

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 10, 2023

The regular meeting of the Transylvania County Board of Elections was called to order by Secretary West at 10 a.m. on Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

Present

Board Members:

Staff Members:

Secretary: Judith West	Director: Jeff Storey
Sandra Watson	Deputy Director: Laura Owen
Wendy Warwick	Deputy Director: Julie Dennis
Nona Walker	

Visitors: Jeff Brewer, Don Henderson, Nancy Henderson, Barb Jackson, Herschel Johnson, Kathy Voltz.

Review and Approval of Agenda

Secretary West asked for a review of the agenda. **Member Watson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 4-0.**

Review and Approval of Previous Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes for the previous board meeting. **Member Walker made a motion to approve the minutes for July 18, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.**

Precinct Official Appointments

Director Storey provided an overview of the administrative process involved with recruiting and selecting precinct officials. Each precinct has a bi-partisan group consisting of a chief judge, a judge from each party, and assistants that are recommended by the local parties and approved by the local elections board for a two-year term. The director went through recommendations for each precinct and thanked the local parties for their efforts in finding workers. Exceptions were defined including the recommendation for Lynn Bullock for chief judge in Rosman Eastatoe. Mr. Bullock's brother is on the ballot this year so he will not work in the 2023 municipal election. Mr. Bullock will resume duties as chief judge in 2024 and is recommended for appointment. **Member Warwick made a motion to approve the recommended precinct official appointments for a two year term. The motion carried 4-0.**

Resolution temporarily moving CC to RE

Director Storey explained there are 19 voters currently annexed in the Town of Rosman and eligible to vote in the municipal election. Rather than having a precinct open for 19 voters in

Cathey's Creek the board can temporarily transfer those voters to the neighboring Rosman Eastatooe polling site with proper notification for the 2023 Municipal Election only. **Member Watson made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion carried 4-0.**

DIRECTOR UPDATES

The director provided the board with the itinerary and logistics regarding the state conference. Departure will be on Sunday with a return on Tuesday. Board and staff reviewed the agenda and ensured all breakout sessions were covered. Director Storey provided the Board with information regarding the ES&S EVS 6.3.0.0 system demonstration that will coincide with the conference. The system would replace the current EVS 5.2.4.0 system if the Board determined to pursue the new release. The director stated it is optional meaning local counties are not required to purchase and can continue utilizing the existing system. The director invited the board to look at the demonstration with the understanding it wasn't something our county needed to pursue at this time. Director Storey mentioned the photo ID equipment is online and the office has already begun issuing free photo ID cards to registered voters. Training dates for the municipal election will be in October. The director informed the board the Brevard #2 precinct mailing is being prepared and will be mailed out shortly. The mailing will be sent to all affected voters and the website updated to indicate the new polling site will be the Mary C. Jenkins Community Center. Member Watson asked if the mailing was considered a "voter contact" with regards to list maintenance. The director stated he will clarify how that it handled and provide an answer to the board. Director Storey reviewed with the board the summary of data being collected for September's meeting regarding Election Day precincts.

BOARD COMMENTS

Secretary West commented that the question that comes to mind when evaluating Election Day precincts is "What problem are we trying to solve"? Ms. West stated the goal is to remove any barriers to voting. With that in mind, expanding the review to include all precincts rather than just the Lake Toxaway area was raised. Secretary West mentioned registration numbers in comparison to voter turnout to identify how many did not vote. Member Warwick expressed a desire to have public input on precincts. Secretary West did not dispute that but felt the board needs to first identify what the questions are to ask the public. Member Watson asked how easy it is to vote in rural areas versus more populated areas. Member Walker asked about driving distances and polling sites and if that has been a problem? The director stated no feedback has been received by the office indicating driving distance has been a problem. Member West encouraged the board to send the director any requests for data to be included in the evaluation. Member Warwick asked if the board was making a decision on the evaluation at the next meeting. Member West and Director Storey responded the board isn't bound to make a decision by September as other factors come into play such as funding and State Board approval. The September meeting gives the board an opportunity to review the data to see if or what further actions are warranted.

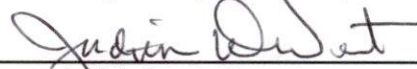
PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kathy Voltz asked if Pisgah Forest will have a precinct open for the 2023 Municipal Election. The director responded that the Public Safety facility will be open for eligible voters in Pisgah Forest. Herschel Johnson applauded the board for reviewing Election Day precincts and felt the board should take the time needed to examine a comprehensive review before making any

decisions. Jeff Brewer spoke of access to voters in rural precincts versus city precincts and asked the board to consider all options including expansion / contraction of precincts or utilizing three early voting sites in even numbered years in lieu of Election Day polling site changes. Mr. Brewer felt looking at all the options on the table could provide a solution to in-person access to voting while respecting funding, resources, and staffing. Nancy Henderson was concerned with driving distances from Burlingame and Silversteen Rd areas to Election Day precincts and felt Quebec Community Center would shorten the distance for some voters. Member West thanked the public for their input. There were no further comments.

On a motion by Member Watson, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be at 10 a.m. on September 14, 2023, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.


Respectfully submitted,



Judith West, Secretary




Sara G. Champion, Chair



Sandra E. Watson, Member



Wendy Warwick, Member



Nona Walker, Member

Approved by Board on: 9-14-2023