



CENTER FOR
TECH AND
CIVIC LIFE

September 15, 2020

Cobb County
Board of Elections and Registration
736 Whitlock Ave. NW, Suite 400
Marietta, GA 30064

Cobb County Board of Elections and Registration:

I am pleased to inform you that based on and in reliance upon the information and materials provided by Cobb County, and the special circumstances Cobb County faces administering elections in 2020, the Center for Tech and Civic Life ("CTCL"), a nonprofit organization tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code ("IRC") section 501(c)(3), has decided to award a grant to support the work of Cobb County ("Grantee").

The following is a description of the grant:

AMOUNT OF GRANT: \$5,662,659.00

PURPOSE: The grant funds must be used exclusively for the public purpose of planning and operationalizing safe and secure election administration in Cobb County in 2020 ("Purpose").

Before CTCL transmits these funds to Grantee, CTCL requires that Grantee review and sign this agreement ("Grant Agreement") and agree to use the grant funds in compliance with the Grant Agreement and with United States tax laws and the laws and regulations of your state and jurisdiction ("Applicable Laws"). Specifically, by signing this letter Grantee certifies and agrees to the following:

Reference No. 19342

1. Grantee is a local government unit or political subdivision within the meaning of IRC section 170(c)(1).
2. This grant shall be used *only* for the Purpose described above, and for no other purposes.
3. Due to special circumstances Grantee faces administering elections in 2020, Grantee has produced a plan for safe and secure election administration in 2020, including an assessment of election administration needs and budget estimates for such assessment ("Safe Voting Plan"). The Safe Voting Plan is attached to this agreement. Grantee shall expend the total amount of grant funds listed in the Safe Voting Plan as detailed in the Safe Voting Plan, but may reallocate funds between budget items listed in the Safe Voting Plan with notice by electronic mail to CTCL. Such reallocation does not require the permission of CTCL.
4. Grantee shall not use any part of this grant to make a grant to another organization, except in the case where the organization is a local government unit or political subdivision within the meaning of IRC section 170(c)(1) or a nonprofit organization tax-exempt under IRC section 501(c)(3), and the subgrant is intended to accomplish the Purpose of this grant. Grantee shall take reasonable steps to ensure that any such subgrant is used in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement, including requiring that subgrantee agrees in writing to comply with the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement.
5. The grant project period of June 15, 2020 through December 31, 2020 represents the dates between which covered costs may be applied to the grant. The Grantee shall expend the amount of this grant for the Purpose by December 31, 2020.
6. Grantee is authorized to receive this grant from CTCL and certifies that (a) the receipt of these grant funds does not violate any Applicable Laws, and (b) Grantee has taken all required, reasonable and necessary steps to receive, accept and expend the grant in accordance with the Purpose and Applicable Law.
7. The Grantee shall produce a brief report explaining and documenting how grant funds have been expended in support of the activities described in paragraph 3. This report shall be sent to CTCL no later than January 31, 2021 in a format approved by CTCL and shall include with the report a signed certification by Grantee that it has complied with all terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement.
8. This grant may not supplant previously appropriated funds. The Grantee shall not reduce the budget of the Cobb County Board of Elections and Registration ("the Election Department") or fail to appropriate or provide previously budgeted funds to the Election Department for the term of this grant. Any amount supplanted, reduced or not



provided in contravention of this paragraph shall be repaid to CTCL up to the total amount of this grant.

9. CTCL may discontinue, modify, withhold part of, or ask for the return all or part of the grant funds if it determines, in its sole judgment, that (a) any of the above terms and conditions of this grant have not been met, or (b) CTCL is required to do so to comply with applicable laws or regulations.
10. The grant project period of June 15, 2020 through December 31, 2020 represents the dates between which covered costs for the Purpose may be applied to the grant.

Your acceptance of and agreement to these terms and conditions and this Grant Agreement is indicated by your signature below on behalf of Grantee. Please have an authorized representative of Grantee sign below, and return a scanned copy of this letter to us by email at grants@techandcivicliflife.org.

On behalf of CTCL, I extend my best wishes in your work.

Sincerely,

Tiana M. Johnson

Tiana Epps Johnson
Executive Director
Center for Tech and Civic Life

GRANTEE

By: _____

[Handwritten Signature]



Title: Michael H. Boyce, Chairman, Cobb County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED
PER MINUTES OF
COBB COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

9/22/20

Date: 9/25/20



To: Center for Technology and Civic Life
From: Janine Eveler
Date: 9/9/2020
Re: Cobb County, GA - Safe Voting Plan

Overview

Cobb County faces significant challenges in executing the November 3, 2020 general election, as well as the two possible runoffs on December 1, 2020 and January 5, 2021. The January runoff is almost certainly going to be required and will draw at least 50-55% turnout, given that there are 20 candidates vying for a highly sought-after U.S. Senate seat.

During the June 2020 Primary, Cobb County received absentee ballot requests 3-4 times higher than any other previous election, a response rate that will almost certainly increase in November. In addition, we faced logistical challenges in delivery and set-up of a new voting system that contains four times the number of components as the former system. As a result of the COVID pandemic, we lost hundreds of poll workers and experienced challenges in conducting adequate poll worker training to those remaining workers. Polls were understaffed and many brand-new replacement workers received limited online training without the benefit of hands-on work with the new system. These COVID-related challenges were particularly felt in areas of the county that serve diverse populations and resulted in long lines and extended voting hours.

For the general election, and the runoffs in December and January, the number of **total registered voters is expected to be between 550,000 and 570,000**. During the general election, there is expected to be at least **440,000** voters casting ballots by mail or in-person. This document offers an assessment of resources needed for Cobb County to safely and thoroughly prepare for the general election.

A preliminary budget overview estimate on top of what is already available to the County is as follows:

Absentee Ballot Processing	\$1,448,184
Early Voting	\$225,000
Secure Drop Boxes and related needs	\$325,000
In-person Voting at Polling Places on Election Day	\$3,664,475
Total	\$5,662,659

Needs Assessment & Costs

The following sections outline initial details of the operation and costs associated with each of the aforementioned categories.

Absentee Ballot Assembly and Processing

For the November election, we anticipate absentee-by-mail turnout to be somewhere around 40% of the total turnout, around 175,000 ballots. Retaining personnel will be critical to efficiently and accurately manage ballot envelopes in the weeks leading up to Election Day and in the canvassing process afterwards. To that end, the following is needed:

- **Personnel:** We currently have 50 seasonal staff and 58 temporary agency workers hired to prepare, process and tabulate absentee-by-mail ballots. Due to the large number of ballots we anticipate receiving for the November general election, we need to bring in an additional 92 temporary service employees. We are seeking additional temporary services companies to help us find enough workers. Based on the current agency agreements, it will cost \$878 per week for each worker and there are 14 weeks where we will likely need these workers before the January runoff is completed, for a total of \$12,302 per worker.
- **Hazard Pay:** The absentee mail processing takes place in confined rooms with many other workers. To help retain these workers and limit turnover, Cobb County would like to provide a hazard pay incentive of \$100 per worker, per election. There are projected to be 200 workers processing mail ballots for a total cost of \$60,000.
- **Ballot Mailing:** To help ease the personnel burden for Cobb County, RunBeck Election Services has offered to print, package and mail the November ballot, between September 15 – October 16. This is offered as an extension of the Secretary of State’s contract and the cost for this service is \$1.40 per ballot. We already have 81,000 ballots ready to mail and estimate another 70,000 will be processed before the end of the contract period. The total cost for this program is estimated at \$211,400.
- **Outreach Materials:** To promote absentee by mail and early voting ahead of the November election we anticipate sending full-page inserts in the County water bills and printing posters to be placed in 125 Transit buses. Other outreach efforts will be conducted through social media and community groups. The total cost for outreach is estimated at \$15,000.

	<u>Total cost</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Unit costs</u>
Temp Services Personnel	\$1,131,784	92	\$12,302
Hazard Pay	\$60,000	200	\$300
Ballot Mailing	\$211,400	151,000	\$1.40
Outreach inserts & posters	\$15,000	165,125	
Total	\$1,418,184		

Early Voting Sites

Cobb County plans to have 9 full-time early voting locations open 6 days per week during the three-week voting period. In addition, there will be another 3 locations available one-two weeks during the period. All locations are open from 7am – 7pm daily.

These sites must be sufficiently staffed with a projected 50 seasonal workers to manage the operations, 150 temporary services workers to check-in the voters on the computers and 300 dayworkers to greet and assist voters in line and on the floor. To help retain these workers and limit turnover, Cobb County would like to provide a hazard pay incentive of \$100 per worker, per election. These workers will handle a surge in voters during the early voting period and we expect at least 100,000 voters to use these voting locations in a pandemic environment. **We estimate it will cost \$150,000 to cover the hazard pay costs**

Secure Dropboxes

In the primary, we had 4 secure drop boxes installed. Installing an additional **12 secure drop boxes (a total of 16)** will help ensure that voters have some opportunity to return their ballots if it may be too late to send via USPS. In addition to \$312,000 in equipment costs and cameras, 10 people will be needed to pick up deposited ballots and monitor drop-off boxes during the 45-day period in which they are unlocked and a total of 32 people are required to retrieve ballots and lock the boxes simultaneously at 7pm Election Night. The total cost for **personnel and equipment is \$325,000.**

In-person Voting at Polling Places on Election Day

Cobb County is committed to securing fully-staffed polling places on election day. For the primary, we lost 2 Election Day polling locations of the 144 planned locations. We are still getting calls and emails weekly from facilities asking to remove themselves from our list of polls. In the General Election, we are committed to securing **145 in person polling locations on election day.** To retain polling places and help pay for cleaning services, we are proposing an additional \$500 for each of the remaining elections this cycle (November, December & January), for a total of **\$217,500.**

In order to staff these locations, the county will hire 28 Area Supervisors to handle recruitment and retention of approximately 1600 poll workers, who are key to a smooth, in-person operation. Cobb County proposes paying a \$100 hazard stipend per person for the three upcoming election days for a total of **\$488,400.**

To protect our workers in the pandemic environment, the county would like to buy 500 plastic shields for pollbook check-in workers at a cost of \$140 and standing sanitizer dispensers for each poll at an estimated cost of \$135 each. The total for this protective equipment is **\$89,575.** In

addition, we would like to purchase 684 partitioned, secure voting system carriers to house the 2,258 ballot marking devices and optical scanners at all polling locations, at a **total cost of \$2,394,000**. These carriers will provide minimal interaction between poll workers to set-up and open the poll, because everything is pre-mounted and requires a single plug-in to power the four-unit carrier. The carriers will also provide less interaction for delivery workers. The voting compartments will have “sneeze guard” partitions to separate voters from each other and provide COVID protections.

	<u>Total cost</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Unit costs</u>
Early Voting Hazard Pay	\$150,000	500	\$300
Secure Drop Boxes & Cameras	\$325,000		
Polling Place Incentive	\$217,500	145	1,500
Poll Worker Hazard Pay	\$488,400	1,628	\$300
Sneeze Guards & Sanitizers	\$89,575		
Secure, partitioned carriers	\$2,394,000		
Total	\$3,664,475		

Conclusion

The investments outlined above will allow Cobb County to reduce the risk of exposure to coronavirus for voters, election staff and poll workers; identify best practices; innovate to efficiently and effectively educate our residents about how to exercise their right to vote; be intentional and strategic in reaching our historically disenfranchised residents and communities; and, above all, ensure the right to vote in a diversity of communities throughout the county. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this request.