

May 4, 2024

Coffee County Board of Elections  
South Pearl Street  
Douglas, GA 31533

Members of Board of Elections and Registration:

We are concerned about the reports of the cyberattack on Coffee County reported in the press last weekend. <sup>1</sup> We are especially dismayed by the indications that county officials did not promptly inform state election officials about the attack, particularly given the potential for malicious attacks on election-related systems. Listed below are a number of questions that have been generated by the reports of the attack. We respectfully request that the Board ensure that complete and candid responses are available to the public at the upcoming May 7 Board meeting.

1. When did the reported cyberattack occur?
2. How was it first detected? Who first informed county officials of the potential attack?
3. How and when did federal authorities become involved in the investigation of the cyberattack?
4. Did the attack involve ransomware? Did the county pay or negotiate with the attackers?
5. What aspects of the county's information system functions and operations were affected?
6. How and when was the Secretary of State's office made aware of the cyberattack? How long after the attack was the SOS office informed?
7. The Secretary's office implied that Coffee County initially withheld the fact that a cyberattack had occurred. Is that correct? If so, why was the SOS not immediately notified?
8. When was the Election Director notified of the breach? Who notified her?
9. What action was taken by the Election Director in response to the information that the breach had occurred?
10. When were the election board members informed of the cyberattack? When were the county commissioners notified of the cyberattack?
11. What actions did the election board take and what instructions did the board give?
12. How many hours passed between the time that the cyberattack was initially suspected and the connection to the voter registration system severed?
13. What specific steps has BOER undertaken to ensure that no voter registration or voter history was altered in the cyberattack? How early did those efforts start and how recently did they continue?
14. Have any voters had difficulty checking in to vote in the current election because of inaccurate pollbooks or voter registration data?

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2024/04/26/politics/georgia-coffee-county-cyberattack-voter-system/index.html>

<https://cyberscoop.com/cyberattack-hits-georgia-county-at-center-of-voting-software-breach/>  
<https://www.ajc.com/politics/coffee-county-georgia-suffers-cyberattack-it-was-also-site-of-a-2021-election-breach/VKLRASDX45B2XONH225JUAC4VM/>

15. Have any recent errors or discrepancies in voter data or sample ballots been brought to the attention of the Secretary of State office?
16. What instructions have been issued by the SOS concerning the cyberattack?
17. What efforts have been made to determine whether any aspect of the desktop computers in the BOER office have been infected with malware?
18. What efforts were and are being taken to ensure that the Clarity Election Night Reporting system was not affected by the cyberattack?
19. What efforts have been taken to ensure that the EMS server has not been compromised by reusing usb sticks used between the web server and the EMS server (particularly as election results are uploaded)?
20. Is the Voter Registration system being accessed through the standard county infrastructure or are “workarounds” or different equipment still being used? Describe the work-arounds used and the time frame in which they were used.
21. At any time during the attack, was voter private data exposed to the attackers?
22. Have political parties, candidates, and poll watchers been alerted to the cyberattack and potential anomalies that may be encountered?

We strongly believe that the Board owes the public a duty of candor and transparency concerning the cyberattack. Anything less on Tuesday will be unacceptable. Please ensure that the board and staff are prepared to answer our questions.

Sincerely,

Jim Hudson  
Coffee County Voter

Larry Nesmith  
Coffee County Voter

Stephanie Flagg  
Former resident of Coffee County

Kathryn Grant  
Georgia Voter