

# Buncombe County Board of Elections

## Asheville/Buncombe County League of Women Voters

**Monitor Name:** Deborah Britt

**Meeting Date & time:** March 19, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

### **Names of Board Members Attending:**

Jake Quinn, Chairman

Linda Block – Secretary

Stephen Aceto – Board Member

Robert Carpenter – Board Member – *unavailable to attend*

Glen Shultz – Board Member

\*Attended remotely

### **Staff Attending:**

Corinne Duncan (Director)

(? Other staff attending – 3 people adjacent and behind Corinne)

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Chairman Jake Quinn.

Chairman Quinn acknowledged the attendees present and those listening remotely.

- Instructed the attendees to raise their hands for questions and when called upon to state their names (explaining the BOE meetings are recorded for public record)
- Reminded everyone the BOE meetings are always streamed and the format included a section for typing in questions for the Board Members.
- Shared that Buncombe County has more unaffiliated voters than Democrats and Republicans and the highest number of un-affiliated voters than all the counties in North Carolina.

\*\*\*Sound volume very low despite me having my volume all the way up. I messaged in the question box to turn up the volume. Volume was turned up about 30 minutes into the meeting.

### Agenda Item: **Minutes**

- Minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

### Agenda Item: **Elect Board Secretary**

- Linda Block was nominated to be Secretary and stated she would accept the position. She was unanimously approved. (Previous secretary was Elizabeth Newman and she left the Board.)

Agenda Item: **Office Updates** given by Director Corrine Duncan

- Director Duncan introduced someone behind her, but unable to hear her name and role.
- Absentee ballots
  - Approx 300 were sent out on Monday
  - Approx 400 requests were received
- Voter cards (approx. 176,000) sent to all ‘active’ registered voters
  - District changes necessitated voter cards being sent out
  - Cards going out in phases
  - Question from floor regarding ‘in-active’ voters
    - Director Duncan answered: in-active voters are registered voters but have not voted for some time and/or have not responded/checked-in with BOE to verify their info is still accurate.
- Early voting cards are now available
- March 29, Court Decision allowing those convicted of felonies, but not incarcerated, can register to vote. Buncombe County - Approx 55,000.
  - Questions from the floor were answered by Chairman Quinn:
    - Court Decision and not a new law, thus it could be over-turned.
    - Pedophiles - Are they flagged in the system?
      - No. There are many options for them to vote that do not violate their restrictions (not be near schools, etc). They vote now. It is up to the felon to seek to re-register to vote.

Agenda Item: **Polling Location Update** by Director Corrine Duncan

- Enka School – not clear if it was Middle School or High School.
  - Voting site changed from gymnasium to a “modular” classroom.
  - Conflict in schedule of gymnasium
  - Chairman Quinn also spoke of probable security concerns with school in session. He advocated that he would like to see Election Day as a National Holiday – safety concerns would be eliminated and schools provide good locations and ample parking spaces.

Agenda Item: **Discussion of Off Cycle Poll Worker Appointments**

- Director Duncan provided background –
  - Cycles are every 2 years: Chief Judges, Party Judges, Election Judges.
  - Buncombe County BOE receives recommendations from the Party Chairs and then make the appointments.
  - To improve timely appointments and avoid high numbers of vacancies, BOE staff initiated increased communication and consultation with the Party Chairs. Communication included timelines and dates by which Buncombe BOE staff needed their recommendations so appointments could

- be made.
  - Consultations and increased communication effective - Currently they have one judge vacancy out of 60 vacancies.
- Chairman Quinn:
  - Verbalized praise to the Director Duncan and Buncombe BOE staff for their hard work toward building a model to increase involvement and communication between the Party Chairs and BOE. Currently, there is no model. Once their model is complete and effective, Buncombe will share their model with the other counties within North Carolina.
  - Questions from the floor were answered.
    - Referenced 163.41 Appointments of Election Officials from their BOE their book of policies/procedures. Section A and D.
      - Section A - Beginning a 2-year cycle
      - Section D – How to fill vacancies
    - Chairman of county BOE receives recommendations from the staff (staff receives names from the Party Chairs) and then makes the appointments for: Chief Judges, Party Judges, and Election Judges.
- Stephen Aceto – Board Member
  - Verbalized praise to Director Duncan and Buncombe BOE staff.
  - Read the qualifications of appointees from 163.41 –
    - Must be voter of the precinct, of moral character, and can read and write.
- Linda Block – Secretary spoke to the attendees present.
  - Asked that they keep in mind when choosing Election Day workers, that they are diverse... important that voters see people who look like themselves when they come to vote.
- Additional questions from attendee’s present answered by Chairman Quinn:
  - Are masks required on Day of Election?
    - Mask requirements are based on the “building” (ie. Medical Bldg).
  - Are poll workers required to be vaccinated against Covid?
    - No, not required
  - Chairman Quinn concluded – election day workers to make voters comfortable when they enter to vote

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.