

**BUTTS COUNTY  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION**

625 WEST THIRD STREET, SUITE 5  
JACKSON, GA 30233  
Tel: 770.775-8202  
FAX: 770.775.2765

February 27, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Austin R. Evers  
Executive Director  
American Oversight  
1030 15th Street NW, Suite B255  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Evers:

I am in receipt of your open records request made pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. Sec. 50-18-70 et seq. in which you asked for all documents pertaining to:

*"1. All official or unofficial notices of changes to polling place locations, including closures, relocations, consolidations, or centralizations (including email communications announcing a polling location change) sent to or prepared for any Butts County voters.*

*2. All official or unofficial notices of changes to polling place locations, including closures, relocations, consolidations, or centralizations, posted publicly within Butts County.*

*Please provide all responsive records from June 25, 2013 through December 31, 2017".*

Attached please find records responsive to your request. This response is made in accordance with the Georgia Open Records Act. If you should have any additional inquiries, please feel free to contact me at 770-775-8202 or email [tlunsford@buttscounty.org](mailto:tlunsford@buttscounty.org). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tina Lunsford, Director  
Butts County Board of Elections &

Registration

## **RESOLUTION OF THE MUNICIPAL-COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION OF BUTTS COUNTY TO CONSOLIDATE VOTING PRECINCTS**

WHEREAS, the Municipal-County Board of Elections and Registration of Butts County was created by an Act of the Georgia General Assembly, House Bill 841 (Ga. L. 2009), and became authorized to carry out its duties on July 1, 2009; and

WHEREAS, under Section 8 of House Bill 841 the Municipal-County Board of Elections of Butts County is authorized to take such action as is appropriate for the management of the affairs committed to its supervision, and under Section 9 of House Bill 841 said Board is authorized to fix and establish, by appropriate resolution entered on its minutes, directives governing the execution of matters within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, under Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. §21-2-262 (a), the Municipal-County Board of Elections of Butts County is authorized to consolidate the precincts where voting shall take place within its geographical jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, with respect to county-wide elections, the Municipal-County Board of Elections of Butts County has determined that it would be more cost effective and efficient to have one voting precinct, located in Jackson, Georgia at the Butts County Administration Building, where all voting on election days shall take place; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal-County Board of Elections of Butts County, upon recommendation of the Election Supervisor, voted at its meeting held on July 11, 2017 to proceed with the consolidation of its five (5) existing voting precincts into one (1) precinct.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby RESOLVED by the Municipal-County Board of Elections of Butts County as follows:

- The five (5) existing voting precincts located within Butts County for county-wide elections shall be consolidated into one (1) precinct, to be located at the Butts County Administration Building, 625 W. Third Street, Jackson, Georgia.
- The Election Supervisor and her staff are authorized and directed to carry out the terms of this Resolution.
- The Election Supervisor is authorized to determine the number of poll workers that will be needed to staff the consolidated precinct and to utilize the services of no more poll workers than necessary to carry out the Board's duties and responsibilities; the Election Supervisor shall have the authority to select the poll workers that will be retained for these purposes.
- The Election Supervisor shall apprise the Board of her work in carrying out the terms of this Resolution at each meeting of said Board until this Resolution has been fully

Butts County Board of Elections and Registration  
Called Board Meeting  
August 8, 2017

The Butts County Board of Election and Registration called meeting was called to order by Chairman Lance Newsome for the consideration of combining the precincts. Those attending were Elections Director, Avery Smith, Chairman, Lance Newsome, Secretary, Letha Kinard, Judy Kelly, newly appointed election member, Lesley Medlock and the staff of the election office consisting of Gwen Cook, Annette Parris, Anita Nelson, Merrell Price, and Sharon Duffey.

The meeting was turned over to Avery Smith. She distributed the estimated cost of merging the precincts for special elections and general elections. She also explained the cost of taking out and bringing in the machines and the additional expense of the additional poll workers and office staff. Mrs. Smith stated that there is three weeks of early voting and also absentee ballots. There are approximately 15,400 registered voters.

The called meeting was adjourned to have the monthly business meeting for the month of August.

[https://www.jacksonprogress-argus.com/news/local/election-board-consolidates-voting-precincts/article\\_51cb0743-5704-58e1-a798-3a477f4b590e.html](https://www.jacksonprogress-argus.com/news/local/election-board-consolidates-voting-precincts/article_51cb0743-5704-58e1-a798-3a477f4b590e.html)

FEATURED

## Election board consolidates voting precincts

By Michael Davis

mdavis@myjpa.com

Jul 18, 2017



The next time Butts County voters head to the polls, unless they're voting in a city election, they'll all be heading to the same place — the Butts County Administration Building.

The Butts County Board of Elections and Registration has voted to consolidate all of the county's voting precincts into one, establishing a central polling place at the government complex, Butts County Elections Director Avery Smith told the Board of Commissioners last week.

Smith presented the plan to county commissioners July 10, asking commissioners for the OK to use the Wayne King Auditorium for Election Day voting. Commissioners did not formally vote on the request, though they expressed no objections and have generally left scheduling the use of the facility to county staff members.

The elections board took the action to consolidate the precincts June 13. Smith said municipal elections will not be affected by the change, and city voters will continue to report on Election Day to their respective city halls to cast ballots.

She said she hopes this November's election will be the first conducted at the consolidated precinct. A countywide special purpose local option sales tax is expected to be on the ballot.

Smith told commissioners the move to consolidate the five voting precincts into one will save money and time. During local, state and federal elections, officials staff precincts at the Worthville Baptist Church fellowship hall, the Towaliga Baptist Church fellowship hall, the Macedonia Baptist Church fellowship hall, the Butts County Community Center and Jenkinsburg City Hall.

Fewer precincts will mean fewer poll workers and voting machines will be needed, Smith said, adding that when the current machines have to be replaced, election officials will have to purchase fewer. She said election officials also won't have to replace voting machines that have already malfunctioned, because not as many will be needed.

"I know you have concerns about your constituents who live out in the county having to come to town on Election Day if they don't want to early vote or vote absentee," Smith told commissioners. "But I can tell you, for 40 years I have heard complaints from people who live in town who have to drive to Worthville."

Worthville Baptist Church is more than 9 miles from the Administration Building.

Smith told commissioners she expects that during the largest elections — when local, state and federal candidates are on the ballot — her department could trim its personnel total by 40 percent or more by staffing only one polling location.

"In big elections, we have to pay usually about six poll workers per precinct, plus we have to pay for the buildings," she said.

Smith noted that in recent elections, more voters cast advance ballots in person in the elections office at the Administration Building than did at precincts open on Election Day. The March vote on the school system's special purpose local option sales tax, for example, attracted 252 people to polling places open across the county on Election Day, while 623 votes were cast either in person during early voting or by mailed-in absentee ballot.

During the November general election, 2,682 ballots were cast in person on Election Day across the county while 8,675 voted early in the elections office or by absentee ballot, Smith said.

"It's tremendous," Smith said. "Every election we have, more and more people are coming to early vote. They like it better. It's more convenient for them."

One commissioner, however, expressed concerns about the consolidation of the precincts.

"The people, especially the elderly people, that have always been going to their polling places like Worthville and Jenkinsburg ... they go to their polling place before they go to work," District 5 Commissioner Russ Crumbley said. "At Jenkinsburg and Worthville, on Election Day, it's always been there. Some of them think this early voting stuff — that their vote don't count. And that's my concern. You have a lot of people that vote on Election Day and I'm a little bit worried you may be suppressing the vote a little bit."

He also worries that during presidential election years, long lines may become an issue at the Administration Building.

Smith said election officials will work to keep lines down by having multiple check-in stations for voters.

District 2 Commissioner Robert L. Henderson Sr. said voters in his district mostly vote at the Community Center in Jackson as it is. He predicted they wouldn't complain about coming to the Administration Building, less than 2 miles west.

**Change from 10 polling places to 5 polling places**

Stark

Macedonia Baptist Church

Mt Vernon Flovilla CHouse Sr. Center  
Butts Co Comm. Center

Towaliga Library  
Library

Shiloh Jenkinsburg  
Jenkinsburg

Worthville  
Worthville Baptist Church

Item 2017-07-116: Presentation by the Board of Elections.

Elections Director Avery Smith gave a presentation to the Board, notifying them that the Board of Elections has voted to consolidate all voting precincts into one polling station at the County Administration building. This was designed to save money and reduce the workforce required to have elections. Ms. Smith indicated that this move could potentially reduce personnel needed by 40%. This decision is under the purview of the Board of Elections but they do request permission from the County to use the Administration Building for this purpose. No other action would be required by the Board.