

**OPERATIONS & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 22, 2019** **5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Linda Little, Chair  
Bryan Smith, Vice Chair  
John Jackson  
Patty Cox  
Bill Oliver

**COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT**

Carol Reed, Auditor  
Josh Tanner, County Clerk  
Rocki Wilkerson, Workforce  
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Rachel Joy  
Grant Noland

The meeting was called to order by Chair Linda Little at the Macon County Office Building.

**MINUTES**

Motion to approve minutes of prior meeting (12/17/18) made by Ms. Cox, seconded by Mr. Jackson and motion carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND CLAIMS**

Motion to approve payroll as presented made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Jackson and the motion carried 5-0.

Motion to approve the claims as presented was made by Ms. Cox, seconded by Mr. Jackson. Ms. Cox asked about a claim for the County Board regarding 2 late fees of \$25. Ms. Reed explained that they had used a credit card to order monitors. Mr. Tanner explained that they had purchased some IT equipment on a credit card because it was going to save some money, although considering the late fee issue, it didn't really seem to work out saving much in the end. This was done as opposed to going through a vender where they would send a bill. The County credit card was used to make 2 purchases in the same cycle, but because of the way the billing worked, the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment didn't make it on time and a late fee was charged. Ms. Little asked if they had considered disputing it. Ms. Reed said they could, but they were actually late with the payment. Mr. Tanner explained that the problem is with the way the billing works. Mr. Jackson asked if the approval process had slowed it down. Mr. Tanner said it is slower because of the way everything has to be approved and that is why, typically, they just request a bill and have a net 30 pay. With the credit card, the problem was with making two purchases at different points in the period and that is where we got caught in the cycle. In the end, about \$18 was saved instead of the \$60 or \$70 they were hoping for. The motion carried 5-0.

**REPORTS**

*Auditor's Office –*

Ms. Reed reported that she would be taking a resolution to the Finance Committee, but wanted to let this committee know about it and discuss it first. The mileage rate for federal went up from 54.5 cents per mile to 58 cents a mile. Normally, we follow the federal guidelines. The resolution will make that effective February 15<sup>th</sup> after the next board meeting.

Ms. Little commented that the price of gas has gone down and she would not vote in favor of it for that reason.

The committee agreed to send it on to the Finance Committee for further discussion.

***County Board – no report***

***County Clerk –***

***Macon County Board Resolution Approving Increase in Appropriations in the FY18 County Clerk Elections Budget***

Mr. Tanner explained that when they budget for the election, it is basically the bare minimum. Some of the things that ran it over include overtime that was spent on mail in ballots. They received over 3,000 requests for mail in ballots this year which is considerably higher than typically received. He said he thought this would just be the beginning of those mail in ballot requests. That is going to be a strategy that both parties will continue, and it will probably get worse. He said he had attended a legislative meeting and learned of some legislation being considered to create a permanent mailing list that people could sign up for and automatically be sent a ballot every election. That means they would sign up intending to never go to the polls and never vote early. They will always want the ballot mailed to them. The cost includes 4 envelopes that have to be mailed out. One is the envelope that is used to mail it out in, one is the envelope to mail it back in, one is the envelope that the ballot goes in and the last one is a secrecy envelope plus the ballot. The permanent mailing list might save some headache because it would be known ahead of time how many would need to be mailed out. The problem this year was that they had not expected to get 3,000 requests for the mail in ballot. When you get 100's every day toward the end of the election and have only so many days to turn around and mail them back out, you just have to pay the overtime. If there was a permanent list, it would be known ahead of time and it might be possible to get a vender do it for a little less money.

The other part was cyber security. This year the County Clerk's Office took some state recommendations and paid for them. There was some reimbursement for some of them, but not for others. That is something for future discussion. There is an e-poll book that is being used in the polling places, where when you come in, your name is typed into the computer, a label is printed, you sign a form and then vote. In the past, there was a pre-printed form and that is something Mr. Tanner said he was considering going back to for two reasons. One, the cost of cyber security. The cost of securing the e-poll books requires additional staff and software to make sure that those things are secure. The other thing is paper can't be hacked. If it is printed and there, and power or communications are lost or if someone gets into the e-poll books, paper is

much better. The contract with the vender comes up after the April election. This would be a man-power cost savings for sure, because about \$13,000 is paid each election to have the vender come out and set the poll books up and make sure they are not broadcasting wirelessly and they are hooked up correctly. The problem is that when you depend on the e-poll book, if someone comes in to vote and the e-poll book is not working, they have to either call the office or go through a paper list. If the pre-printed poll book is used, they come in, are looked up, torn off and away they go to vote. So, the e-poll books were originally created prior to the cyber security concerns to make same day registration / same day voting easier. They do that, but expose a lot of risk which is expensive to mitigate. That is something that will be looked at in an effort to reduce the overages that occur every election. This year, we only have one election, so more money should not be needed, but every year there are two elections and more specifically, the 2020 presidential election will have a lot of mail in ballots, probably way more than 3,000 and if we continue on with the e-poll books, we will still have to spend the money to secure those. That was about \$13,000 each election. Overtime was mainly spent on the mail in ballots. Early voting is great for the candidates and the election process, but it is expensive for the County Clerk's office. Additional hours were mandated which equates into overtime or extra help. He said he was going to try to take advantage to more part time people because the cost is less. Overtime costs a lot more than \$10 an hour which is what part timers are paid.

This resolution is for actual costs incurred in the November, 2018 election.

Ms. Cox made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Jackson.

Chair Little asked about how many of the 3,000 mail in ballots that were sent out had come back. Mr. Tanner said it was somewhere over 2,000, so a third of them did not come back. Part of the issue is the confusion created on Election Day. The parties know that those ballots were mailed, so they call them every day until it is turned in. Even on Election Day, they call and tell them to bring the ballot into the polling place and surrender it or put it in the mail. When people found out it was going to cost them \$1.21 to mail it back, walked it into the office. When they come in on Election Day, they have to surrender that ballot and get a new ballot which creates issues. There is nothing that can be done to stop the mail in process, but there is concern about it. Everyone who requests one is verified as a registered voter and it is being mailed to their registered address, but there is no way to guarantee who is filling it out. It is expensive, as is early voting, etc. but it is going to continue. Ms. Little commented that she was happy to see that it was over 50% return. Mr. Tanner added that it was hard to determine how many of the people that did not mail it back in didn't come in to the polling place and surrender it, but it was not another 1,000. There were hundreds though, because it did cause Election Judges concern. They are used to seeing one or two of those, not hundreds coming back

The motion carried 5-0.

***Recorder –***

Ms. Eaton was not able to attend the meeting. Her monthly reports were distributed to committee members and they were instructed to contact Ms. Eaton with any questions.

***Workforce Investments –***

Ms. Wilkerson reported good news. Macon & DeWitt did receive a waiver. About a year ago, Macon & DeWitt were being considered for separation, but she said they had gone to the state and fought it saying that they have been together for 36 years and wanted to continue the partnership and last week, a letter from the Governor's Office was received and there is now a waiver that is good through the end of 2020. She said they have a lot of good employers that were supportive of the process and really stepped up to the plate to help the two counties stay together.

More good news, a fast track workshop was held last week. Several employers wanted to hire people and get them to work ASAP. Normally, there is an orientation process where eligibility of people who want to go to school is determined. This assessed current skills and determined how quickly they could be hooked up with an employer. 38 individuals showed up and 13 of them had a follow up. This is not great, but is a start and fast tracks will continue weekly.

**Citizen's Remarks - none**

**Old Business - none**

**New Business – none**

**CLOSED SESSION None needed**

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, February 25, 2019

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Little adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

*Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, County Board Office*