



Fall 2010

Registrations and Election Elections Corner

“News for & about the Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections”

A Letter from the Director

Greetings from Barry Garner:

As we look back on 2010, we had four successful county-wide elections. In July, we had the General Primary/ Special Election and on August 10th, the runoff. On November 2nd, we had the General/Non-partisan election and on November 30, the runoff. Each election has shown improvements. The November 2, 2010 election received some positive press coverage as a result of an improvement and factual statement I made regarding our Registration and Elections team. **“The Fulton County vote will be finished by 11:30 pm on election night.”** Our Election department’s servers received 329 of the county’s 333 precincts’ results by 11:30 p.m. That’s 98.7% of the results! The statement I made to an **Atlanta Journal & Constitution (AJC)** reporter was spotlighted on www.politifact.com as well as their Sunday edition newspaper. My focus was not for press coverage of this magnitude but instead a vote of confidence for all of our elections teams working together to create successful outcomes. I am fully aware that there has never been, nor ever will be, a perfect election. However, with each election that we prepare, our teams are working together to come as close to perfection as humanly possible.



As we look forward to 2011, we will review the lessons learned in 2010. We will take an earnest look at what we did right and wrong. The things we did right, we will find ways to improve and enhance; the things we did wrong, we will correct. A main focus for our department will be TRAINING. We will look at every aspect of our department to make sure that everyone has the skills moving forward for us to run successful elections, in particular, efficiently operating precincts. We expect everyone to be able to answer frequently asked questions from the public. As we prepare for the February 4, 2012 Presidential Preference Primary, scheduled to begin with early voting in December 2011, this will be critical!

Before I close, I must convey my appreciation to FGTV for broadcasting live Election night coverage, particularly focusing on counties and local races.

My staff, including temporary staff, possess tremendous talents and capabilities. I want to give special thanks to all of you who worked hard to make our 2010 elections a winning season. I wish each of you a happy and healthy holiday season!

MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure that the registration and elections process is efficiently and effectively provided to eligible citizens of Fulton County according to applicable laws and rules.

Inside This Issue...

- Letter from the Director
- Congratulations
- Employee Spotlight
- Truth “O” Meter
- Compare the Numbers
- Online Poll Worker Training
- Provisional Voting
- Did You Know...?
- Helpful Websites
- Contact Information



Subscriber Info:

Interested in local election news?
Receive the Elections Corner
News Letter by
submitting your
Email address to:

ElectionCorner@fultoncountyga.gov

CONGRATULATIONS!



Marcia Ridley is the recipient of a Fulton County Employee Association’s Education Scholarship. In October, Marcia submitted an essay about her goals and aspirations. Currently, she is majoring in Business Administration at Shorter University. Marcia maintains a 3.8 GPA in addition to working full-time in Registration and Elections. Way to go!

Keep up the exceptional work Marcia!

If you would like to unsubscribe to this news letter, please click on the above email address and type **“unsubscribe”** in the subject line.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!



April Pye is a 1978 graduate of Georgia State University where she obtained a Bachelors of Science Degree in Psychology and also pursued further graduate level studies in Organizational Psychology and Law. Ms. Pye is a certified Paralegal who began her work in County Government with the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in the Office of the Honorable Gordon Joyner, followed by the Honorable Karen Elaine Webster where she became the Chief of Staff. After working in the Commission District 2 Office for five years, Ms. Pye came to the Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections in 2003 where she is currently the Chief of the Administration Division. In 2008, as Interim Director, Ms. Pye led the Department through the largest and most historic Election in Fulton County history. She is beloved by her staff and the entire Department where she is a significant member of the Voter Registration and Elections team. She has been a member of the Georgia Elections Officials Association, Voter Registration Association of Georgia, the GEOA Legislative Committee, IACREOT and the League of Women Voters. Ms. Pye volunteers with numerous organizations and is currently a proud member of Word of Reconciliation Church in Decatur, Georgia.

The Truth "0" Meter is "TRUE"!

Barry Garner has been at the helm of the Voter Registration and Elections Department in Fulton County for a little over one year and is credited with making more significant strides and positive changes within the Department than anyone in decades.



In a November 2nd article, appearing in the AJC, Mr. Garner received recognition for making one of the boldest statements statewide during the 2010 Election Cycle. One of the many "bold statements" made by Mr. Garner in recent months came prior to the tabulation of votes on Election Day.

Historically, Fulton County is always the last County in the State of Georgia to submit final unofficial results on Election Night. Some would argue this has been because Fulton is the largest County with the most registered voters and most polling precincts, which naturally requires more time to tabulate. Fulton County Elections became a media spectacle during the 2008 Presidential Election when it was accused of taking too long to tabulate Absentee Ballots.

What is becoming more increasingly evident since Mr. Garner's arrival is his ability to back up these statements! Part of what comes with growth and improvement is the ability to publically challenge yourself and your team to strive for excellence. Mr. Garner's goal was to post the final results of the November General Election by 11:00pm on Election night, which has never been done before.

In the end, Fulton County only missed its goal by minutes showing marked improvement from previous Elections. Historically, Fulton County usually posts results well after midnight. It is a new day in the Department of Registration and Elections. As the Department moves forward, it has become the shared goal of every member of the team to become the best Elections operation in the State of Georgia. We are well on our way.

Compare the Numbers!

Below is a snap shot of voter turnout against the total number of registered voters in Fulton County during General Non-partisan Elections:

YEAR	NUMBER OF VOTERS	TURNOUT
19-Oct-1998	429,838	21%
11-Oct-2002	384,422	53.5%
23-Oct-2006	451,961	46.52%
10-Oct-2010	520,715	50.32%

Online Poll Worker Training Module

The first step to achieving this result is the implementation of an Online Poll Worker Training module. This much anticipated training component will make life easier for poll workers and elections administrators on many levels.

"I love the element of flexibility online training provides," said Dwight Brower, Elections Chief. "Poll Workers can do the training in the leisure of their homes and we can monitor the progress throughout the process."

Administratively, the training component is a valuable resource. "We can get instant trends," advised Brower. "For example, if there is a particular question that a person is constantly missing, we can determine if this is a systematic problem. Also, we can do e-mail blasts to all poll workers, when necessary."

Primarily, the training module will be flexible and convenient for the Poll Workers because of the 24/7 availability. The module will allow each individual to select a day and time for training that is convenient to their schedule and needs. Also, the module will let the user stop and start at any time he/she desires

From an elections administrative perspective, the module provides training, administers the exam, and prints a certificate of completion. The training of Poll Workers will be easier to manage as well as more efficient. Overall, the component will save time and money.

Once the online training component is completely implemented, face-to-face training will still be required. However, the mandatory time frame is going to be shorter and more hands-on. The usage of the actual precinct equipment will continue to be implemented.

A number of Poll Workers have been asking for online training for some time now. This will allow an opportunity for them to take control of their own training. In addition, potentially, they will have a greater retention of the information, since they can go back, revisit, and review the online information anytime. Every consideration will be made to the Poll Workers who do not have computer access for the online training. Computers will be available at our North and South government annexes.

Provisional Voting



The right for all voters to cast a ballot in a particular Election is taken very seriously and extended to all who enter a polling precinct or Early or Advance Voting site, who would like to exercise their right to vote. One of the most important voting initiatives that have been put in place to preserve that right at all cost is Provisional Voting. Provisional Ballots exist in the State of Georgia as an option for voters who believe they are currently registered to vote and are not aware of any reason he or she may have been removed from the database of Voters or they do not have one of the acceptable forms of identification when they arrive at the polls and are willing to provide the County with an acceptable form of ID. We strive to ensure that every eligible registered voter is given the opportunity to exercise their voting right.

The need to vote a Provisional ballot can occur due to a variety of reasons. These include voters not having the required form of identification, voters not appearing in the voter registration database, voters attempting to vote out of precinct, inaccurate information and system failure. In this particular instance, if a voter does not appear in the database, or they do not have a Government issued Photo ID, they will be permitted to vote a Provisional Ballot, which in Georgia, comes in the form of a paper ballot.

Most important for Voters to be knowledgeable of is that under no circumstances can they be turned away from the Polls, however, they must be an eligible registered voter with proper ID, and in the correct precinct, in order for their Provisional Ballot to be tabulated. If the individual is in fact NOT a registered voter in Fulton County, the vote will not be tabulated. If the individual is in fact a registered voter in Fulton County, but voted in the wrong precinct, a duplicate ballot will be marked only for the seats eligible for the correct precinct. Regardless of the reason for issuance of a provisional ballot, verification must take place within 72 hours, in order for the provisional ballot to be tabulated. Once the ballot is researched and verified, that voter's ballot will be counted. Again, in Fulton County, if verification has to be provided by the voter, the voter has until the close of business on the Friday after the Election to provide the necessary documentation. One of the reasons that the final official results of the tabulation of votes is not certified until several days after the actual Election is to allow voters the opportunity to resolve the challenge so that their vote will be counted.

Did You Know That...?

In 1836 the Georgia General Assembly voted to build the Western and Atlantic Railroad to provide a trade route to the Midwest. It was to run from Chattanooga to a spot called "Terminus," located somewhere east of the Chattahoochee River. This route would be linked to the Georgia Railroad from Augusta and the Macon & Western, which ran from Macon to Savannah.

Colonel Stephen Harriman Long, an experienced army engineer, was chosen to recommend the location of the terminus. After surveying various routes, Colonel Long drove a stake near Five Points in modern Atlanta. Although the "zero milepost" marker has often been moved, its current location in Underground Atlanta is very close to Long's original choice.

Around 1842, the residents asked that Terminus be renamed "Lumpkin," after Wilson Lumpkin, the Governor of Georgia. He asked them to name it after his daughter, Martha instead, and Terminus became Marthasville. Three years later, the Chief Engineer of the Georgia Railroad, J. Edgar Thomson suggested that it be renamed to "Atlantica-Pacifica," which was quickly shortened to "Atlanta." The residents approved and the town was eventually incorporated as "Atlanta" in 1847.



Secretary of State
www.sos.state.ga.us

Fulton County
www.fultoncountyga.gov/county/elections
www.myfultoncountyga.com

State of Georgia
www.georgia.gov

Federal Voting Assistance
www.fvap.gov

Federal Election Assistance
Commission
www.eac.gov

Federal Election Commission
www.fec.gov



CONTACT INFORMATION

Government Center Tower (main)

Registration 404-730-7072
Elections 404-612-7020

South Fulton Service Center
404-612-3050

North Fulton Service Center
404-613-7675

Barry Garner
Director

April Pye
Administrative Chief

Dwight Brower
Elections Chief

Brenda Williams
Registration Chief