



MINUTES
STATE ELECTION BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, November 12, 2025
9:00 a.m.

Coverdell Legislative Office Building (CLOB), Room 307 Atlanta, Georgia
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiiDksnKykQ>

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Mr. John Fervier, as Chairman, called the State Election Board ("Board") meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present for each Board action taken. The following Board Members were present: Mr. John Fervier, Dr. Janice Johnston, as Vice Chair, Mrs. Janelle King, Mr. Rick Jeffares, and Mrs. Sara Tindall Ghazal.

Vice Chair Dr. Johnston gave the invocation.
Member Rick Jeffares led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

State Election Board Meeting: October 22, 2025, Business & Executive Session Meeting
October 24, 2025, special Meeting was canceled.

Motion: Member King moved to approve the October 22, 2025, minutes with one spelling correction from commend to comment.

Second: Member Rick Jeffares

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

Discussion: Member Ghazal raised a concern that a statement recorded in the minutes reflects what was said but not factual reality regarding a letter sent personally. Paragraph F discussed: Minutes reflect discussion as sent on behalf of the board, but actual letter was sent personally.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Vice Chair, Dr. Johnston asked to make the following additions to the agenda.

New Business: Discussion on the dismissal process of case SEB2023-025.

Old Business: Pre-meeting and presentation of cases for the December meeting.

New Business: Media and public relations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board moved to enter an executive session at 9:22 a.m. and put the Regular meeting in recess.

Motion: Member King moved to enter into an executive session.

Second: Vice Chair, Dr. Johnston

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

The Board returned from executive session at 9:39 a.m.

Following the executive session, Chairman Fervier motioned to authorize a settlement agreement between American Oversight, the Georgia State Election Board, and Dr. Janice Johnston.

Motion: Chairman Fervier moved to authorize a settlement agreement between American Oversight, the Georgia State Election Board and Dr. Janice Johnston.

Second: Chairman Fervier stated no second is needed when the Chair makes the motion.

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

Vice Chair, Dr. Johnston, stated that a second Executive Session to discuss personnel matters needs to be added to the agenda. Chairman Fervier added it to the agenda to be held while the Board breaks for lunch.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments were made by the following individuals: Marissa Pyle, Andres Porra, Rachel Glover, and Karen Davenport

The Board went into recess for a ten-minute break at 10:24

Motion: Member Jeffaries moved to recess for a ten-minute break.

Second: Member King

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

The Board returned from recess and resumed the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation from Ken Wright and Mark Swanson

Case Dismissals and Investigative Process (Cases SEB2024-123)

Brief description of issue: Complainants argued that procedural failures and incomplete investigations by the Secretary of State's office led to the improper dismissal of their cases.

Complainant's Arguments (Ken Wright)

Case 2024-123: Alleged that Wendy Davis, a public office holder, was ineligible to serve as a poll officer (deputy registrar) in Floyd County. They argued the investigation was flawed because it incorrectly stated compensation was required for the role, failed to note evidence provided (Ms. Davis's oath), and did not interview the correct election officials. They also noted a time discrepancy: Ms. Davis allegedly handled ballots on December 10, 2020, four days before early voting began.

Case 2020-222: Alleged Ms. Davis engaged in electioneering by distributing "Voter Protection Hotline" cards for the Democratic Party. The investigation allegedly failed to include key evidence (the card, notes, screenshots), contact key witnesses, and notify the complainant of the case's disposition.

The complainants missed the original hearing where the case was dismissed due to a scheduling miscommunication.

Respondent's Arguments (Wendy Davis):

She stated all her actions were legal and at the request of the local elections office. She was not "deputized as a registrar."

Providing a phone number to voters being turned away is not electioneering; it was to help people vote according to the rules.

Ms. Davis stated she was not properly notified about the hearing date.

Chairman Fervier explained he allowed the complainants to speak because a miscommunication caused them to miss the prior meeting, but clarified his intention was not to reopen the case.

The Chair requested the complainants submit their recommendations for improving the investigation process in writing.

The board took no new action but agreed to review written recommendations from the complainants.

OLD BUSINESS

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Presenter: Clay Parikh Cyber Security and Future of Georgia's Voting Systems (SB 189)

Clay Parikh, a cybersecurity expert, presented concerns regarding Georgia's Dominion voting system (DVS 5.5 Alpha) and its certification, particularly in light of SB 189 which mandates removing QR codes from ballots by July 2026. He highlighted that DVS 5.5 Alpha was a version modified for Pennsylvania, and its base version (DVS 5.5) was tested by two different labs, which is a significant concern in system testing. Parikh noted that the test plan allowed only one day for source code review, and security findings were addressed by updating documentation rather than resolving underlying issues. He also pointed out that Georgia law requires federal certification and inspection by three state-appointed examiners, yet an Alabama-based lab (Pro V&B) was used, and their certification report incorrectly identified the system version. Parikh raised six questions for Georgians, including the specific Dominion voting system versions used, whether the Secretary of State certified the system, and the number of vulnerabilities in DBS 5.5 Alpha. He emphasized that the system lacks a Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) as the printer component is not included in D Suite 5.5 Alpha, suggesting a lack of auditability. He also criticized the limited source code review, the small number of modified lines of code (376 out of hundreds of thousands) for major changes, and the reliance on a publicly available port for modifications. Parikh stated that official state records of machine examinations are not publicly available. He identified 190 conservative vulnerabilities in just four applications of the system, noting that the SMS system is only an express patch and requires manual installation. Parikh asserted that no currently available voting system is secure, but mitigations can be put in place. He recommended hand-marked paper ballots as more secure than QR code machine-marked ballots, explaining that QR codes are barcodes and their use violates HAVA because voters cannot verify them. He also stated that machine-marked ballots can be duplicated and are untraceable, making forensic audits impossible. Parikh suggested that hand-marked paper ballots with optical scans, followed by hand audits, would be a better practice, as auditing should not be done by the same method (machine counting). He recommended removing the SB 189 portion regarding machine-marked ballots and addressing it in SB 214, which focuses on hand-marked

paper ballots. He concluded by questioning why the system could not handle more paper ballots and suggested that

moving from 30,000 Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs) to 3,000 would be an optimistic goal for the legislature.

The Board broke for a five-minute recess at 11:41 a.m.

Motion: Member King moved to recess for a five-minute break.

Second: Member Jeffaries

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

The Board returned to resume the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Presenter: Phil Davis – Ballot Assure

Phil Davis made a presentation about hand-marked paper ballots, QR Ballots, how they're formatted, how they work, and how they don't work.

Philip Davis, a citizen who has studied Georgia ballots for five years, presented findings on vulnerabilities in the state's voting system, including 3,930 double-scanned ballots in Fulton County. He explained that QR codes on ballots contain ID numbers, not names, making them not human-readable and easily duplicated due to their non-unique nature. Davis demonstrated that the ICX device is hackable, with unprotected passwords and hashes, allowing system data modification, such as swapping candidate names while the QR code retains the original answer.

He highlighted a flaw in the "disabled" candidate feature, which caused miscounts in the *Spears v. Orson* case, leading to votes trickling up and Michelle Spears receiving zero votes in her district. A newly discovered issue revealed that hand-marked ballots with a disabled candidate stopped tabulating, ignoring the entire back of the ballot and resulting in 22 lost races. Davis strongly recommended removing QR codes from ballots, advocating for tabulation based solely on human-readable text. He noted that current QR-coded ballots are difficult for OCR to read due to poor print quality and formatting.

Davis also reported that 94,000 QR-coded ballots were rescanned pre- and post-election in Fulton County, with new images showing date-time stamps, indicating alterations. In 2020, duplicate tabulator IDs caused election day delays and necessitated rescanning in-person QR-coded ballots on ICC machines. He suggested scanning ballots twice and comparing them to detect manipulation or double counting and warned that tabulators can be hacked in minutes using technician cards and SQL commands.

Presenter: Garland Favorito: Emergency EAC complaint to vacate the Dominion 5.5-A Certification.

Garland Favorito, co-founder of Voter GA, with 40 years in IT and 25 years in election integrity advocacy, presented an EAC emergency petition to vacate Dominion certification. He argued that the Dominion system fails to meet 2005 EAC security standards, specifically lacking proper encryption, key protection, and adequate password security, with its certification based on outdated 1985/1994 FIPS standards. Key vulnerabilities include encryption keys stored in clear plain text, allowing easy decryption and modification of results, and hard-coded, publicly known admin passwords that are encrypted rather than hashed.

Forensic reports indicate the election management server database is configured for remote access, despite claims to the contrary, and uses an uncertified SQL Server Management Studio to bypass Dominion software. Dominion systems share a common X.509 certificate value, acting like a universal password, which enables communication

between servers and allows remote access, as evidenced by Serbian programmers accessing Georgia servers in 2020.

A forensic study on a 2020 Georgia county election server revealed over 3,000 program files were secretly modified post-installation and contained an uncertified compiler capable of creating undetected malware.

Favorito showed a three-minute demo by Clay Parikh, illustrating how six lines of code could change presidential election results on an authenticated Georgia server, undetected. He urged the State Election Board to inform counties about these vulnerabilities and issue an opinion on the system's safety for the 2026 election. Favorito recommended hand-marked paper ballots and public hand-counting of results as the most secure and dispute-free method, eliminating machine costs and audit complexities. He dismissed ballot image audits as "fake audits," explaining that images can be altered and do not reflect voter intent, citing instances of missing and electronically altered ballot images in Fulton County.

Update on Investigative Caseload:

Report from the Secretary of State's Office regarding the number of open or pending State Election Board cases currently retained by investigators.

McGowan from the Secretary of State's office informed that investigators would no longer attend board meetings.

There are 154 open cases, in addition to 276 cases previously sent to the State Election Board, with 156 currently under investigation.

Board members expressed concern about ruling on cases without investigators present to answer questions publicly, emphasizing the need for transparency.

Options for presenting cases without investigators include a board member or the Executive Director reading a summary of investigation (SOI), with a request for cases to be provided by December 1st for review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board moved to enter an executive session while eating lunch at 12:45 p.m. and put the Regular meeting in recess.

Motion: Member King moved to enter an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Second: Member Rick Jeffares

Vote: Passed unanimously (4-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, Member Rick Jeffares, and Member Sara Tindall Ghazal

The Board returned from executive session at 1:38pm. Member Ghazal did not return to the regular session meeting after the executive session.

NEW BUSINESS

State Election Board Emails and Documents

The State Election Board is experiencing difficulty obtaining its own emails and documents from the Secretary of State's office. Former board members Lindsey and Mashburn are downloading their emails to flash drives, considering them property of the State Election Board. Concerns were raised about the whereabouts of emails from former staff members like Addison Brooks, Alex Harden, and Mr. Cohen, which are believed to be held by the Secretary of State's office instead of the Board. The chairman and

executive director were requested to work with the Secretary of State to retrieve these emails, an issue that has been ongoing since June and has involved litigation. The matter is slated for discussion at next month's meeting to seek a resolution

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Board Meeting: Zoom Meeting Tomorrow

OLD BUSINESS (Amended)

The Board discussed previously submitted comments to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) supporting a proposed rule requiring photo identification for voter registration on the federal application and documentation of citizenship.

It was noted that the comment was submitted in an individual capacity. Member Giselle inquired whether the submission reflected an individual position. It was clarified that the comment referenced support of the State Election Board and that consent and support from a majority of the Board had been obtained prior to submission.

To ensure clarity and transparency, it was suggested that the Board formally ratify the comment during the current meeting to reflect official action of the State Election Board.

Motion: Vice Chair, Dr. Johnston moved to ratify the comment that letter sent in supporting the EAC was from a majority of the SEB

Second: Member Rick Jeffares

Vote: Passed unanimously (3-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, and Member Rick Jeffares

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 3:01

Motion: Vice Chair, Dr. Johnston, moved to ratify that the letter sent supporting the EAC was from a majority of the SEB.

Second: Vice Chair, Dr Johnston

Vote: Passed unanimously (3-0)

In Favor: Vice Chairman, Dr. Janice Johnston, Member Janelle King, and Member Rick Jeffares