

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

Monitor Name: George Elam

Date & Time: March 4, 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

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 as follows: 4 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 1 Common Cause, and 1 LWVAB. Two virtual observers.

Agenda Items

I. Approval of Agenda

Agenda for this meeting approved 5/0

II. Minutes

No minutes

III. Office Updates – Corinne Duncan

- The chief Judge checkout went smoothly. All Early Voting sites packed up.
- Absentee Ballot list will be prepared after this meeting. Corrine had a media event this morning.
- WLOS will have an in depth interview at 6 pm (yesterday) ?
- Early Voters voters surpassed 26K and the estimate for Election Day is 25-30K
- The website will have all Election Day voting sites plus the number of voters in line. There will be a 50' barrier at the sites to prevent campaigning and electioneering.
- Corrine doesn't expect long lines.
- It's too late to mail in Absentee Ballots as they must be received by 7:30 on Election Day.
- Absentee Ballot results will be given at 7:30 on Election Day.
- Last Thursday Corrine presented Avril the Budget as it stands. Avril asked the budget be increased \$56K to cover the cost of county wide school board redistricting.

- Mary Ann asked for a program breakdown of the budget. Corinne said she would get that to her.
- The candidate coordinator position is closed. There were 80 applicants. The aim is to have the position in place in the near future.
- Jake said there are two petition drives ongoing to get on the ballot. The one for County Commission Chair has reached the threshold. The other, running for County Commissioner seat #3, did not reach the threshold.
- Mary Ann asked about signature verification on the petitions. Does staff check each voter signature? Corinne said each signature must match the signature on the registration file. If it does not a letter is sent to the signator. There is a signature verification pilot ongoing , but not in Buncombe.
- Tonight the pre- Election Day Absentee Ballot list of election thus far will be printed and signed by Chair, who takes an oath for the certification. Then it will be notarized . Any Absentee Ballots ballots received tomorrow, Election Day, will be processed on Canvas day.
- Corinne said staff will be at three locations on Election Day. Neggy will be at the office headquarters, Corrine at fire station #13, and one will be at the warehouse.
- Tomorrow at 6 am deputies will bring the Absentee Ballot lists. At 6:30 the polls open. At 10am, 2pm, and 4 pm poll workers will send in the first voting numbers via an APP on their cell phones.
- At 11:30 Corrine will give the media update from Station 13. At 2pm the Board must be at 59 Woodfin in person. There will be 1 Board challenge at 2 pm – a deceased person (no death certificate yet). The ballot will be pulled.
- The Board will learn how the DS-200 is shut down.
- Board must be present next at 6 pm. At 6:30 they prepare the Absentee Ballot count for 7:30.
- There was a discussion of a road project at Emmas Grove, near the polling place.

IV. Absentee Ballot Review – Justin Tate

- Justin: presented 11 ballots with envelope irregularities, 10 of which were not controversial. One had an exception form with no exception boxes checked but the last four SS numbers were included. The voter also had to have an assistant to fill out the form. There was much discussion as to whether the ballot should be counted or not. Jake seemed to lean toward approval, also stating that to reject the ballot would require a unanimous board vote. Mr. Aceto said the affidavit was not complete and therefore must be rejected. Much back and forth ensued. Mr. Shults read from a numbered memo and from the statute 163-166(b)2. Corrine gave information from a state board meeting that paralleled the issue. Mary Ann made a motion to send the ballot back to staff for cure.
- Corrine said the voter would be contacted and given options. The vote was 5-0.
- The other 10 were approved 5-0.
- Justin presented 2 military and 33 overseas civilian. Both were approved 5-0
- Justin presented 60 ballots with exception forms pending review. 4 bipartisan teams formed for the review. They were approved 5-0 but later it was found that there were only 59 ballots, not 60. Line number 11 on the list had been left blank. The vote was corrected.

- 298 civilian ballots were presented to 4 bipartisan teams for review. They were approved 5-0.
- 4 ballots were reviewed for voter intent. Three of them were duplicated and approved 5-0.
- 1 with a questionable mark in one race was discussed at length. The vote to approve was 3-2 with Shults and Braine voting in opposition.
- Totals tonight were: 404 ballots approved.
- Executed civilian AB ballots thus far total 1309
- Overseas ballots thus far total 88
- Military ballots thus far total 7

V. Certified List of Approved Absentees

Jake took the oath for certification of the three categories: Civilian, Civilian overseas, & Military.

V. Next Meeting: Friday, March 8 at 5:30 **Location:** 59 Woodfin Place