

**SHELBY COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

September 22, 2020

The regular meeting of the Shelby County Election Commission was held electronically on September 22, 2020.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: By Chairman Stamson at 4:04pm

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Tate, Uhlhorn, Taylor and Smith

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda Phillips, AOE (via video)
Joe Young, DAOE
Pablo Varela, attorney
Stacey Scott, staff
Carol Collinsworth, staff
News media

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 24, 2020 MINUTES

MOTION STATED: Commissioner Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Uhlhorn

OUTCOME OF MOTION: passed unanimously

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Attorney Varela stated there are three active litigations.

- Shelby Advocates for Valid Elections have a petition to the US Supreme Court
- Pamela Moses case is on appeal
- Latroy Williams, Jr. case was dismissed

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- We are in full on election mode with staff working 7 days a week and 14-hour days.
- All 1,403 UOCAVA ballots went out on time.
- 14,607 requests for absentee as of today. Majority are over 60 followed by UOCAVA, ill and out of the county.
- Handout of breakout by zip code of ballots that were rejected.
- New videos on how to complete absentee ballot and voter registration paperwork.

- Testing a product called ISOCUE that will allow voters to be called via their smart phones to come inside when their turn and they can see how busy the early voting sites are.
- Today is National Voter Registration Day and, due to COVID-19, we aren't doing as many events as in past. We are doing registration events on Saturday at the Forum with the Grizzlies and at Macy's.
- Voter registration deadline is 13 days away, early voting starts in 22 days and the election is in 42 days.

Commissioner Taylor said some people are having trouble verifying their voter registration on third party sites. AOE Phillips said it is best to go to GoVoteTN.com. It lags our site (shelbyvote.com) by a day or two. Third party sites lag the TN sites by several days. Hyphenated names are tricky in our system.

CHANGES TO ELECTION DAY POLLING SITES:

No changes at this time. ISOCUE may resolve the problem at smaller sites.

Commissioner Tate asked about using Breath of Life. AOE Phillips said we are considering it for election day but we already have contracts for all early voting sites including Raleigh United Methodist Church.

EARLY VOTING SCHEDULE APPROVAL:

We are using the same locations as in August but extending the hours for this election only for social distancing during the pandemic.

Commissioner Taylor moved that they approve the early voting schedule of locations, dates, times, number of machines and staff with the amendment that the change in hours are only for this election, without objection.

Seconded by Commissioner Tate.

Commissioner Smith asked that it be amended to add the FedEx Forum as an early voting site with 30 poll books and 50 voting machines.

Commissioner Taylor seconded for the purpose of discussion only.

Commissioner Uhlhorn stated that we have already discussed using the Forum at previous meetings.

Commissioner Smith stated that he believes AOE should have brought Forum option to the commissioners. Commissioner Taylor views AOE role differently, that the AOE is charged with the responsibility to make decisions and bring recommendations to the body as needed.

AOE Phillips stated that she discussed using the Forum with the Grizzlies and they came to the conclusion that using it for early voting would be difficult for many reasons:

- There are a lot of access points to the building
- Internet installation would be very expensive

- Surface parking lot doesn't require attendants but is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the entrance so 1.5 mile walk for voters.
- Parking garage requires parking attendants, elevator attendants, way finders and more security. Very expensive.
- Due to Forum contracts, we would have to use Forum food vendors. Visitors can't bring their own food so it would cost \$75 a day to feed each of our workers.
- Grizzlies management team thought they could be of better to use as an emergency site in case of a natural disaster. Second, they have agreed to be the absentee counting location for absentee ballots. Third, they are partnering with us to do some voter education. The Grizzlies agreed that it would not be a good early voting site.
- Our equipment is finite so would have to discuss which early voting sites would you want to give up to use the Forum. The November ballot will take 2 minutes. Check in will longer to check in than voting and there is no additional equipment available.

Commissioner Taylor stated that it appears that the Grizzlies want to be civically engaged and they have found ways to work with us. AOE stated they were involved with us before the NBA suggested this. We did voter registration events with the Grizzlies last December.

Commissioner Taylor asked about suggestions for early voting location and AOE acknowledged that suggestions are made prior to every election and staff looks at options and determines feasibility.

Commissioner Tate asked about internet at the Forum. AOE stated Shelby County IT would have to order and have installed and we were outside the time frame.

Commissioner Tate also asked about Forum staff. AOE stated we would have to use the Forum contracted staff for security, attendants, food, etc. at a cost of \$30-40,000. And another \$30,000 for just meals.

Commissioner Smith said 20 of 30 NBA teams have offered their arenas. He stated that TN code 2-12-201 states that the AOE is to prepare a plan of early voting sites and present it to the commissioners for approval. Commissioner Uhlhorn stated that the AOE submitted a plan and that fulfilled the requirement.

Roll call vote to add the FedEx Forum as an early voting site:

Taylor – no, Uhlhorn – no, Smith – yes, Tate – yes, Stamson – no. Motion failed.

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to accept the early voting schedule resolution with the added language that the extended times are pandemic specific.

Roll call vote: Taylor – yes, Uhlhorn – yes, Smith – yes, Tate – yes, Stamson - yes.

Motion passes.

Commissioner Taylor suggested that commissioners have the ability to add a discussion item to the agenda. Items for discussion will be sent to the chairman and added to the agenda. This will give the staff time to prepare.

Commissioner Tate stated that the Election Commission is on the County Commission agenda tomorrow regarding funding for new equipment.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:

Old Business:

Commissioner Smith asked for the SOVC report. Stated the commissioners are supposed to compare the source reports to the poll tapes.

Commissioner Smith asked AOE Phillips if, during the bid process, did she add any capital expense outside the data submitted to the bid. AOE replied that she added items requested by the commissioners for ballot on demand units. Accessory items would have been added no matter which vendor was selected.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were several comments and questions.

The next meeting will be on October 20, 2020 at 4pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made to adjourn by Commission Taylor. Meeting adjourned at 5:17pm.



Steve Stamson, Chairman

Date



Anthony Tate, Secretary

10.20.20

Date