

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ABSENTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 13, 2024

Chair Champion called the absentee meeting of the Transylvania County Board of Elections to order at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

Attendance

Board Members:	Attendance	Staff Members:
Chair: Sara Champion		Director: Jeff Storey
Secretary: Judith West		Deputy Director: Laura Owen
Sandra Watson		Deputy Director: Julie Dennis
Wendy Warwick		
Nona Walker		

Visitors: Jeff Brewer, Kathy Voltz

Review and Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Member Warwick, the board unanimously approved the agenda.

Public Comments

Mr. Brewer advocated for 3 early voting sites due to the expected high turnout. Mr. Brewer mentioned Alexander and Swain counties have multiple sites and felt Transylvania county should be able to provide them as well. Mr. Brewer advocated for 3 early voting sites for both mid-term and general elections.

Review and Approval of Received Absentee Ballots

Deputy Director Owen presented the board with 22 CIV absentee applications to consider and approve. **Member Watson made the motion to approve 20 of the 22 executed absentee ballots. 2 ballots were spoiled for non-matching CIVs. The motion carried unanimously.**

Approved: 20 CIV

Disapproved: 2 CIV

Election Center electioneering and parking policy

Director Storey stated complaints have been received regarding electioneering in the walkway outside of the buffer zone and asked the Board for a policy. **Member Walker made a motion to prohibit electioneering in the pedestrian walkway due to safety concerns. The motion carried unanimously.** The director indicated both parties wanted the same location for electioneering and recommended a coin flip. **Member West made a motion to use a coin flip**

to determine location preference. The motion carried unanimously. The coin flip resulted in giving the Democratic party first choice of location.

Early Voting Site Consideration for FY 24-25 budget

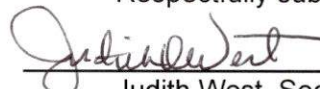
The Board reconsidered the components involved with multiple early voting sites for fiscal year 2024-25. Factors included turnout, staffing, hours, costs, location availability and traffic. Member West reiterated the question of what the Board was trying to solve. Data showed that two facilities for early voting were more than adequate to accommodate the expected turnout. The Board shared concerns with staffing more than two sites given the struggle to find workers. The change in required hours for a 17-day period for multiple sites was also concerning. All sites must be open an equal number of days and times with no flexibility to have additional sites open for the last week as was previously allowed. The purchase of additional equipment was also a consideration since inventory will only accommodate up to two sites. The Board also discussed possible areas to use exclusively for a 3-week period with no ideal location identified to accommodate a third early voting site. The Board appreciated the input received from the public. Chair Champion recognized the funding support county commissioners give the Board of Elections and felt if asked, the commissioners would fund it, but at this time, didn't feel a third site was warranted based on all factors considered. The Board agreed. **On a motion by Member West, the board unanimously approved the director to request funding for two early voting sites for the next fiscal year.**

Early Voting Inclement Weather Guidance

The Board discussed inclement weather issues for early voting sites. It was agreed upon that the Board of Elections would follow county administrative guidance for countywide closures due to inclement weather with notification to the State Board of Elections. Site specific issues that didn't affect all early voting sites would warrant an emergency board meeting to determine the course of action. **On a motion by Member West, the policy was approved unanimously.**

On a motion by Chair Champion, the meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m. The next scheduled meeting will be at 5 p.m. on February 20, 2024, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

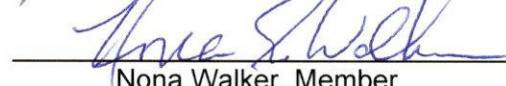
Respectfully submitted,



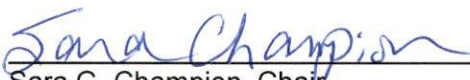
Judith West, Secretary



Sandra E. Watson, Member



Nona Walker, Member



Sara G. Champion, Chair



Wendy Warwick, Member

Approved by Board on: 4-23-24