



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

### STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Melanie Conrad, Chair, Board of Elections  
John Scott Husser, Board of Elections  
Corey Townsend, Board of Elections  
Vanessa Waddell, Interim-Chief Clerk, Elections  
John Blalock, Public Safety Division Director  
Carl Lively, Major, Police Department  
Ron Hunton, Captain, Police Department  
Hollis Barton, Assistant County Clerk, County Manager's Office

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Olivia Morley, Rome News-Tribune  
Virginia McChesney  
Nancy Ivester  
Frances Herron  
Phil Herron  
Michael Morgan  
Samuel Malone  
Terri Wright  
Angela Rubino  
Jackie Harrison  
Cynthia Eason  
Daniel Eason  
Pam Peters  
Emily Foster  
Raleigh Hussman  
Carrie [Illegible]  
Lauren Waits

#### I. Call to Order

Chair Melanie Conrad called the meeting to order.

#### II. Approval of the Minutes

No minutes were approved at this meeting. Mr. Husser stated he was working on previous minutes from prior meetings.

#### III. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Townsend made a motion to approve the Agenda, seconded by Dr. Conrad. Motion carried 2-0, as Mr. Husser had stepped out of the room.

*Hollis Barton, Assistant County Clerk  
County Manager's Office*



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

### IV. Public Comments

- a. **Michael Morgan:** "My name is Michael Morgan I reside at 1235 Radio Springs Road in Rome, the two things I would like to bring is primarily based upon, the first one is, I'm very much in support of your consideration to relocate the Elections office to the Health Department building, I feel it's personally deplorable ok that we've housed that department in the broom closet in the bowels of this Administration Building for so long and I feel that we should invest in this team if we expect performance of them at a collegiate level, currently we're giving them crayons, ok, but yet we're expecting collegiate or Olympic level results ok, as a citizen I expect Olympic level results ok when it comes to fair honest transparent election processes ok I think we should invest with and give them the best tools administrative tools that we can afford to, we need to provide them with the proper training to execute their duties, and as a measure of aptitude they should be provided a written exam ok on the knowledge of the State Codes governing Elections, I've recently discovered we don't have any County Codes to govern our Elections, which I'll be working on that at a later date, uh I don't see a time clock so I'm just trying to keep myself on target here because here's the elements, okay we have to ask ourselves as the people, have we provided an accurate assessment of the aptitudes of the personnel, have we provided them all the tools, materials, and supplies required to perform their duties, have we provided the best training development training processes and documented the results of this training, have we clearly defined their roles and responsibilities for all the positions within the team, and have we granted clear and concise authority for them to execute those duties ok, have we witnessed and evaluated their performance of the defined understood and comprehended duties and provided accurate and timely feedback, and then have we provided them the authority and the freedom to perform their duties, ok, if we have not provided all of these elements to this team we cannot hold them individually accountable ok that falls on us the people, alright, and the last thing that I would like to recommend is that the Chair of this Board resign from the position ok based on Article 45-10-3 of the Georgia Official Georgia Code Annotated and I will read and quote from that Code '

**Chair Conrad:** "Ok your time is up."

**Mr. Morgan:** "Never engage in other conduct which is unbecoming to a member or which constitutes a breach of public trust."

**Chair Conrad:** "Your time is up."

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## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

- b. **Sam Malone:** "Good afternoon, thank you for hearing me, my name is Samuel Malone I live at 204 Woodvine Ave, Rome, Georgia, I'm a lifetime Roman, and I'd just like to say I'd like to thank the Floyd County Board, and they will hear this later, the Board of Commissioners for refusing to allow the State to begin the process that could take away our local control over our elections, Floyd County voters deserve to be in charge of the elections local control has served Floyd County well, and I want to the BOC for protecting and I also want to thank the BOE for the work that you do and thanks again, the BOC must continue to stand up for the local control and protect Floyd taxpayers so that we aren't forced to pay for a State review that could let State authorities take over our BOE, again, thank you."
- c. **Terri Wright:** "You know, I think that there is quite a bit of misunderstanding as far as the State taking over our Election Board the only time that happens is if they find that there are serious issues but they never take over our Board and I want to thank Mr. Townsend I want to recognize him and his integrity and his going out of his way to make sure if we have questions he's answered them and personally want to thank you and make sure that's for the record; I have a couple problems with the agenda, the minutes, we've discussed in the past about there's no transparency someone thought maybe you guys could do it at night or whatever if there's some way to get with the County I know the City videos all of theirs so that the other citizens that can't be here have a way of knowing what's going on, it's just transparency that's all people really want, and looking at the agenda I'm bothered because you either know what's on the agenda, or you don't, and when you've got the word 'other' what does that mean, the public does not know what's on your agenda with that word, so you know I'd like to see that kind of straightened out and not only that but there are no Minutes, so you can go to the Board of Commission's and you can if you missed something you can go back and read their Minutes but there are no Minutes so if I don't know can you tell me who's responsible for the Agenda and for the Minutes and maybe how we can kind of get that fixed so that there is some transparency there may not be as much, not so much confusion that's not the word I'm looking for, but there may not be so many questions from people if they had those tools and that's kind of what I'd like, but if you could answer who is responsible for the Agenda and the Minutes I would appreciate that."

**Mr. Townsend:** "I guess one thing to just clarify with that specific issue you raised in terms of 'other' being on the agenda, that is the Board's maybe slight

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County Manager's Office*



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

OCD in wanting the agenda to be balanced, so there's no alternative item or secret agenda related to the other item it's just we have an a and b for each item--

**Chair Conrad:** "I should add I teach Public Speaking and require my students to write outlines and it's just cringey for me to see an outline that has an a without a b there; it also allows for a little flexibility should something come up in a week from when we have to publish the agenda, to when we actually have the meeting."

**Mr. Townsend:** "the only other thing I would say with respect to the minutes is we are working to get them on the website, I think quite frankly, it's a little bit easier for the County to get their minutes on the website because they basically run the website it's run through the County Administration; and we're working with them to get our minutes out there and a faster process to do that, we're also going back and getting them historical minutes so we can get those up-to-date so it's a process, it's in the works, and we're hoping to get that done as soon as possible."

**Mr. Morgan then asked a question away from the podium, making it inaudible.**

**Mr. Husser:** "We don't have minutes today because I was late, I was the one writing the minutes, I had the minutes from last month I didn't have a chance to get them today, this morning City Court ran over, then I had to dart from there to here then I've got to go to a doctor's appointment so we'll get those minutes, I've been relieved of my minute-taking ability by the County so I am thrilled, that process will be streamlined, and you know, I apologize for my minutes I tend to keep them bare bones outlined, but I did learn that I am not supposed to write the minutes to where I understand them I am supposed to write them for y'all to be able to understand them so I think that was one of the issues but again, I've been relieved thankfully, we've got someone whose been trained in that so I think you'll have more thorough minutes going forward, but again I apologize for not having them ready today just my schedule got ahead of me but we'll meet Friday and I'll present the minutes on Friday to be ratified and we'll have the last minutes hopefully up next week."

**Ms. Wright then asked a question away from the podium, making it inaudible.**

- d. **Angela Rubino:** "Actually have a series of questions in regards to the Citizens Advisory Committee, so my first question is what is the purpose of the



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

committee, second would be what is the selection process, who would be selecting this board, will the citizen advisory committee be considered the will of the people, and how does one get on to this committee?"

**Chair Conrad:** "That's actually something we are going to be discussing today, we don't have any final details or whether or not we're even going ahead with it we're just discussing it."

**Ms. Rubino:** "So it hasn't been established yet?"

**Chair Conrad:** "It has not been established yet, we are just discussing it."

**Ms. Rubino:** "Thank you."

- e. **Pam Peters:** "I just wanted to ask for an update on the peer review at some point today, supposedly that was the manner of choice because it could be enacted quicker than a performance review and it's, here's our close to thirty days since that decision was made, and wondering what the progress is, performance review had thirty days to get started and I'm wondering has anything gotten started, and also I wanted an update, I got the impression, it may be the wrong impression, that you had narrowed down our candidates for the clerk to four candidates, and you had to contact them to make sure they were still wanting to be considered for the job, and to let them know that you would make those names public, that's the impression I got last month, so I'm wondering since a month has gone by, are you ready to let the public know who your top four or top three candidates are, and where are we in that process?"

**Chair Conrad:** "I'll go ahead and answer both those questions as best I can. The peer review, at this point is in the hands of the County, so we've made the recommendation, that might be a question that you would ask them tonight at their meeting, and in my Chair's Report I'm going to talk about the Chief Clerk position and where we are on that, so I am going to answer that question when we get to that part."

**Mr. Townsend:** "The only other thing I would add on the Peer Review is that, again, that is completely with the County as Dr. Conrad said, however, in the communities that I reached out to in terms of a willingness to participate, all of them said they wanted to get past the municipal election first, and so I don't know that a lot of action has taken place up to this point because we just wrapped that up last week, so I would anticipate that if there's going to be any



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

activity on that it's going to ramp up significantly going forward as opposed to over the past thirty days."

- f. **Daniel Eason:** "Good afternoon, I just came up to speak about the election we had just last week and thank the Board and the Elections office for a great job that you did, the League of Women Voters in Floyd County, we had a poll monitor at each precinct, and we observed very good coordination between the staff and the Board, I don't know of any hitches that were that we had last week, everything seemed to have gone well, we didn't have a whole lot of voters vote, but that's up to the citizen, but you guys did a great job, particularly with the signage with getting the precinct change at Mt. Alto North over to the Anthony Center, you did a wonderful job there; for those of us who have been watching the Board and the office for the last couple of years, that hasn't always been the case, and Vanessa did an outstanding job getting that done beforehand just as it's supposed to be done so that all the citizens knew where their precinct was, we still had people show up who were not aware but that was on them, but the Board and the office did a great job and thank you."

### V. Chair's Report

Chair Conrad stated she felt the most recent municipal election went smoothly and thanked the poll workers for working the long hard hours. Chair Conrad then stated she only wished the voter turnout had been a little higher and stated they had some goals for the upcoming elections in 2022 to increase efficiency with the overall progress. Chair Conrad then stated they were hoping to move by the end of the year and they were planning to interview the four candidates for Chief Clerk via Zoom on Friday. She also clarified as far as the releasing of the names, they are able to release the names within fourteen days of announcing who they are recommending for the position to protect the applicants, particularly those that are currently employed. She then stated the applicant does have the right to remove their name from consideration if they are not offered the position so that it is not published to protect them. This concluded Dr. Conrad's report.

### VI. Interim-Chief Clerk Report

Interim Chief Clerk Vanessa Waddell stated the election was certified yesterday and the totals were published on the website, Twitter, and Facebook if anyone wanted to review them there. Stated the turnout was disappointing, with only 12.81% of voters voting, out of 21,000 voters, there were less than 3,000 who voted. Ms. Waddell then stated the upload was completed off of the Voter List and it was provided to the

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## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

Secretary of State's office. During this election, the Secretary of State came up with an Election Data Reporting Tool and on election night they were able to report advance voting, election day voting, and any provisional ballot totals that were available. Stated this was a way for them to be able to review local totals and what to anticipate on election day. Stated they do have a list of potential poll workers from the Secretary of State and has been passed on to a Temp Agency who will be handling it moving forward.

### VII. Old Business

#### a. Update on Move to Health Department

Mr. Townsend stated he recently had a conversation with Facilities Management Director, Ryan Davis, who is working with several different departments and people to improve the overall space and although they had to make some minor changes, they are looking forward to the new space and anticipating to having a new design to the space and will make it available to the public to view when possible. Stated they are aiming to have this completed by the end of the year, however this will depend on construction and how much is required, however the overall goal being to have this completed before the 2022 election cycle.

#### b. Other

### VIII. New Business

#### a. Citizens Advisory Committee

Chair Conrad stated they have had discussions and recognize the need to have greater transparency regarding the Election Board and thought about seeking public input. Stated the initial proposal would be to create a Citizens Advisory Committee similar to what the Transportation Committee has in place, and that it is in the discussion stage at this point.

Mr. Townsend stated one of the first things that he did as far as civic engagement in Floyd County is participate in the FRUTS committee, which is now the Citizens Advisory Committee, and it gives the Planning Commission an opportunity to engage with the public and receive community feedback. Stated one of the reasons he believed this might benefit the Elections office is to give clarity on questions the community had regarding the Elections office and have the opportunity to inform the public. Stated in terms of some of the questions Ms. Rubino brought up, he believed they would like applications from the

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County Manager's Office*



## FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

County Administration Building - Community Room

November 9, 2021 12:00 p.m.

community and would like to open to anyone and they do recognize they are talking about sensitive matters with politics and may need to seek out the advice of outside agencies on what the selection process would look like. Stated their primary objective is to get community engaged in what is going on in the Elections office, and give them the opportunity to hear and ask questions of the office and the Board and remain updated.

### b. Other

### IX. Closing Remarks

No closing remarks.

### X. Next Regular Meeting is December 14, 2021

### XI. Adjournment

Mr. Townsend made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Husser. Motion carried 3-0. There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.