



Board of Elections & Registrations

Irwin County Georgia

Waymond Harris, Chairman

Ethan Compton, Election Supervisor

Patricia Thurman, Democratic Party Representative / Vice-Chair

Wyatt Thompson, Republican Party Representative

Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 22nd, 2026 @ 3pm

Call to Order: *Chairman Harris absent, Invocation and Pledge led by Member Thompson.*

Approval of Agenda: *Supervisor Compton asked board to entertain and introduce motion to relax the agenda to pass a resolution to recognize a poll worker's 40 years of service- Motion introduced by Member Thompson, seconded by Vice-Chair Thurman, amended agenda passed 2-0.*

Approval of Minutes: *Minutes emailed to members previously, printed out for board. Member Thompson motions to pass minutes as presented, Vice-Chair Thurman seconds, minutes passed 2-0.*

Old Business: *N/A*

New Business:

1. May 19th, 2026 General Primary / Nonpartisan General and Special Election Voter Credit Reconciliation
 - a. All reconciliation forms, as well as voter credit and numbered lists are available for board review prior to the vote to certify, as they have been throughout the course of this election for our county.
2. 9 Voter Challenge Cases
 - a. 10 active voter registrations and/or applications were on file for one single family residence within Ocilla on Rainbow Drive, prompting further review.
 - i. One of the flagged applications was for an active felon with over a decade left on their probation who was already reported to the State Elections Board last November for repeatedly attempting to register to vote using multiple methods (in-person applications, by mail applications, online applications and via DDS) and attempting to vote provisionally as an active felon despite staff warnings, signing multiple affidavits under penalty of perjury insisting otherwise, in front of a State Investigator during a precinct inspection.

1. This application has been rejected and forwarded to investigators to add to the case file.
 - ii. The other nine are mostly groupings of small families with registration dates spanning years, leading to an assumption that the previous inhabitants of the property are simply renewing their existing drivers licenses without updating their addresses as new families move in.
 - iii. We sent a letter to the address early last month, informing the residents of the matter and asking them to fill out a form we sent them with the names and year of birth of all inhabitants of the address and that we intend to challenge the voter registrations of all persons on file for that address which were not on the list.
 - iv. We received no response, and Chairman Harris has attempted to visit the address on multiple occasions to attempt to speak with the individuals, with always no answer.
 - v. As such, we intend to challenge all 9 remaining voters for the Rainbow Drive address in question, and due to state law forbidding making a decision on a voter challenge within a 45-day timeframe before an election, we will make the final determination for these cases in July.
3. Ballot Verifier Demo for consideration in FY 27 Budget
 - a. At the GAVREO Conference, Supervisor Compton spoke with a vendor, Civera, who offered a comprehensive online suite allowing public viewing of ballot images, elections results and more granular elections data for multiple previous elections.
 - i. Given that up to 3 days of office staff work is spent preparing similar data for open records requests per election while this tool can do the same work in minutes in a more transparent manner for the public, we requested a demonstration and Supervisor Compton believes that it is a worthwhile investment for our county as a service for our staff and voters.
 - ii. BallotVerifier will be able to store elections results for all elections which we have the ballot images and Cast Vote Records for (which for us would be starting in March 2020) and be able to allow any member of the public to inspect each and every ballot image, with some redactions of the precinct/combo number to preserve voter privacy for some elections and combos, and to obtain turnout data on an incredibly granular level.
 1. Not only will this aid in relieving staff work in handling many complicated open records requests, but it will also aid our office in performing more accurate data analysis to better allocate resources for future elections of similar types.
 - iii. This service also performs an independent Optical Character Recognition retabulation of the ballot images, allowing the public to see for every ballot:
 1. The ballot image itself
 2. What the elections system interpreted that ballot image as a vote for
 3. And what their system interpreted the ballot image as a vote for
 - iv. We have been asked in recent times by candidates, members of the public and county legal counsel for data for past elections that, due to the retention schedule having expired for those elections and our limited space to keep records beyond that, we did not

have the data beyond archived newspaper clippings in the Clerk of Court's Office or basic results information. With this tool, we can avoid such a scenario repeating itself.

- v. This tool will create and host a custom website for us, mimicking the header and footer of the county website pixel-perfectly, with a custom domain of ballotverifier.irwincounty-ga.gov, to better inspire public confidence in the website being official, safe to navigate and part of Irwin County's government.
- vi. Historical import of old elections data will be a one-time fee of \$3,000, with a \$4,500 annual subscription after that which will also cover the costs of importing new elections data. This will cover all elections our office runs, including city elections.
- vii. The proposed first draft budget for FY 27 includes this item within it based on Supervisor Compton's recommendation.
- viii. They also offer their own Election Night Reporting platform if our county wanted an independent solution, which while being a convenient backup option, in Supervisor Compton's opinion is not better enough from the existing tools the state offers to warrant a \$4,500 annual subscription.

4. FY 27 Budget First Draft Presentation

- a. Given a projected improvement in the County's financial status moving forward due to industrial investment, the Finance Director informed our department to prepare our budget to include more substantial investment in our department and the services which it can provide our voters. More changes were instead made by not cutting budget items as aggressively as considered by Supervisor Compton in previous meetings.
 - i. As such, given recent accomplishments of our office, current levels of inflation, that this budget marks 5 years of service with Irwin County for both Supervisor Compton and Asst Supervisor Romans, and recent poaching attempts by other Georgia counties as well as counties in Texas, raises have been proposed for both staff members, as well as small raises for poll workers who haven't had a compensation adjustment since 2022.
 - ii. This budget includes small adjustments to:
 - 1. Fica Contributions, Medicare and Retirement (+\$100 combined due to increased pay)
 - 2. Worker's Compensation (-\$450 due to over-budgeting in previous years)
 - 3. Computer Services (+\$7,800 due to rising computer part costs as well as BallotVerifier)
 - 4. Communications (-\$300 due to completion of Voter Guide project, but increased expected postage for voter list maintenance mailers)
 - 5. Advertising (-\$1,000 due to less election notices in FY27 vs FY26)
 - 6. Travel (+\$500 due to increased costs, partially offset by GAVREO beginning to compensate Supervisor Compton for travel if it benefits them starting July 1 when he becomes a member of their Executive Board)
 - 7. Dues and Fees (+\$250 due to GAVREO dues increases)
 - 8. Poll Workers (-\$6,000 due to fewer anticipated elections held in FY27, despite

Poll Worker pay raises)

9. Operating Supplies (+\$1,206 due to preparing for potential new voting system during FY27 and changes such as potentially needing new voting booths)

iii. In total, this marks an increase of \$11,282.05 versus FY26, or an increase of 6.9%.

1. This budget includes one runoff and one special election during FY27 which we want to be prepared for but do not specifically see as likely happening.
2. In addition, this full budget amount is very likely to not be spent in full but merely stated in order to best plan for all potential changes that could happen in the coming year, for example, the likely transition to a new voting system before the 2028 Presidential Election Cycle.

Resolution recognizing 40 years of poll worker service for Phyllis Fletcher: Member Thompson motions to pass, Vice-Chair Thurman seconds, passed 2-0.

5. Risk Limiting Audit Preparations

- a. Due to Memorial Day being Monday May 25th, the start date of the RLA has been pushed back to Friday May 29th, where we will start at 9am.

Supervisor Compton mistakenly typed 9am on the outline but said 10am during the meeting.

- b. The legislature has funded additional OCR-based ballot image audits for all elections this year, and if the legislature does not pass any new legislation in a special session, it will be the official count for tabulation for elections beginning after July 1st until a new voting system is selected or upgrades to our current system are made, likely as decided by the next Secretary of State.
- c. Two statewide races will be audited instead of the usual one as the first election which qualifies for changes in the laws surrounding audits since 2024, and due to the sheer number of contests in this primary which are in a 5-10% margin of victory, we plead with this board to make an exception regarding the local races selected for additional auditing within the guidelines in our bylaws for the sake of conducting a timely and accurate audit.
 - i. If we keep to all contests within a 10% margin between the first and second place candidate, the following contests for all ballots will be audited:
 1. Secretary of State- DEM
 2. Agricultural Commissioner- DEM
 3. Labor Commissioner- DEM
 4. Public Service Commission 5- REP
 5. US House of Representatives 8- DEM
 - ii. If we exempt races heading to runoff, the following contests will be audited for all ballots:
 1. Agricultural Commissioner- DEM
 2. US House of Representatives 8- DEM
 - iii. Both of the above scenarios will also include the semi-randomly selected 2 batches(always 1 Absentee by Mail batch for every county, plus 1 tabulator used during

Early Voting or Election Day, for this election meaning between 321 and 1,075 ballots of the 1,928 total cast will be audited) for 2 contests selected by the state.

- iv. We recommend auditing ALL BALLOTS for:
 - 1. The 2 contests selected by the state.
 - 2. All contests within a 10% margin of victory which are not heading to a runoff which are listed above.
- v. This will lead to two of the highest profile contests and two of the closest contests on our ballots being audited on every ballot in a manageable setting with an anticipation of only lasting about 4 hours while avoiding overloading our volunteer auditors as happened during the 2024 primary audit, leading to accuracy errors upwards of 14% and the audit lasting from 9am until nearly 7pm.
- vi. If this recommendation is heeded, we will need 4 volunteers from each county party. If not, we will need 8 to keep the audit from becoming an all-weekend affair and interfering with our ability to prepare for the Runoff, as equipment testing begins the business day following the audit, and Supervisor Compton is already likely going to need to work Saturday the 30th in order to prepare materials (security keys, a custom test voting rubric accounting for the ballots and equipment deployment for our county, a wiped, secured USB drive to load with the new election project files, etc) for the pre-election testing.

Member Thompson motions to approve auditing the races suggested by Supervisor Compton, Vice-Chair Thurman seconds, motion passed 2-0

6. Runoff Preparations

- a. The following contests are heading to runoff:
 - i. US Senate- REP
 - 1. Mike Collins
 - 2. Derek Dooley
 - ii. Governor- REP
 - 1. Rick Jackson
 - 2. Burt Jones
 - iii. Lt. Governor- REP
 - 1. Greg Dolezal
 - 2. John F. Kennedy
 - iv. Lt. Governor- DEM
 - 1. Josh McLaurin
 - 2. Nabilah Parkes
 - v. Secretary of State- REP
 - 1. Tim Fleming

2. Vernon Jones
- vi. Secretary of State- DEM
 1. Dana Barrett
 2. Penny Brown Reynolds
- vii. Commissioner of Insurance- DEM
 1. DeAndre Mathis
 2. Keisha Sean Waites
- viii. State School Superintendent- REP
 1. Bubba Longgear
 2. Richard Woods
- ix. Commissioner of Labor- DEM
 1. Nikki Porcher
 2. Michelle Michi Sanchez
- x. Public Service Commission District 5- REP
 1. Bobby Mehan
 2. Josh Tolbert
- b. Voters who did not vote in this primary can pick either party's ballot for the runoff, voters who voted in this primary can only vote in the runoff for the party's ballot they selected in the primary, and voters who chose nonpartisan in the primary cannot vote in the runoff, as no nonpartisan primary contests went to runoff.
- c. Runoff L&A
 - i. We anticipate holding Logic and Accuracy Testing from Monday June 1st until Wednesday June 3rd, in the hopes that the Secretary of State's Office can send us the elections project files in an expedient manner.
- d. Runoff AiP
 - i. Early Voting will be from Monday June 8th until Friday June 12th.
- e. Runoff AbM
 - i. All voters who applied for an absentee by mail ballot this year and selected that they were physically disabled, 65 years of age or older or qualified for UOCAVA protections on their application will be issued an absentee by mail ballot the second they are available.
 - ii. All other persons can begin applying now for an absentee by mail ballot for this runoff with an application deadline of Friday June 5th.
- f. Runoff Election Day
 - i. Runoff Election Day is Tuesday June 16th and will be in both Irwinville and Ocilla from 7am until 7pm.

g. Runoff Equipment Deployments

- i. The bottlenecks at the Ballot Marking Devices caused by the excessive ballot length were well-managed by the deployment decisions made for this primary, with less than 10 people all day needing to wait less than a minute for an available BMD.
- ii. Given that there are far less options on the ballot and contests to vote on leading to faster voter turnaround time in the voting booth, and that turnout always dramatically drops from a primary to its runoff, we anticipate best meeting voters' needs in this especially tight timeframe by only opening the 8 ATI-equipped BMDs in our office for Early Voting and Ocilla's Election Day, and deploying the single ATI-equipped BMD and the 2-BMD medium cart to Irwinville's Election Day.

h. Runoff Certification

- i. The timing of this runoff leads to an interesting issue: Friday June 19th is a federal, state and county holiday and our office will be closed when we would normally certify our election.
 1. We will address this by separating the required meetings into two meetings: one to reconcile voter lists on 5pm Thursday June 18th, and then we will meet after the extended provisional and UOCAVA deadline on 5pm Monday June 22nd to certify the final results.
 2. *Member Thompson and Vice-Chair Thurman ask Supervisor Compton to post conditional notices stating that if there are no pending cure provisional or UOCAVA ballots, we will certify on June 18th, otherwise we will meet to reconcile on June 18th then meet again to certify on June 22nd.*

7. Recess until 5:15pm to Certify at advertised time.

Member Thompson motions to recess until 5:15pm to certify at advertised time, Vice-Chair Thurman seconds, recessed at 4:27pm.

8. 5:15pm: Certification of May 19th, 2026 General Primary / Nonpartisan General / Special Election

- a. Results read, winners announced, vote to certify and, when certified, winners' certificates signed for nonpartisan/clerk of court winning candidates.

Member Thompson motions to certify results, Vice-Chair Thurman seconds, results certified 2-0.

Public Comment: N/A

Board Comment: N/A

Executive Session: (If needed)

Meeting Adjourned: Next Meeting: Thursday, June 18th, 2026 @ 3 5pm– Results Reconciliation of June 16th, 2026 General Primary Runoff & Certification if no pending Provisional or UOCAVA ballots, otherwise Monday, June 22nd, 2026 @ 5:15pm- Certification of Results

Member Thompson motions to adjourn, Vice Chair Thurman seconds, adjournment passes 2-0 @ 5:29pm.
