

## JUNE 11, 2019

The Cumberland County Board of Elections met at the Board of Elections Office at 1:00 pm for their regular monthly meeting

**Present:** Floyd W. Johnson, Jr., Chairman  
Bobby Swilley, Member  
Irene Grimes, Member

Linda Devore, Secretary  
Helen Nelson, Member  
Terri Robertson, Director

**Staff:** Angie Amaro and Mitzie Roberts

**Guests:** Pamela E Carver, Meta A Weaver Coaxum, Franzetta S. Grandisson, Matthew Davis, Ethelyn Baker, Jonathan C. Strange, Joyce Tucker, Valencia Applewhite, Chilleko Hurst, Asia C. McNeill, Xavier Williams, Waverly Bethune, Sally Shutt, Sam Sterling, Keyshawn Farrar, Samuel Marcus, Sarita Mallard, Nicole Willingham, Robert Taber, Sarah Taber, Carmele McKeller-Smith.

Chairman Floyd Johnson called the meeting to Order at 1:00PM.

Public Comment Session Opened.

Pamela Carver, 502 Circle D Drive, Linden, NC, thanked the Board for their work. She served as a pollworker in 2018 and amazed with the effort to keep our elections fair and untampered with. Want to talk about making one-stop voting as accessible for all voters as possible. Need more times for all workers, and locations.

Val Applewhite, 5813 Mondavi Place, Fayetteville, NC, regional manager and organizer for Democracy North Carolina. As we travel around for BOE meetings, we find that meetings held in the evenings are better attended. We are asking you to move meetings to a more convenient time such as 5 or 6 in the evening. As we prepare for 2020 we would also like you to look at early voting site at Cliffdale, which is highly used, but not enough parking. Would like to suggest that we consider moving to Fuller Recreation Center with plenty of parking spaces.

Chilleko Hurst, 55 Acadiana Drive, Parkton, NC, [Robeson County] with three concerns. 1. Alert system for curbside voting not always working. 2. Public should be notified of change in election criteria. 3. Confusion of some voters when speaking to staff at a voting site when the voter has moved and must be turned around, and sent to another site. Deters people from voting.

Xavier Williams, 674 Baywood Rd, Fayetteville, NC, Junior at NCA&T and intern with Democracy North Carolina. Ask for your support of HB893, and more flexible early voting hours for everyone.

Chairman Johnson thanked the speakers for their comments.

**ACTION:** Bobby Swilley moved that the minutes from recent meetings be approved as presented. March 12, April 23 and 30, May 7, 13, 14, 23 and 24. Second by Nelson and unanimously approved.

Director Robertson gave a budget and election update.

1. County budget has not yet been adopted, however, the County Manager presented the budget to the Commissioners, and we are expecting to receive everything we proposed other than a new full-time position. We will re-write the job descriptions of our current eight full-time employees to include the new photo voter identification. It has been 10 years since we did this, and we are now required to handle additional finance work that was previously done by the county finance department, as well as additional responsibilities as election laws have changed.
2. One of our full-time positions is vacant, and we will be advertising to fill it. We currently also have a 19-hour part time position.
3. We need to set times of day for our upcoming absentee meetings.

Secretary Devore inquired about the timing of the Canvass meeting for the October primary, and overlap with the start of November early voting.

Director Robertson responded that two years ago the General Assembly granted the ED authority to change the primary canvass date so that early voting could begin on schedule. We are expecting the same will happen this year, allowing us to have primary winners determined in time for general election balloting.

Devore inquired whether the ballot on demand equipment allows us to move into November early voting immediately since ballots can be printed as voters arrive.

Robertson replied that we have one ballot on demand printer, so that as soon as we can determine the primary winners, we can print ballots. We hope to have another soon, and more for presidential in 2020.

Director Robertson asked the board members to agree on times for absentee meetings. Secretary Devore suggested that we want to accommodate board members and address the concerns raised by Applewhite to consider evening hours, perhaps not so much for absentee meetings as for regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

Member Nelson does not have a problem with meeting after 5:00PM, but 1:00 for afternoon meetings to coordinate with her work schedule.

**ACTION:** Devore moved that the discretionary times for absentee meetings be set at 1:00 August 20 and 27, September 3, 17, and 24, October 1, 22 and 29. Seconded by Swilley and passed unanimously.

Member Nelson asked whether we should consider moving out regularly scheduled July and August meetings to 5:00.

Director Robertson asked Board members to consider moving our regularly scheduled August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to August 20<sup>th</sup> to coincide with our precinct officials appointment meeting on that date. Also, to consider moving our regular monthly meeting to a different day to avoid conflicting with elections days, which are always on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

There was discussion among board members as to possibly moving dates and times of future monthly meetings. Chairman Johnson asked that we defer a decision for members to consult their schedules.

Director Robertson reported that the State BOE will be holding photo voter ID seminars in Cumberland County on June 18<sup>th</sup>. North Regional Library at 2PM and Crown at 6PM.

Devore inquired whether we have received our photo ID printer.

Director Robertson reported that we have received it. It is working and have already issued two photo IDs.

Devore inquired whether we anticipate any problems implementing photo voter ID for 2020 elections.

Director Robertson responded that we have set up a separate office near the front, and we are prepared now.

Director Robertson presented the staff recommendation for early voting plans for September 10<sup>th</sup>, October 8<sup>th</sup>, and Nov 5<sup>th</sup> elections. Recommendation is the same as our May 14<sup>th</sup> election where we had 179 voters utilize one-stop. The municipalities have to pay for their elections, and they have never asked for expanded sites or hours for their elections.

Member Grimes stated that we have never before had the situation of re-doing an election. She suggests that we either add East Regional Library, which is right in the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> District, as an additional site with Saturdays and Sundays, or expand BOE hours 7AM to 7PM and add a couple of hours on Saturdays and Sundays. She estimates the cost of operating our BOE location with longer hours, and weekends would be about \$27,000.

Secretary Devore suggested we could reasonably expect to have 3 or 4 times as many voters for the 9<sup>th</sup> District election in September as we had for the May primary, and that the director's recommendation should easily handle that number of voters. In weighing fairness to taxpayers, we could be looking at only 200-300 early voters at East Regional at a cost of \$30,000 for 7AM - 7PM each day and on weekends. The BOE is located in the 9<sup>th</sup> District, and in the most densely populated area within the district. There is also a cost to expanding BOE hours and days with over-time for staff as well as one-stop workers.

Director Robertson stated that given the low turnout expected, we could open with minimal staff and cut down the number of worker hours to reduce the cost of an additional site to around \$20,000.

Grimes suggested that we could open East Regional Library, which would require 7AM-7PM each day, as well as the first two Saturdays for 4 hours each, and the first two Sundays for 3 hours each. Statute does not allow voting on the final weekend.

**ACTION:** Member Grimes made a motion to open the BOE for the September 10<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> District special election from 8-5, Monday through Friday, and add East Regional Library as an addition early voting site, open 7AM-7PM Monday through Friday, and two Saturdays 9-1 and two Sundays 2-5. Seconded by Nelson.

Discussion of the motion followed.

Member Swilley asked how many days of early voting this would be.

Director Robertson replied that it would be 17. 13 weekdays and four weekend days.

Devore suggested that we consider the \$20,000 cost for an additional site, and consider the cost per voter.

Chairman Johnson suggested that we are primarily concerned for our voters, ample locations, and times for voters to exercise their constitutional right to vote, and not to put a dollar value that will hinder cause and effect.

Swilley suggested that we should also consider the option of only expanding early voting here at our BOE site from 7AM-7PM and adding Saturdays and Sundays.

Devore stated that she would much prefer to follow the Director's recommendation, but if we are to spend additional money and add hours, we open East Regional to accommodate the large geographic area of the 9<sup>th</sup> District. The BOE is not located anywhere near the geographic center of the 9<sup>th</sup> district.

**ACTION:** Chairman Johnson called for a vote on the pending motion by Grimes, which passed unanimously.

Secretary Devore stated that while she would have preferred to follow the Director's recommendation, she was willing to make this a unanimous vote to keep the decision local.

Chairman Johnson stated that he also respects the Director's recommendations.

Director Robertson asked for consideration of the early voting plans for October and November municipal elections.

Secretary Devore suggested that since Fayetteville is the only municipality which has primaries, and we do not yet know if a primary will be needed for the mayor's race or any of the districts, perhaps we should delay a decision on early voting until after the filing period ends on July 19<sup>th</sup>.

Director Robertson commented that we have never had any additional sites for municipal elections. The municipalities have to pay for their elections, and they have not requested additional sites for early voting.

**ACTION:** Secretary Devore made a motion to follow the Director's recommendation for the early voting plan for October and November elections. BOE site only, 8AM-5PM, Monday through Friday. Nelson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director Robertson reported to the Board that the Falcon Town Hall was damaged by a vehicular accident recently and will not be available as a voting site for municipal elections in November, as is customary. All voters in Falcon and Godwin will vote at Godwin Town Hall. Falcon voters will each be notified by mail of the change.

Member Swilley addressed the full-time staff position that is currently vacant and will be advertised in the near future. He reminded the Board that the Director has full authority to fill the position without further Board action. Her decision.

Member Nelson asked that the Board address the concern expressed during our public comment period with the curbside not working properly.

Director Robertson explained that every worker is always trained to watch curbside, and occasionally the batteries will die, but this should never be a problem.

Secretary Devore asked about the concern with the Cliffdale early voting site, and the possibility of using Fuller Recreation Center, which is privately owned.

Director Robertson responded that Fuller is used as an election-day site, but we are allowed to use a private site for early voting only if a public site is unavailable.

Devore asked the Director for suggestions for improving parking at Cliffdale during early voting.

Director Robertson has spoken with school administrators to move teachers to the bus parking area. If we change that site, then we have to recognize that all the people who vote there regularly will be wondering where to vote. With paper ballots this year we will be able to add more booths, and this should move the voters through more efficiency, and help with making parking more available. Most helpful would be if candidates limited the number of campaigners they send to Cliffdale or ask them to park elsewhere or carpool.

Member Grimes suggested that we need to speak with legislators about last Saturday voting.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:09PM.

Submitted by,



Linda Devore, Secretary



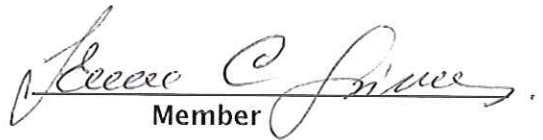
Chairman



Member



Director



Member

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Member