



Board of Elections and Registrations

Post Office Box 1340
Columbus, Georgia 31902-1340
"Georgia's First Consolidated Government"
(706) 653-4392

Uhland "U.D." Roberts, Chair
Linda Parker, Vice-Chair
Edwin Roldan
Diane Scrimshire
Annette Williams

Muscogee County Board of Elections and Registration
February 6, 2025
Minutes

The monthly meeting for the Muscogee County Board of Elections and Registration was held Thursday, February 6th. Chairperson Uhland Roberts called the meeting to order at 2p.m. All board members were present. Edwin Roldan is excused from the meeting due to the passing of his mother in Puerto Rico.

Board Comments:

Agenda Request: N/A

Approval of Minutes:

- Annette Williams seconded Linda Parker's motion to approve the September and November board meeting minutes.

New Business:

- **Precinct Changes**
 - a) Moon- North Highland
 - b) Col. Tech
 - c) Cunningham
- **Early Voting Locations-** Only 1 early location for the June 17th election. Beginning on May 27- June 13th at the City Service Center only.
- **Voter Registration Report-** Diane Scrimshire seconded Linda Parker motion for the Board to accept the 6 obituary deaths for the month of January.
- **FY26 Budget Preparation**

The Chair recommended budgeting funds in the FY26 request to explore leasing early voting sites since it is so difficult to find locations. The board would like to have a building for all things Elections such as equipment storage, deployment, public testing, early tabulation, and other activities as needed.
- **Special Primary- Public Service Commissioner – June 17**

Old Business:

- Richard Parker asked the board to look at ways to reach voters and others with important information. He also presented to the board an after-action report on poll watching for the election calendar year 2024. Mr. Parker will return for the March 6th meeting for discussion to allow the board an opportunity to review the report.


Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items:

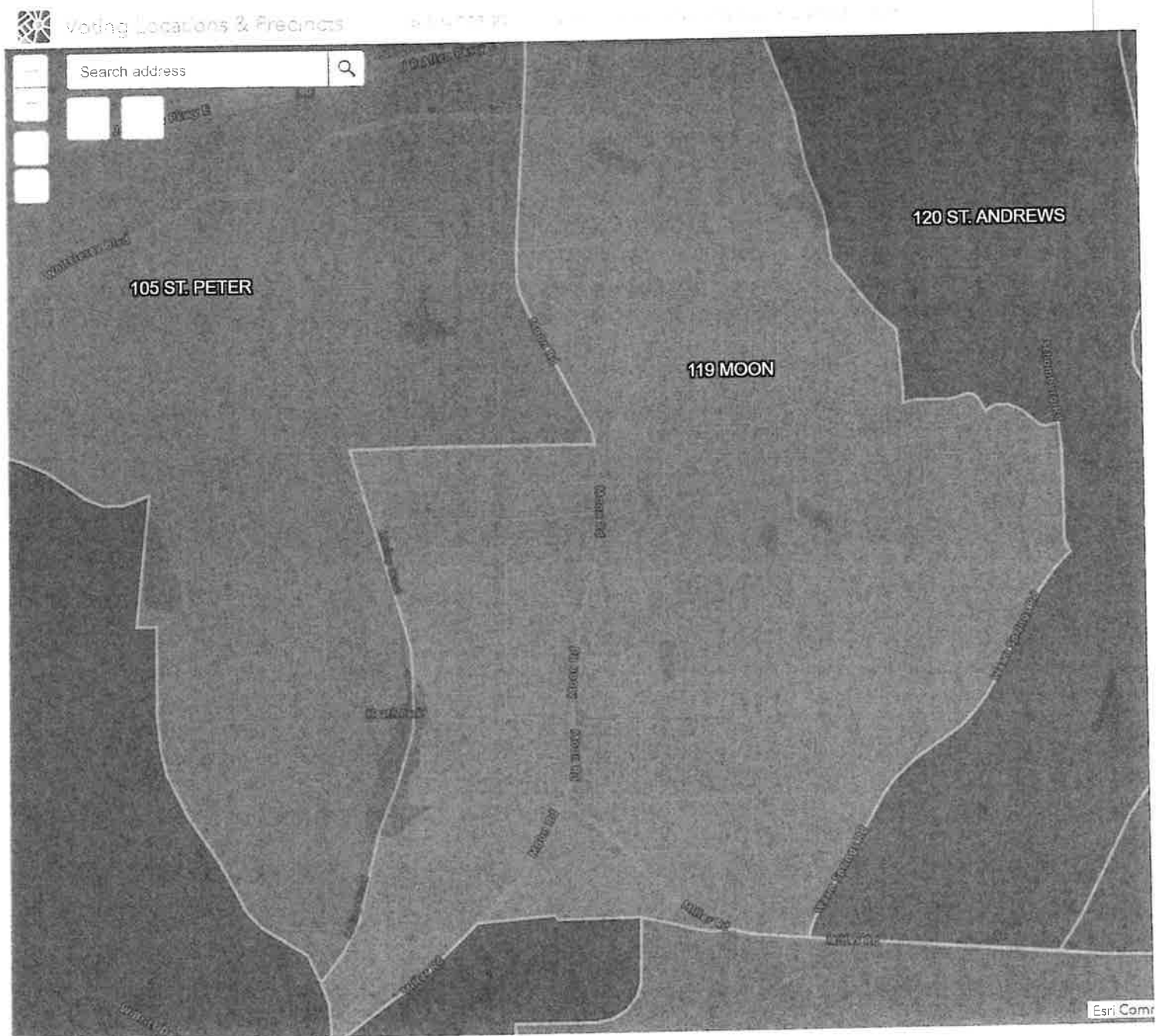
Patrick Davidge- Poll Watcher at precinct #121 Salvation - spoke about his experience and commended the precinct staff on an outstanding job. He stated that the staff and precinct manager, Gwendolyn Davis, go above and beyond for voters.

Correspondence: N/A

No further business Chair, Uhland Roberts, adjourned the meeting at 2:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Uhland Roberts
Chairperson



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2025 Election Calendar

*First day for absentee-by-mail applications for **June 17, 2025 special primary:**

03/31/2025

*First day for absentee-by-mail applications for **November 4, 2025 special election:**

08/18/2025

<u>Election</u>	<u>Voter Reg Deadline</u>	<u>Advance Voting</u>
Special Primary Public Service Commissioner (PSC) June 17, 2025	May 19, 2025	May 27 – June 13, 2025 No voting May 26 for Memorial Day Holiday
Run-off Election (If necessary) July 15, 2025	May 19, 2025	As soon as ballots are available.
General/ Special – Public Service Commissioner (PSC) November 4, 2025	October 6, 2025	October 14 – October 31, 2025
Run-off Election (If necessary) December 2, 2025	October 6, 2025	As soon as ballots are available.

*Last day to apply for absentee ballot-by-mail for **June 17, 2025 special primary:**

06/06/2025

*Last day for absentee-by-mail applications for **November 4, 2025 special election:**

10/24/2025

6 February 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR Muscogee County Board of Elections

SUBJECT: After-Action Report

1. As Co-Chairs of the Muscogee County Democratic Committee's Voter Protection subcommittee¹, we would like to offer the following comments and observations regarding the conduct of elections by the Columbus Georgia Elections and Registrations Office ("ERO"), as well as with regard to the administration of election-related activities conducted by the ERO.
2. Although our comments and observations are germane to prior election cycles generally, we are focusing primarily on the 2024 election cycle.
3. First, and most importantly, we want to commend everyone involved, from the Muscogee County Board of Elections to the Executive Director to the entire Office staff for their diligence, their energy, their devotion to the work and for always leaning into trying to ensure that every qualified and registered voter in Muscogee County is able to exercise their right to vote. We believe that the experience and professionalism of our Board and our Elections Office is unparalleled in the State of Georgia.
4. No system is perfect, and we want to offer the following observations as an opportunity for improvement:
 - a. Notices – It appears that the current system of notifying the public of meetings of the Board (and cancellations or postponements), as well as of agendas expected to be followed in those meetings, consists of posting to the ERO website and of posting physical notices on the entrance to the ERO office. Use of the website is hit-and-miss and generally erratic (for example, as of 2/5/2025, notice of cancellation of the January meeting is posted with notice of a meeting on 2/6, but no time is given for the meeting). We understand that changes to the website, even to post recurrent notices and agendas, may be difficult as the administration of the website rests in the City's general IT department. We would urge you to find a solution to this such that the general public has the ability to view these notices in a timely manner.
 - b. Precincts – Educating and informing the voting public with regard to the location of their assigned precincts is imperative. Although this issue has been ameliorated to some degree (Wynnton became INC as soon as Wynnton UMC ceased to be the precinct for that voting district), there are still precinct names that cause confusion. District 102 is still called "Carver" in spite of the precinct having been moved to the

¹ In the interest of full disclosure, the undersigned also act in the capacity of County Liaisons for the Democratic Party of Georgia's Voter Protection (DPG-VoPro) program, and as LEADS (Local Election Advocates and Defenders) for ACLU of Georgia. However, this memorandum does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of either of those organizations.

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Columbus Library². The precinct at Shirley B. Winston Recreation Center is still referred to as St. John's. We recommend that the name of each voting district always be the same as the name of the facility actually hosting the precinct.

c. Precinct Location Education – In the same vein, during the General Election in 2024, there were a substantial number of voters who still thought that Holsey Monumental was the correct location for District 116, enough so that DPG Vo-Pro asked us locally to post our own signage at Holsey to try to redirect those voters to the correct location. We are aware that the ERO placed such signage (infinitely better than the hand-drawn poster board signs we cobbled together) at Holsey during the General Primary; however, we believe there are a substantial number of voters who only vote in the General Election in November, and those voters would not have seen the ERO's signage in May. We recommend that when a precinct change is made, that the ERO post appropriate signage for an entire election cycle rather than just the Primary.

d. Voter Education - All of us, political organizations, voter interest groups and the ERO should participate in and offer voter education on the following topics, all of which we have seen cause voter confusion (and consternation) in real time:

1. Registering to vote, including eligibility, staying actively registered (not being subjected to list maintenance), and restoration of voting rights to persons whose rights have been terminated.

2. Absentee voting, including what happens and what a voter should expect if they desire to vote in person after having applied for an absentee ballot.

3. Location of assigned precincts and the difference between early voting sites and the proper location to vote on Election Day.

Although much of this information is available online, we all need to be cognizant of the fact that there are many voters who do not or cannot easily access such information.

e. Out-of-Precinct Voters (OPVs) – OPVs are a perennial problem, and in some respects, an OPV is the result of an uneducated voter. Of course, OPVs are not an issue by law until 5 PM and after on an election day. We know that the requirement that an OPV execute a provisional ballot is more work on election staff at a precinct, and as a result, we have seen election staff turn away OPVs, most often by simply not asking if

² This is indicated on the "Precinct List for Muscogee County" available as a handout at the ERO (see attached). However, at [Precincts](#), a webpage that is part of the ERO website but which is not accessible from the ERO website's main page (one must conduct a browser search for "precincts in Columbus Georgia" or similar to find the existence of [Precincts](#)), District 102 is correctly identified as "Columbus Public Library."

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the voter can get to the correct precinct and/or not alluding to provisional voting as an alternative, but, in some cases, by actually refusing requests for provisional ballots after 5 PM. Respectfully, we believe that this issue would be best ameliorated if election staff were to be required to advise an OPV (at and after 5 PM) as follows:

"This precinct is not your correct voting precinct. Your correct precinct is _____, located at _____. If you believe you have the ability to get to your correct precinct in order to be in line there before 7 PM, you should go there to vote. If you believe that you cannot get to your correct precinct in time and you want to vote, you may vote by provisional ballot here. This will require you to sign an affidavit, under oath, that you cannot get to your correct precinct in time to vote. How do you wish to proceed?"

We hope that the ERO and Board will take appropriate action in instances where any election staff refuses a proper request for a provisional ballot from any voter.

e. Early Voting Locations – From the standpoint of the number of days and hours offered for early voting, we continue to applaud the fact that the Muscogee County Board of Elections and the ERO offer the maximum amount of time allowed under Georgia law. As you know, we have, in the past, advocated for the creation of early voting sites in addition to the three sites that have been used, and we continue to advocate for the establishment of additional early voting sites, especially in the downtown (or uptown, if you prefer) area.

f. We continue to applaud the partnership between the ERO and the League of Women Voters in which the League is permitted to establish a presence at the Citizens Service Center on Election Day to redirect voters who come to the CSC believing that it is a voting location on an Election Day. By all accounts, these voters routinely number in the hundreds. This phenomenon, along with OPVs, demonstrates a need for additional voter education.

5. We finally want to express our appreciation for the cordial and cooperative relationship we have experienced with the Board and the ERO over the past few years, and we look forward to a continuation of that relationship.

FOR THE MCDC VOTER PROTECTION SUBCOMMITTEE:

PAM PARKER



RICK PARKER

