

Board of Elections and Registrations

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

Margaret S. Jenkins, Chair
Uhland "U. D." Roberts, Vice-Chair
Eleanor L. White
Diane Scrimshire
Linda Parker

Muscogee County Board of Elections and Registration December 5, 2019 Minutes

The monthly meeting for the Muscogee County Board of Elections and Registration was held Thursday, December 5th. Chairperson Margaret Jenkins called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. All members of the Board were present. November Board minutes were adopted.

Comments:

- Happy Birthday Ms. Eleanor White
- Voting Demo done on November 16th, Chair Margaret Jenkins attended in support of Elections Office.
- Pastor Flakes of 4th st Baptist Church to coordinate 10 churches for a combined demonstration of New voting equipment on January 4th at 12 noon.
- Barbara Romey asked for voting demo at Columbus State for January 28th (Columbus Academy for Lifelong Learning)

New Business:

- Linda Parker moved and Uhland Roberts second with an unanimous decision for issuing the call for Special E Splost March 24, 2020 election.
- Uhland Roberts motioned and Linda Parker second to approve VR report for November with 73 obituary deaths.

Old Business:

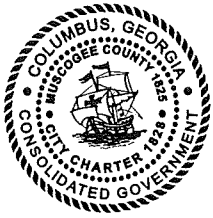
- GIS mis-match report completed.
- Precincts changed for 2020 (Fort to Canaan & Rothschild to Holsey) —
- State inspectors to inspect precincts for electrical configuration.
- State Election Board to write rules
- Grants will be available up to \$15,000 per county for implementation of new system.

Discussion:

- January 2nd Board meeting will be moved to January 16th at 2:00 p.m.

Correspondence:

- Fair Fight Email



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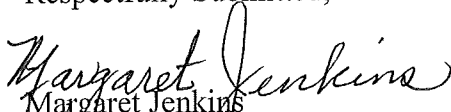
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Guests:

- Chaille Sullivan – League of Women Voters/ Indivisible Columbus Ga
- Barbara Romey – League of Women Voters
- Elizabeth Romey – League of Women Voters
- Rick Parker – DPG Liaison

No further business Chairperson, Margaret Jenkins, adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Margaret Jenkins
Chairperson

From: Info <Info@fairfightaction.com>

Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 10:47 AM

To: Nancy Boren <NBoren@columbusga.org>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Unfunded Mandate to Counties for New Voting System

FAIR  FIGHT
ACTION



Dear Muscogee County Elections Supervisor,

In an effort to push the state for transparency and answers regarding Georgia's new Dominion Voting System and allow counties to plan, Fair Fight Action, FreedomWorks and National Election Defense Coalition (NEDC) have partnered to create the first county-level cost analysis on the new elections system for local officials. These estimates are based on the limited publicly available information. Details of this analysis are available at GeorgiaVotingMachines.com.

Our analysis shows the total 10-year cost to Muscogee County is: \$1,148,719.28

A Breakdown of the \$1,148,719.28 Unfunded Mandate for Muscogee County Follows:

Machines: House Bill 316 requires Muscogee County to have [C: HB316 2020 Req] voting machines, or 1 per 250 electors or fraction thereof, in each precinct. The Secretary of State has announced that it will provide 473 machines to the county. Therefore, Muscogee County will need to purchase **78** additional machines in order to comply with HB316 in 2020. Over the course of the 10-year Dominion contract with the state, because of projected population growth not factored into the Secretary of State's initial allotment of machines to the counties, Muscogee County will need to purchase **78** additional machines in order to remain in compliance with HB316. At \$3500 per unit, **the total unfunded machine mandate for Muscogee County will be \$273,000.00 over 10 years.** If the county does not purchase these additional machines, it will be subject to lawsuits for failing to comply with HB316.

Licensing & Warranty: The Secretary of State will cover licensing/warranty costs for the first 2 years. **Over the next 8 years, Muscogee County will be required to spend \$641,989.00 to cover the licensing and warranty costs** for the machines allocated in Dominion's Request for Proposal, which included the license and warranty costs for ballot-marking devices, polling place scanners, electronic poll books, and central scanning devices. This cost will increase if more machines are added to comply with HB316.

Printing & Personnel: **Muscogee County will spend \$233,730.00 over 10 years to cover printing and personnel costs.** This estimate assumes 1 additional personnel will be needed in each precinct, \$0.13 cents for blank ballot stock, and \$0.40 for full-faced ballots.

The combined unfunded 10-year mandate for all Georgia counties is a staggering \$82 million. We know the Secretary of State has awarded \$107 million of the total allocated \$150 million in election bond funds to Dominion already. The Secretary of State has not said if it will use the remaining \$43 million to cover any of these county costs. Moreover, taxpayers will be paying off the 20-year bond for 10 years after these voting machines have expired, because the state took out a 20-year bond to pay for a 10-year contract on a voting system with a 10-year lifespan.

This analysis is not a final determination of costs but an estimation based on limited publicly available data; a full analysis of all costs is impossible given the sheer lack of information provided by the Secretary of State. Fair Fight Action, FreedomWorks and NEDC hope this analysis can serve as a catalyst for conversation and

transparency for taxpayers and the counties as the state embarks in this massive voting system transition-- a first step towards further clarification of costs to counties. Georgians and **Georgia counties deserve answers. Georgians deserves a secure election system that works for voters and does not bankrupt counties.**

We welcome any clarifications to these costs/calculations because the Secretary of State has failed to provide this information to counties. The full analysis can be found online here: GeorgiaVotingMachines.com

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND & ANSWERS ON COST ANALYSIS

Why Will Many Georgia Counties Need To Purchase Additional Machines?

- HB316 requires one machine for every 250 voters in each precinct. But the Secretary of State did not purchase enough machines for Georgia counties to comply with HB316 on a precinct level. Our analysis shows counties would need to purchase 2,098 machines by next year to comply.
- Moreover, although Georgia is one of the fastest growing states in the country, the Secretary of State did not account for any registration growth in the initial machine purchase. Expected population and registration increases will require counties to purchase 2,644 additional voting machines by 2029. If counties do not purchase additional machines, they will be subject to lawsuits for non-compliance with HB316.

Why Has The Secretary of State Not Disclosed These Potential Costs to Counties Yet?

- Despite being 51 days away from the Secretary of State's own ever-changing deadline to distribute 30,050 new voting machines across the state, almost no information has been provided to the counties detailing the full cost burden of this new system.
- Instead, many counties were asked to pore through 1000s of pages of Dominion Request for Proposal documents for answers. Unfortunately, not a single page of the Request for Proposal provides county level cost estimates.
- The failure of the Secretary of State to publish a detailed cost analysis suggests his office has not examined the cost burden of the contract the Secretary has entered into on behalf of the Georgia taxpayers.
- The all-ballot marking device voting system that the Secretary of State championed has been exceptionally controversial and has been criticized as excessively expensive compared with other options supported by the public.
- By pointing to the Request for Proposal, the Secretary of State could later claim he provided counties with all relevant information.

What Costs Are Not Included in This Analysis?

- These estimates do not include the cost of adding additional precincts due to the high electrical needs of new machines, early vote personnel costs, local election official training costs placed on counties, cost of backup machines for counties, the cost of ballot on demand printer licensing/warranty, the cost of additional equipment to ensure ballot secrecy, or the cost of toner and other consumables.

TOP 20 QUESTIONS FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

1. Will the additional \$43 million in bond funds be used to cover the unfunded county mandate of the new voting system? If not, what will the Secretary of State do with the unallocated \$43 million?
2. Will the ~\$5million in federal funding also be used to cover unfunded county mandate and additional county costs related to new machines?
3. Will the Secretary of State unilaterally reallocate machines prior to January 2020 elections to ensure that counties may be in compliance with HB316?
4. If not, what action will the Secretary of State take prior to January 2020 elections to ensure that counties may be in compliance with HB316? If so, how will the Secretary of State ensure that this reallocation is done in a fair, equitable and transparent manner?
5. Will Secretary of State buy additional machines to ensure counties are compliant with HB316 in 2020?
6. Can the Secretary of State explain why machine disbursement is now scheduled for "the end of January," when Dominion advised completion by December 31 "if not earlier" in order to avoid "undue pressure" on the counties? (GPB, [11/15/2019](#)) (Dominion Response Document 12-1)
7. Will counties be required to train all local election officials on their own budget?
8. If so, when should counties begin training local election officials on the new voting system?
9. Will the counties be required to pay all licensing and warranty costs from 2022 to 2029?
10. How exactly will the Secretary of State help counties solve the electrical load capacity issue of these new machines? When will counties receive more information?
11. Why are taxpayers asked to pay for machines for 20 years when the contract and lifespan of the equipment only last 10 years? (Secretary of State issued 20-year bonds with \$12 million in interest each year, yet contract is only through 2029)
12. Will the Secretary of State clarify that failure to pay "optional" warranty costs or use outside vendors for repair may lead to massive replacement costs in 6-7 years (given life cycle of machines)?
13. What exactly is and is not included in the warranty each year?
14. Will the Secretary of State allow counties to purchase additional equipment at reduced costs in 2020?
15. Will the Secretary of State allow counties to purchase additional equipment at reduced costs for the full term of the contract?

16. Will future ballot marking device tablet/screen purchases include printers?
17. What exactly is included in licensing costs each year?
18. Why are Dominion machine costs so much higher than they were a few years ago?
19. What is the expected life cycle of each piece of equipment purchased by the counties?
20. Will the counties be required to pay for the security of the much larger equipment year round?