

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

Monitor Name: Aiden Carson, George Elam, and Elaine Elam

Date & Time: August 22, 2023 3:30 PM

Names of Board Members Attending:

Jake Quinn, Chairman

Steven Aceto, Board Member

Glen Shults, Secretary

Mary Ann Braine, Board Member

Sally Stein: Board Member

Names of Buncombe Co Staff Attending: Corrine Duncan, Director
Anna Katherine Moore, Administrative Coordinator and Clerk to the Board;
Karen Rae, Elections Coordinator

Location of Meeting: 59 Woodfin Place, Asheville, NC

Observers:

There were quite a few members of the public, including representatives from both parties who were involved in the judge nomination process. Three representatives from LWVAB.

Agenda Items:

Minutes:

- Minutes from August 1 and August 14 (the product demo in Concord) were approved 5/0.

Office Updates (Corinne):

- The North Carolina Together Video Project is under way and expected to be completed fir January. It will demonstrate that the same processes are followed throughout the state.
- The new equipment software has been approved and the new hardware is at the warehouse, ready for implementation.
- The county has set up a Web Emergency Operation Center, which they will pilot in the coming primary, and maybe in the Municipal Election.
- They are staffing up, with positions at the front desk and the warehouse filled and in-house positions advertised.
- Photo ID processes at the BOE are up and running and some members of the public have gotten cards.

- The poll worker recruitment web page has been updated so it is now easier to apply, and there is a video explaining responsibilities.

Finalize Board Calendar:

- A proposed calendar was distributed and discussed.
- Mr. Shultz suggested moving the machine testing on October 10 to a time earlier in the day. It was scheduled to follow the 5:30 Absentee Meeting.
- Jake thought the later time would make it easier for the public to attend, and there might be increased interest after the machine upgrades.
- Corinne said the earlier time would be good during February.
- Jake noted that they will not be expecting a large number of Absentee Ballots this fall so the Absentee meeting will probably not be as lengthy as some have been in the past.
- They decided to change the October 10 Absentee meeting from 5:30 to 3:30, with the machine testing to follow after a recess.
- The schedule can be approved now and amended later. Decisions about 2024 can be made as late as December. The dates need to be published 30 days in advance.
- Ms. Braine asked about the extra day following the ballot counting days. Corinne said that the extra days may not be needed for low numbers of ballots, but may be necessary if there are large numbers.
- Mr. Aceto said he appreciated the schedule document contains hyperlinks to applicable statutes
- The calendar was approved 5/0.

Appoint Precinct Judges (Karen Ray):

- Corinne gave an overview and Karen followed with a detailed account of the process used (for Election Day Chief Judges only).
- Both parties collaborated with excellent results. Steve Holland and Cathy Klein were the party reps.
- Last time around, 90% of the positions were filled but only 52% actually worked. Karen's position was created to try to turn that around.
- Out of 240 positions, 235 names have been chosen, so only 5 more are needed.
- Karen has worked with potential judges to make sure they understand the requirements and to weed out those who will not be able to do it.
- Karen said party chairs Jeff Rose and Doug Brown did a great job in filling the slots.
- Each location needs one chief and two party judges.
- Each party can nominate 2 chiefs and 2 party judges.

- Preference is given to judges' precinct residency, experience, and past performance. Poll worker feedback and incident reports are considered.
- They look for people who are calm and confident, are organized rule followers, and have the ability to manage people.
- The process was driven by NC Statute 163 article 5, which details the rules for filling the positions, the qualifications, and the oath to be administered.
- Mr. Aceto asked about unaffiliated voters filling judge positions. The statute does not require party affiliation and both parties have nominated unaffiliated. Three of the chief judges are unaffiliated.
- Corinne stated that of Buncombe's 204,000 registered voters, 85,000 (42%) are unaffiliated, 73,000 (35%) are Democrats, and 44,500 (22%) are Republican. Libertarian and Green make up 1%.
- Mr. Aceto asked about the No Labels party but it really wasn't clear what his question was. He approves of our taking merit and past history into account.
- Ms. Stein asked what would be done about the 5 vacancies. Karen said the parties can still submit names, and she has the ability to choose candidates herself to fill the slots.
- There were congratulations all around for the success of the process and how important it is. Our best effort so far, according to Jake.
- The judges were approved 5/0.

Next Meeting Date:

September 12 at 5:30 pm

Location: 59 Woodfin Place