

Buncombe County Board of Elections
Asheville/Buncombe County Board of Elections

Monitor Names: Cheryl Williams on line

Date & Time: May 28, 2026, 1:00 PM

Names of Board Members Attending:

Glenda Weinert, Chairman (R), Jake Quinn, Board Member (D), Mary Ann Braine, Secretary (R) arrived late, Sally Stein, Board Member (D), Courtney Blossman (R)

Names of Buncombe Co Staff Attending:

Corinne Duncan, Director; Gabrielle Corey, Elections Administrative Coordinator; Neggy Fox, Assistant Director

Location of Meeting: 35 Woodfin Street, Asheville NC

Observers: 1 Common Cause, 1 LWVAB online

I. Approval of Agenda – passed 4/0 (Ms. Braine was a few minutes late)

II. Office Updates – Corrine Duncan

- Ms. Duncan reminded Board Members that she will be out next week at an Election Science, Reform, and Administration conference in Phoenix where she will be on a panel discussing Hurricane Helene and emergency preparedness.
 - Ms. Stein asked when she will return.
 - Ms. Duncan said she will be at the Conference Mon-Thurs, then take personal leave until June 14 when she will return but attend a Wake County workshop on June 15. She will be back in the office on June 16.
- The County has decided that to be better prepared for a major emergency, every employee will have a role in response. Election Services and Health and Human services have been assigned the shelter role. It's good fit for the Office because it is flexible and could be conducted even while overseeing an election.
 - It involves Red Cross training which staff have already completed.

- Specialty roles will receive additional training, such as for her role as a shelter manager.
- In addition, there will be in person training.
- Mr. Quinn said he had heard that Emergency Services will buy the old JC Penney building for training and asked whether Ms. Duncan had heard anything more.
 - She said nothing official but that Tim Love has requested a meeting with Dr. Weinert and Ms. Stein for June 18 which would be a good time to find out more.
 - Ms. Blossman asked whether the entire Board could attend.
 - Ms. Duncan said that the Board had decided to have the facilities committee meet regularly with Mr. Love regarding progress then report to the Board.
 - Ms. Blossman said she had never voted for that and asked Ms. Braine whether she had. NOTE: No response that I could hear.
 - Ms. Stein said it is a continuation of the regular updates she and Dr. Weinert had been providing. She said the meetings are a chance for Mr. Love to give the Board a head's up on evolving events that might not be ready for a public meeting. It might involve plans for the Penney building.
 - Ms. Braine said the Board should meet after the meeting with Mr. Love. Ms. Stein reminded her that the next Board meeting is June 23.
 - Ms. Stein and Dr. Weinert will keep the Board up to date on any public information they can share.
- The Early Voting Plan survey has already had 534 submissions and WLOS is promoting it. The last survey received 2,000 submissions but she does not know the curve of responses. Consequently, she's not sure how this survey will compare to the last one. Staff are working on radio announcements for the survey now.
- Ms. Stein and Dr. Weinert have reached out to UNCA to check on the possibility of a polling location on campus.
- Ms. Braine said that she alerted Ms. Fox that Upper Hominy was not listed in the Early Voting Plan as a possible site and she agreed to add it.

III. Badge Access Resolution– Corrine Duncan

- Dr. Weinert said each Member has a color-coded copy of the draft to show the original wording (green), the changes made at the last

meeting (red), and suggestions from Ms. Duncan and staff (purple). This is the main purpose of today's meeting

- Ms. Duncan said when they learned that the access system could not be set to alert Members seeking access that no staff are present. So, she and staff suggested that Members have no access to high security areas (warehouse and areas that require badge access and a code). Otherwise, Members can access to office space only during office hours when staff will be present.
- Mr. Quinn still fails to understand why Members need access to the warehouse at times other than when they regularly work there. He sees the risks as optics and security concerns. He's open to hearing why it's needed and wants the benefits to outweigh the risks.
 - Ms. Blossman said that according to the law the Board oversees Election Services and should have access.
 - Access for its own sake could be debated forever but he has yet to hear a compelling reason. When questioned by the public why Members need access to high security areas, he wants to have a clear answer.
 - Ms. Blossman said she thought she was quite clear that the Board is legally responsible for the operations of the staff and to confirm that access is needed.
 - Mr. Quinn said that the Board has long delegated administrative oversight to the Director. Staff report to the Director, not to the Board. He's concerned about interrupting the work of a high performing, professional staff.
 - Dr. Weinert does not disagree with Mr. Quinn but does see the need from the employer's side. These rules are not meant for the staff we have today but should concerns arise in the future, the ability for an unannounced visit can be helpful.
 - Mr. Quinn said any questions or concerns should be taken to the director, not gathered by a Member in off the cuff visits to the work place.
 - Ms. Stein said someone needs to visit unannounced but it should be Ms. Duncan, not the Board. The Board has an unspoken authority that can intimidate staff.
 - Ms. Blossman said we have oversight responsibility. We will follow the chain of command as outlined in the resolution.

The Board should be able to enter the office, have a discussion, and then leave.

- Dr. Weinert and Ms. Duncan each said they had not thoroughly reviewed the document.
- Ms. Blossman moved to accept the draft as is. Ms. Braine seconded because the process began in December 2025. On February 17 the State Board said we should have access which is why we have that language in there.
- Ms. Braine said that without access, how will we know whether we have concerns.
- Mr. Quinn said Ms. Duncan keeps the Board up to date on movement of staff and we routinely see the work performed by the staff. Communication is crucial to keep this Board working effectively.
- Ms. Duncan said that currently the Board has access to everything but the resolution is to make access more convenient for the Members.
- Ms. Blossman said she respects everyone's thoughts but she called the question for a vote.
- Ms. Stein asked which draft they are voting on.
- Dr. Wienert said the Board did not vote on access to the warehouse but did talk about access for a bipartisan team with staff present, and schedules for access. We can't have access to warehouse due to IT limitations.
- Ms. Blossman and Ms. Braine said that bi-partisan teams are not needed.
- Dr. Weinert, Ms. Stein, and Mr. Quinn said that bi-partisan pairs are absolutely essential because of the optics. Mr. Quinn said he doesn't want 2 Democrats to have access any more than he wants 2 Republicans to have access because of how it looks.
- Dr. Weinert said we could rescind the motion and redraft the resolution for a vote.
- Ms. Blossman asked whether Ms. Braine agreed to rescind and make the changes.
- Ms. Duncan said she is getting concerned about voting on the draft because there are typos and confusion among the Board.
- Mr. Quinn stated again that the chain of command is from the Board to the Director and the Director to the staff. This

resolution seems to skirt the chain of command by allowing Members to enter the space without notifying the Director.

- Dr. Wienert agrees that unannounced visits have a place but it's clear that this Board has 5 very different personalities and views. She thinks it's a courtesy to let the Director know that they might stop by.
- Ms. Duncan feels strongly that the changes she suggested: having Members knock at the warehouse door and confine their office visits to office hours. If it doesn't work, we can revisit the issue and make needed changes.
- Ms. Braine pointed out that the last sentence of the statute says the actions of the Director and the staff are deemed to be actions of the Board. So, it's not clear to her how the changes protect the Board as Ms. Duncan has said.
 - Ms. Duncan said she is trying to protect the Election System.
- Ms. Blossman moved to accept the color-coded draft as is.
- Mr. Quinn asked again about giving the Director a heads up when they are to visit the space and retaining the need for bi-partisan visits.
- Dr. Weinert said there is a motion and second to accept color-coded draft. Discussion closed. The motion passed 3/2, along party lines.
- Dr. Weinert said we can discuss the matter of advance notice at a later date.

IV. Next regular meeting date: Tuesday June 23, at 5:30 for public input on Early Voting Plan at 35 Woodfin Street

Adjourned at 2:16 pm.