

Upson County Board of Election & Registration  
106 East Lee Street, Suite 130  
Thomaston, GA 30286  
August 25, 2020

Call to Order: Chairman, Robert Haney called the meeting to order. Board members, Janice Bennett, Jack Grubb, Jessica Jones and Mary Hefton were present along with Election Supervisor, Pam Releford. This meeting was live streamed through the Upson County's YouTube channel.

Invocation: Jessica Jones gave the invocation.

Secretary's Report: Motion by Jack Grubb, Second by Janice Bennett to approve the minutes from the July 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting. Jessica Jones abstained. Minutes were approved

Public Comments: Email from Gary Larson, Democratic Party County Coordinator for Voter Protection, that was sent to Election Supervisor, Pam Releford:

Democrats would like to see the following for the Nov. 3rd. election:

- 1) Consistent hours for voting for advanced voting
- 2) Advance Voting Hours similar to regular voting for example 7am to 7 pm . Currently scheduled hours do not work for people who have jobs.
- 3) We'd like to see voting 7 days a week or at the least the addition of a Sunday.
- 4) We'd like to see more than one location for advance voting. Perhaps adding back some locations that were eliminated as polling precincts when that move was made.
- 5) We'd like to see more drop box locations. The Democratic Party would like to know if the reason for only one drop box location is financial. If so, they may be able to help in locating alternate funding. Again, putting drop boxes in all current and former precincts would be ideal. Many counties have applied for CARES ACT funding for such initiatives.
- 6) We'd like to see the county take the initiative to pre-populate Vote by mail applications and send them out to all registered voters in the county since the SOS's office is not doing it this time around. It is still something you can do.
- 7) We'd like to see the county pay the postage for Vote by Mail Ballots for Nov.
- 8) Is there anything we can do to help with your poll worker recruitment efforts? We don't want to step on any toes but if you think we could be helpful, let me know.

Old Business: There was no old business to discuss.

New Business: Election Supervisor, Pam Releford informed the Board that all of the Poll Workers for the upcoming election were all lined up as to who would be available. Jessica Jones suggested that we assign precinct to each Board Member to visit throughout the day on Election Day. It was discussed and decided that Jack Grubb and Janice Bennett could visit the Precinct during the day and that Jessica Jones and Mary Hefton could visit after working ours as to not take away from their other jobs. Election Supervisor, Pam Releford stated that at this time we do not have enough County employees to work, as was decided in the July Meeting. Jessica

Jones suggested having a face to face meeting with the people so that that might get a better response to who would be willing to work. We had a discussion of important dates for the upcoming Election. September 15<sup>th</sup> will be when Absentee Ballots are mailed out, it is also the date in which the Ballot Dropbox will open-it is at the City end of the Government Complex and it is marked. October 5<sup>th</sup> is the last day to register to vote or to update any voter information. October 12<sup>th</sup> is the first day of Advanced Voting; October 24<sup>th</sup> is the Saturday Voting for Advanced Voting. October 30<sup>th</sup> is the last day to have an absentee ballot mailed out, and it is the last day of Advanced voting. November 3<sup>rd</sup> is Election Day. Jessica Jones spoke about how during the last election, as a Board, we started poll worker training and learned right alongside those who would be working the Polls. This enabled the Board to have an idea as to what was going on at the Polls, and when we did our drop-ins, if they needed something, we could possible assist in some way. Chairman, Robert Haney stated that the biggest hurdle during Election Day was that the Precincts often ran out of things, such as paperwork, and that having Board Members available to run things to the Precincts would be a big help. Training days for Advanced Voting is October 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:30-12:00 in the Magistrate Courtroom; Set-up for Advanced Voting will be October 9<sup>th</sup>. October 13<sup>th</sup> will be training for Redbone and Town from 8:30-12:00 and Salem and Yatesville from 1:00-4:00 at the Civic Center.

For question 2 from the email, it was motioned by Jack Grubb to extend the hours of Advanced Voting for the weekdays from 4:30PM to 5:00PM; Janice Bennett seconded; Motion was approved.

### The following questions and answers from the Email in Public Comments

- 1) Consistent hours for voting for advanced voting: **Consistent hours are already set; Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30, Saturday 9:00-4:00**
- 2) Advance Voting Hours similar to regular voting for example 7am to 7 pm . Currently scheduled hours do not work for people who have jobs. **It is a person responsibility of each person who wishes to vote to make time to vote. Employers are required to let people off to go vote, and each voting precinct has work excuses available. It is also too much to ask those who are working the polls to stay 12 plus hours each day for all 3 weeks. It was passed to extend the voting hours to 5:00 PM during Advanced Voting for weekday times.**
- 3) We'd like to see voting 7 days a week or at the least the addition of a Sunday. **Not at this time**
- 4) We'd like to see more than one location for advance voting. Perhaps adding back some locations that were eliminated as polling precincts when that move was made. **It is difficult enough to find workers for the full 3 weeks for one location; also the cost of having to staff and supply multiple locations is too high.**
- 5) We'd like to see more drop box locations. The Democratic Party would like to know if the reason for only one drop box location is financial. If so, they may be able to help in locating alternate funding. Again, putting drop boxes in all current and former precincts would be ideal. Many counties have applied for CARES ACT funding for such initiatives. **According to RULES OF STATE ELECTION BOARD, CHAPTER 183-1, GEORGIA ELECTION CODE, SUBJECT 183-1-14 ABSENTEE VOTING, TABLE OF CONTENTS, 183-1-14-0.6-.14 Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes: 1.) It has to be County or Municipality owned property; 2.) Watched by a camera 24/7 and archived for 30 days after the election is certified; 2 people must go to the dropbox to retrieve ballots; has to be attached to the ground. Because of these rulings, this is not something that can be done by November and at this time there is not a need for another one.**
- 6) We'd like to see the county take the initiative to pre-populate Vote by mail applications and send them out to all registered voters in the county since the SOS's office is not doing it this time around. It is still something you can do. **The**

Center for Voter Information has already mailed out applications; people can also call and the election office will mail out an application to that person; the cost for mailing out applications to all voters is too high and not feasible at this time; it is also a part of personal responsibility.

7) We'd like to see the county pay the postage for Vote by Mail Ballots for Nov. **This is not something that is feasible.**

8) Is there anything we can do to help with your poll worker recruitment efforts? We don't want to step on any toes but if you think we could be helpful, let me know. **Someone will be in contact with you in regards to ways you might be able to help.**

Board Members Comments: Jack Grubb stated that he was glad to be back together and see everyone; Chairman, Robert Haney stated that LNA Testing for Advanced and Regular Voting will be the week of September 21<sup>st</sup> for the testing of the equipment and our next meeting will finalize the official calendar

Next Board Meeting: September 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am

Adjourn: Motion by Jessica Jones, Second by Janice Bennett to adjourn the meeting.