

**ATTACHMENT #1**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FY2022 ANNUAL OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET FOR ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA SO AS TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR DEFICITS RELATED TO THE UNEXPECTED NOVEMBER ESPLOST ELECTION AND FOR EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE 2021-2022 REDISTRICTING PRECINCT CARD POSTAGE IN THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

The Commission of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia hereby ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. The Commission of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia desires to amend the General Fund Operating Budget to provide funding for deficits related to the unexpected November ESPLOST election and for expenses associated with the 2021-2022 redistricting precinct card postage in the Board of Elections Department.

Said Operating and Capital budget is hereby amended as follows:

**General Fund:**

EXPENDITURES:

Decrease:

Other General Administration	
General Fund Contingency	\$95,000

Increase:

Board of Elections Department	
Operating Expense	\$95,000

SECTION 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

**THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY  
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

**SUBJECT:** Request to the Mayor and Board of Commissioners to approve \$95,000 in Contingency for the FY22 Elections Department Budget

**DATE:** April 15, 2022

**BUDGET INFORMATION:**

REVENUES:

EXPENSES: \$60,000 Coordination of two Elections (May Primary and June run-offs)  
\$35,000 New Precinct Cards to 100% of voters  
\$95,000

ANNUAL: \$95,000

CAPITAL:

OTHER:

FUNDING SOURCE: FY22 General Fund Operating Contingency

**COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON:** June 7, 2022

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**PURPOSE:**

To request the Mayor and Commission approve a budget ordinance allocating \$95,000 of General Fund Operating Contingency to cover deficits and remaining expenses for the Board of Elections' FY22 Budget (**Attachment #1**).

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**HISTORY:**

1. On June 15, 2021, the Mayor and Commission adopted the FY22 Operating and Capital budget, which included an allocation \$1,008,473 for the Athens-Clarke County Board of Elections.
2. On July 23, 2021, the Board of Elections received a call from the Clarke County School Board requesting a Special Election (ESPLOST) for Athens-Clarke County voters. The call was after the fiscal budget had been established, passed, and allocated to the department.
3. During the 2021 Session of the General Assembly, Governor Kemp signed Senate Bill 202, amending/adding sections of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 21. SB 202 was a 98-page bill that overhauled many of processes from absentee ballot and requiring use of security paper to the need of increasing cost of Contract Labor; all unfunded mandates that caused increase in operational expenses.

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**FACTS & ISSUES:**

1. Currently there is \$371,578.16 for the Board of Elections FY22 Budget; \$368,053.43 in Personal Services; \$1,799.73 remaining in Operating Services, which prompts the need to request contingency funds to expend the remaining months of FY22 Budget.
2. One of the major factors contributing to the need for additional funding is due to the expenses incurred with the November 2021 countywide ESPLOST election, which was not included in the FY22 Budget Request. The original budget included only a General Municipal Election for the 1,029 voters of the City of Winterville but not an election that would encompass the 81,000+ voters of Athens-Clarke County. The ESPLOST Election was not predicted at the time of the original budget proposal.
3. In addition to the unexpected expenses of conducting a countywide election, processes resulting from 2021 General Assembly associated with Senate Bill 202 required an increased cost of advertising; State Law requires that most advertising should be display ads rather than less expensive legal ads.
4. The Board of Elections conducted the ESPLOST election at a cost of \$113,069.80 - \$97,018.80 in Personal Services, \$16,051 in Operating Services. These costs were not included in the FY22 budget request. However, approximately \$8,000 was estimated at the time of the budget proposal for the General Municipal Election for the City of Winterville.
5. The 2021-22 Redistricting process resulted in 100% of Athens-Clarke voters receiving a new polling precinct card. Currently there are more than 81,000 registered voters in Athens-Clarke County. In the FY22 Budget Request, \$24,945 was requested for Postage, which did not include the possibility of all registered voters receiving a new precinct card. The cost to mail the cards will cost the county approximately \$35,000.
6. The requested funding to cover these unforeseen Elections expenses and to carry the department to the end of the fiscal year for FY22 warrants amount of \$95,000 in Operating Expenses.
  - a. Operating Expenses – In the FY22 Budget, the Mayor and Commission approved **\$216,595** in Operating Expenses. The cost associated with the November 2021 countywide ESPLOST Election related to ballot printing, elections supplies, the cost of transporting election equipment, contract labor and postage were a major factor in the deficit in Operating Expenses.
  - b. The cost to mail a new precinct card to 100% of the registered voters of Athens-Clarke County is approximately **\$35,000**.
  - c. For the remainder of the FY22 Budget, the Board of Elections will conduct two Elections; the May General Primary and June General Primary Runoff Elections. The Operating Expenses funds needed to conduct the two elections consists of transporting the voting equipment to the 24 Election Day locations and six Advance

Voting locations; postage and printing for mailing absentee ballots; election supplies, advertising and remaining receipts that have not been encumbered for the fiscal year. The amount to conduct the two Elections and to carry the department through FY22 Budget (excludes postage for polling precinct cards) is **\$60,000**. This amount only includes Operating Services. There is currently \$368,053.43 remaining in Personal Services.

7. This recommendation supports the following Mayor and Commission Strategic Commitment:

- Informed and Engaged Citizens

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**OPTIONS:**

1. Mayor and Commission approve a budget ordinance allocating \$95,000 of General Fund Operating Contingency to cover deficits and remaining expenses for the Board of Elections' FY22 Budget (**Attachment #1**).
2. Mayor and Commission deny the request.
3. Mayor and Commission defined option.

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**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Option #1

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**DEPARTMENT:**

Prepared by: Charlotte Sosebee

  
Charlotte Sosebee

04/15/2022  
Date:

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**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:** Option #1

  
Manager

May 11, 2022  
Date:

**ATTACHMENTS:** FY22 Budget Ordinance – BOE Operating Contingency