



Board of Elections & Registrations



Irwin County Georgia

Waymond Harris, Chairman

Ethan Compton, Election Supervisor

Charlene Hutchinson, Republican Party Representative / Vice-Chair

Patricia Thurman, Democratic Party Representative

Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 30th, 2024 @ 4pm

Call to Order: Board Chair Harris not present, Vice-Chair Hutchinson led the meeting and Pledge of Allegiance while Rep. Thurman led the invocation.

Approval of Minutes: Rep. Thurman motions to accept the minutes as written, Vice-Chair Hutchinson seconds, approved 2-0.

Old Business:

1. Proposed Bylaw Changes Regarding Post-Election Auditing Standards and Procedures
 - a. If no other amendments are suggested for the bylaws, it should be passed in this meeting to give plenty of time for it to be in effect prior to the November election. If additional amendments are to be suggested to be added, let us discuss and log them for now for an amended proposal to be posted publicly until our August meeting when it can be approved.

Supervisor Compton reiterated that Vice-Chair Hutchinson's recommendations for amending the additional auditing threshold from 4 to 10% has been added to the bylaw changes immediately after the June meeting, then posted publicly in our office and on the county website on June 12th.

Rep. Thurman motions to approve the bylaw changes as presented, Vice-Chair Hutchinson seconds, bylaws approved 2-0, notarized by Evelyn Romans upon approval.

2. FY 25 Department Budget Approval for County Commission Submission

- a. In order to best allow the Irwin County Commission to review and approve the department budgets prior to the fiscal year beginning September 1st, this board needs to approve the budget at either this or a called meeting in the coming weeks.

Supervisor Compton highlighted that the alternations made were to reflect employee pay decisions reached at the June meeting's executive session, leading to an increase of \$3,545.07 vs. FY 2024, or 2.21%.

Vice-Chair Hutchinson motions to accept the budget as presented, Rep. Thurman seconds, FY 2025 budget approved 2-0 for submission to the Irwin County Board of Commissioners.

New Business:

1. Voter Challenge

- a. On June 12th, we received information from a newly established information sharing agreement between the GA and FL SOS offices regarding a voter, 10801459, Douglas Ray Harris who is registered both in our county and Hillsborough County, FL.
- b. Both offices have confirmed the voter in question are registered on their rolls, with their Tampa, FL registration being the more recent entry. Within our jurisdiction, the voter first registered automatically via DDS in 2016, had their precinct card returned to us as undeliverable, moving them into inactive status. Office staff then moved the voter back to active manually in December 2019 due to former clerk Yolanda Hicks improperly processing a final inactivity notice from the voter, which reset their inactivity timer and returned them to active instead of removing them from the voter rolls as they should have been.
- c. Under existing federal procedures, the voter should have been moved to canceled status in January 2020, but given they are erroneously still on our rolls while actively registered in another state and voting there, we are challenging and recommending the removal of this never-used voter registration from our rolls to best protect the voter from any investigations in this state or another from improperly registering to vote in two different states simultaneously, since they are currently flagged in FL due to this registration on our rolls which would be cleared upon their removal from our rolls here.

Rep. Thurman motions to sustain the voter challenge, Vice-Chair Hutchinson seconds, challenge sustained 2-0.

2. Summer 2024 Staff Trainings

- a. Supervisor Compton has passed Course 2: Management and Leadership Concepts in Election and Voter Registration through Auburn University's Certified Election and Registration Administrator program with the National Election Center and is currently taking Course 4: Election Information Access & Security which concludes July 25th.
 - i. This would be the third course of the 12-course program completed so far this year for this master's level certificate, the nation's highest-level certification for elections officials.
- b. The Secretary of State's Office is holding a joint elections cybersecurity workshop for elections supervisors and county IT staff in partnership with CISA in Valdosta on August 7th, a regional training in Valdosta for South GA elections supervisors on August 20th, and a statewide training

for elections supervisors in Macon from August 26th through 28th. The topics have not been disclosed for the regional and statewide training sessions.

3. City-County SPLOST Referendum on November Ballot

- a. Referendums from both the City Council of Ocilla and Irwin County Commission have been passed and delivered to our office in time for placement on the November General Election Ballot for a Joint City-County General SPLOST Referendum, renewing the one that had been in place from July 2012 until July 2024.
 - i. The current one expired July 1st, 2024 and, if passed, this SPLOST will not take effect until July 1st, 2025, giving city and county taxpayers a 1% sales tax break until then.
 - ii. This joint SPLOST is expected to raise \$5,500,000 over 6 years, to be divided between the city getting 40% and the county getting 60% of the funds raised for paying off existing debts, building and repairing roads, city sanitation projects, acquiring public safety vehicles for the city, landfill maintenance, and maintenance and improvement of city property, and only for those listed purposes.
 1. This figure was reached by using 2022 US Census Bureau population figures for Ocilla and Irwin County populations, dividing the portions of funds raised by the respective share of each population.
 2. If any county entity wishes to have a project covered by SPLOST funds during this upcoming period, if it is approved, they will have to have the county commission go through the process to meet and approve to acquire debt for that project prior to the effective date of this referendum of July 1st, 2025, since other projects were not explicitly listed to be covered by this funding other than for the “retirement of indebtedness on current capital outlay projects”.
 - a. Due to the limited timeframe to put this referendum on the November ballot, the City and County had to pass resolutions and form an intergovernmental agreement contract in time for it to be added and voted on this year, extensive detailed project lists could not be compiled in time for addition, and the wording chosen allows the newly elected County Commissioners the ability to decide what projects should be funded through debt then repaid by this SPLOST, if passed, after they take office.
- b. A Call for Special Election has been placed in the Ocilla Star and reminders of voting dates and times along with the full text of this referendum shall be run for 4 consecutive weeks prior to the election date, with the first publication planned for publication tomorrow, July 17th.

Public Comment:

N/A

Board Comment:

N/A

Executive Session: Entered executive session @ _____ due to request by _____ to discuss:

~~Exited executive session @~~

Meeting Adjourned: *Vice-Chair Hutchinson motions to adjourn at 4:32pm, Rep. Thurman seconds, meeting adjourned 2-0.*

1. Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 13th, 2024 @ 4:00pm