

The Laurens County Board of Registrars met on Monday, May 6, 2024 in the Registrars' Office for their regular monthly meeting. Present were David Gay, Chief Registrar and Board Members, Keith Alligood, Christine Baker, Alan Scarbrough and Gladine White. Susan Rooks, Chief Deputy Registrar was also present.

Call to Order.

David Gay opened the meeting in prayer.

The minutes of the April 1, 2024 meeting and the April 8, 2024 Special Called Meeting were approved as submitted. Keith Alligood motioned to approve and Christine Baker seconded.

The expenditures were approved as submitted. Alan Scarbrough motioned to approve and Gladine White seconded.

OLD BUSINESS: Susan reported that the office was running smoothly as a team effort during the Advance Voting for the May 21, 2024, General Primary and Nonpartisan Election. As of Saturday, May 4, 2024, a total of 832 voters had cast their ballot in person. There were 665 Republicans, 154 Democratic and 13 Nonpartisan voters. Monday, April 29th had 172, Tuesday, April 30th had 151, Wednesday, May 1st had 164, Thursday, May 2nd had 135, Friday, May 3rd had 167 and Saturday, May 4th had 43.

NEW BUSINESS: Susan informed the Board that a voter had come in to vote with an old t-shirt with a former candidate's name on the shirt. She stated that she had consulted with County Attorney, Billy Kight and Genola Jackson, Superintendent of Elections for clarification on wearing campaign material and according to the GA Election Code 21-2-214 (a) No person shall solicit votes in any manner or by any means or method nor shall any person distribute or **display any campaign material** within the polling precinct. She instructed all poll workers that no campaign material was allowed during the Advance Voting process whether it be old or current candidate material.

LaTosha Collins, Inspector/Investigations Division of the Secretary of State, had come by to check our office outlay and was very pleased with our office procedures

and the new 3 ft x 12 ft banner stating “**ADVANCE VOTING HERE**” in Red, White and Blue.

Susan read over the new House and Senate Bills that would go into effect during the 2024, 2025 and 2026 voting period. Those included HB 1312 for a Special Primary to be held on the third Tuesday of June in 2025 for Public Service Commission of District 2 and 3. HB 974 (Effective July 1, 2024) A new watermark will be required on all security paper used to print ballots. Absentee Ballots must be scanned at 600 DPI resolution, or the highest resolution possible by the certified voting system. Ballots generated by the BMD’s must be scanned at least 200 DPI, and all ballot images must be posted by the second Friday following the primary or election on a system provided by the Secretary of State. HB 1207 (Effective July 1, 2024) states that all poll workers or employees of the election superintendent shall be a citizen of the United States. Allow for reopening of qualifying if no one qualifies during the week of qualifying for the General Primary and Non-Partisan Election. Effective January 1, 2025, the Election Superintendent shall allow for a candidate to inspect ballot proofs for accuracy before they approve the proofs. The candidate shall have 24 hours for such inspection. SB 189 shall remove the Secretary of States as an ex-officio member of the State Election Board, homeless electors will be able to use the address of the Registrar’s office as their jurisdiction for voting, allows for hand-marked ballots in a county election with less than 5,000 registered voters to petition the State Election Board for permission to conduct the election in this manner and the election must be a special election (Effective January 1, 2025). The official tabulation count of any ballot scanner shall be based upon the text portion or the machine mark, provided that such mark clearly denotes the elector’s selection and does not use a QR code, bar code, or similar coding, of such ballots and not any machine coding that may be printed on such ballots (Effective July 1, 2026). All Absentee by Mail ballots that were accepted as of the day prior to the election to be tabulated and the results reported to the Secretary of State no later than 8:00 PM on Election Day or one hour following the close of the polls (Effective July 1, 2024). This also includes ballots cast by advance voting. SB 212 removes the Probate Judge from election responsibilities. All counties currently with the probate judge as election superintendent must establish a board of elections. This must be done prior the December 15, 2024.

Susan stated that there has been a lower request for Absentee by Mail than expected. As of today's date, there has been a total of 358 Absentee by Mail requested. 200 Republican, 157 Democratic and 1 Nonpartisan. There have been 4 cancelled mailed ballots changing their request from Democratic to Republican.

There were no visitors to recognize.

At this time Susan stated that the 2024-2025 Budget would not be approved by the County Governing Authority until possibly in their June workshop.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. with the next regular monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, June 3, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.