

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

**Monitor Name:** George Elam, Aiden Carson in person

**Date & Time:** February 20, 2024 3:30 PM

**Names of Board Members Attending:**

Jake Quinn, Chairman

Mary Ann Braine, Board Member

Steven Aceto, Board Member

Glen Shults, Secretary

Sally Stein: Board Member (virtual)

**Names of Buncombe Co Staff Attending:** Corrine Duncan, Director; Devin Whitney, Elections Technical Specialist; Justin Tate, Absentee Coordinator; and Anna Katherine Moore, Administrative Coordinator and Clerk to the Board; Bria Bailey, Elections Technical Specialist; Joyce Kanavel (back temporarily), Bobby

**Location of Meeting:** 59 Woodfin Place, Asheville NC

**Observers:**

10 observers (including 4 assistants for absentee ballot review) as follows: 5 Democrats, 2 Republicans, and 3 LWVAB. Two virtual observers.

**Agenda Items**

**I. Approval of Agenda**

Agenda for this meeting approved 5/0

**II. Minutes**

Minutes for 2/13 meeting approved 5/0

**III. Office Updates – Corinne Duncan**

Early Voting is going smoothly, with somewhat lower numbers than the 2020 Primary. Daily turnout stats are available via the front page of the BCBOE website ([here](#)).

Last week Corinne did a live Q&A on the county’s portal called [Let’s Talk](#). Frequent media access will be ongoing, and on Election Day Ms. Duncan will give media updates 3 times during the day.

Only Chatham County has higher requests for Absentee Ballots than Buncombe, based on the percentage of registered voters. The last day to request an Absentee Ballot is February 27.

One precinct captain has had to be replaced, in precinct 9.1.

**IV. Absentee Ballot Review – Justin Tate**

Justin presented 6 Absentee Ballots to be reviewed by the Board. These ballots had issues such as the ballot being placed in the clear sleeve meant for the voter id. They were reviewed in accordance to numbered memo 2021-03. After review they were sealed so they can be counted later.

A question was raised about what the appropriate postage is for Absentee Ballots and what happens if the voter does not apply the correct postage. Jake said postage is \$1.63

(3 Forever stamps will work). Sometimes ballots are received by the BOE without the proper postage, but it's not known what the actual policy of the Post Office is. Some may be returned to sender.

Justin presented 15 Overseas Civilian Absentee Ballots for Board review. They were approved 5/0. One of those ballots was pulled aside because the voter had written on the back of the ballot a clarification of an over vote, indicating which choice was intended. The Board approved that ballot and it was then duplicated. The ballot was approved 5/0.

Justin presented 34 ballots with Exception Forms for Board review. All were approved 5/0.

Next, 3 2-party teams were formed, pairing duplicating team members who were in the audience with Board members, to review 138 ballots that the staff had recommended for approval. Two issues were found:

- One ballot was found where the CID number on the ballot did not match the envelope. No matching envelope was found and the ballot was set aside, reducing the number from 138 to 137. The voter will be contacted and asked to redo or Vote Early.
- One ballot had an over vote where there was a large X placed over the unintended vote. The intent was obvious and the ballot was duplicated. There was some discussion regarding the importance of knowing the voter's intent, and the need to take an extra second to quickly scan ballots for such handwritten indications.

A total of 186 ballots were approved (137 Civilian Ballots + 15 Overseas Ballots + 34 Ballots with Exception Forms).

Ms. Braine asked a question about the buffer zones at Early Voting Sites. Some people have been uncertain as to whether the maps provided by the BOE showed required locations for electioneering or just suggestions. It seems the maps clearly indicate the 50-foot boundary limit for electioneering, and suggested areas to be used which will not impede voting. Other places might be acceptable as long as they are outside the 50-foot limit and don't impede voting or parking.

**V. Next Meeting:** Tuesday, February 27 at 3:30 **Location:** 59 Woodfin Place