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Levy County elections move forward with more security



Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones speaks to the County Commission on July 17.

Story and Photo

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 19, 2018 at 3:28 p.m.

BRONSON – Levy County Commission Chairman John Meeks will be signing a certificate of equipment for casting and counting ballots as a result of a motion by County Commissioner Rock Meeks, seconded by Commission Vice Chairman Mike Joyner on Tuesday (July 17).

Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones found unanimous approval to her request, which reflects continued progress with secure elections in Levy County.

Out of the \$19.2 million granted to Florida, Jones said, \$76,304 was provided to help Levy County in its election process – from the Elections Security Grant, which was provided under the Help America Vote Act.

Improving security for the elections is where these funds are going now. Jones said an IT person is helping her meet the challenges of having a secure election in Levy County.

Even training employees is a key component when it comes to security, Jones said. The United States Department of Homeland Security is scheduled to conduct a free analysis of the office in Levy County, she said, and one or more staff members from Homeland Security are anticipated to come take a physical scan of the building to determine possible improvements.

Jones mentioned that her effort for more security includes changes she added since taking office. Cameras, key-required access to certain areas of the office and other aspects of security are in place.

Jones said she feels comfortable with the current level of security at the office, but she knows there is always room to improve.

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Accepting the grant funds results after a conference in May, Jones said. A month later, she was told the county would receive the money, given the information that was needed could be gathered within three weeks.

Jones was not seeking approval from the County Commission on Tuesday, but she needed the chairman's signature on "attachment C" of the documentation that says the county has equipment that is secure for casting and counting ballots.

Jones mentioned this fact is true because Levy County in 2014 bought that very equipment, which most other Florida counties are just now purchasing. She mentioned her appreciation for the County Commission four years ago taking action she sought in that regard.