19

- **Remodeling of newly acquired space:**
 - County Manager, Dr. Steve Ledbetter, reported at Monday morning's Department meeting that the renovation plan is moving forward, with the bidding process beginning soon, and renovations to be completed prior to the May General Primary Election. Director Slaughter would like to extend gratitude to the Board of Commissioners, County Manager Steve Ledbetter, and Assistant County Manager Erica Dye for their continued support in improving the Voter Registration Election facility so that the Board of Elections and Voter Registration may continue to deliver exceptional services to the voters of Spalding County while creating a working environment more conducive to the processes and procedures of the Department.

- **Precinct Consolidation:**
 - Presentation by Director Kimberly Slaughter.
 - Director Kim used data from the November 4, 2024, election and broke down how the voters cast their vote. Data was also worst-case scenario to be fair to the voters of Spalding County.
 - She also went the extra mile and contacted the State Reapportionment Office and sent in maps. They saw no issues and that the consolidation would even clean up some of the lines for ballot styles.
 - Director Kim addressed the question as to why the 30-minute comment time frame was used. She had researched other boards to see how they handled it and then even went above that.
 - Kim Slaughter also informed the Board and the public that no one from outside had input.
 - There was significant discussion about Precinct Consolidation by the Board which included ideas of expanding Advance Voting.
 - Board Member Howell raised the question why data was used from 2024.
 - Board Member Wimbish questioned the volume the precincts would have and why not just have one precinct on election day. He also advised people feel uncomfortable because of history.
 - Board Member Newland advised that if we process 1900 voters in advance voting on one day we can handle election day.

Precinct Consolidation is as follows:

- Consolidation of Voting Precincts 1 (Second Baptist Church), Precinct 5 (UGA Griffin Campus), & Precinct 6 (City Park Gym) into one precinct - Precinct 1 – Second Baptist Church – 501 W. Broad Street, Griffin, GA 30223.
- Consolidation of Voting Precincts 2 (Fairmont Community Center), Precinct 3 (Senior Citizen Center), & Precinct 7 (Griffin First United Methodist Church) into one precinct – Precinct 2 – new location - Office of Elections and Voter Registration, 825 Memorial Drive, Griffin, GA 30223.
- Consolidation of Voting Precincts 13 (County Line United Methodist Church) and Precinct 14 (Sunny Side United Methodist Church) into one precinct – Precinct 3 (new number) – Sunny Side United Methodist Church - 5084 Old Atlanta Rd, Sunny Side, GA 30284.
- Consolidation of Voting Precincts 12 (Fairview Baptist Church), Precinct 10 (Oak Hill Church) and a partial of Precinct 8 (St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church) into one precinct – Precinct 7 (new number) – Oak Hill Church, 100 Lakeside Rd., Williamson, GA 30292.
- Consolidation of Voting Precincts 11 (First Presbyterian Church), Precinct 20 (Roberts Fire Station) and a partial of Precinct 8 (St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church) into one

precinct – Precinct 8 (new number) – First Presbyterian Church of Griffin, 1349 Macon Rd., Griffin, GA 30224.

- Consolidation of Precinct 16 (Faith Baptist Church) into four precincts as follows:
Precinct 3 (new number) - Sunny Side United Methodist Church – 5084 Old Atlanta Rd., Sunny Side, GA 30284, Precinct 4 (new number) - Eagles Landing First Baptist Church, - 2567 Teamon Rd., Griffin, GA 30223, Precinct 5 (new number) – Griffin First Assembly – 2000 W. McIntosh Rd., Griffin, GA 30223, and Precinct 6 (new number) - Union Baptist Church – 1405 N. McDonough Rd., Griffin, GA 30223.

Updated List of Voting Precincts effective immediately are as follows:

- **Precinct 1** – Second Baptist Church – 501 W. Broad St., Griffin, GA 30223
- **Precinct 2** – Office of Elections and Voter Registration – 825 Memorial Drive, Griffin, GA 30223.
- **Precinct 3** – Sunny Side United Methodist Church – 5084 Old Atlanta Rd., Sunny Side, GA 30284
- **Precinct 4** – Eagles Landing First Baptist Church – 2567 Teamon Rd., Griffin, GA 30223
- **Precinct 5** – Griffin First Assembly – 2000 W. McIntosh Rd., Griffin, GA 30223
- **Precinct 6** – Union Baptist Church – 1405 N. McDonough Rd., Griffin, GA 30223
- **Precinct 7** – Oak Hill Church – 100 Lakeside Rd., Williamson, GA 30292
- **Precinct 8** – First Presbyterian Church of Griffin – 1349 Macon Rd., Griffin, GA 30224

Old Business – Approval of proposed precinct consolidation request by the Elections Director.

Motion Passed: 3-2

Chairman Ben Johnson, Board Members James Newland and Chris Piland voted in favor of Board Members Dexter Wimbish and Lee Howell voted in opposition

New Business – None

Board Members Comments –

- **Chris Piland** – Thanks to the public that showed up and thanks to Kim Slaughter for a great job on the presentation.
- **Dexter Wimbish** – Mr. Wimbish believes one of the things Director Kim could do in the future is put in her report the people that she may have spoken to and checked on items with, so it shows it's not just what she thinks, but what has been advised to her. Mr. Wimbish appreciated hearing the people that Director Kim talked to and how that went into her proposal. Board member Wimbish also advised he didn't vote against the proposal because he doesn't believe in it, he voted against it simply because of the timeline. He appreciates Director Kim's transparency and the lengths she went to to be able to answer those questions. Mr. Wimbish appreciates the staff because we are leadership and it's clear that your leadership is impacting on your staff and their desire to support you in what you are doing. He also commented that he knows Director Kiim doesn't support voter suppression and only wanted to be sure that the residents attending the meeting understood what she was saying.
- **Lee Howell** – Does not believe that Director Slaughter is trying to suppress the vote and doesn't believe she has any intention of doing that. With other states drawing new lines this may make us look like we are trying to suppress the vote. That is why he was uncomfortable with it now. He

goes along with cutting down the precincts just not at this time. Board member Howell believes Director Kim did a great job.

- **James Newland** – He came tonight unsure on how he would vote. But it was Director Slaughter’s presentation and the voters comments that decided for him with the talk of suppression.
- **Chairman Ben Johnson** – Kim Slaughter did a great job on putting everything together and thanks to everyone else in the office. Appreciate everyone that works in elections, appreciates the Board and the comments. Chairman Johnson advised he actually agrees with others more than they think he does. He appreciates everyone who attended the meeting that actually stuck it out and the others that had to leave suddenly.

Adjournment –

Motion/Second by Dexter Wimbish/James Newland

Motion Passed:5-0

Voted for: Chairman Ben Johnson, James Newland, Chris Piland, Dexter Wimbish and Lee Howell at 8:15 pm

Ben Johnson, Chairman

Kim Slaughter, Elections Director