

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS

**Ken Raymond**  
Chairman

**Stuart Russell**  
Secretary

**Fleming El-Amin**  
Member



**Robert H. Coffman**  
Director of Elections

**Lamar Joyner**  
Deputy Director

## FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 27, 2013

### **Meeting Called to Order**

An absentee meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Elections was held in the Fourth Floor Meeting Room on August 27, 2013. The meeting convened at 6:00 PM, Chairman Ken Raymond presiding. No speakers were present for the public comment session.

Board Members in attendance: Chairman Ken Raymond, Secretary Stuart Russell,  
Member Fleming El-Amin

Staff Members in attendance: Director Robert Coffman, Joshua Chunn, Judy Speas,

### **Approval of Minutes**

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the last meeting and found no errors. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to approve the Board minutes of August 20, 2013. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Approval of Absentee Ballots Returned**

Mr. Chunn recommended 27 absentee ballots for approval and 3 absentee ballots for disapproval in the Winston-Salem Primary Election weekly report. The reason for disapproval was that a candidate signed as the witness. A letter of explanation and a second absentee ballot would be mailed to the three voters. Chairman Raymond asked for a motion regarding the absentee ballot report. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to accept the staff recommendation of the returned absentee ballots.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Mail Absentee Ballot Issue**

Mr. Coffman discussed a recent issue regarding the mailed absentee ballots for the 2013 Winston-Salem Primary Election. That morning, election staff realized that thirteen absentee ballot requests had used the same mailing address. Also, a candidate returned three voted absentee ballots that used that mailing address. The same three absentee ballots were disapproved in the weekly report. Mr. Coffman conferred with the State Board of Elections general counsel regarding the issue. Even though it is legal for a ballot to be sent to any mailing address if the voter completed and signed the request, it is good to be observant if there is a semblance of impropriety. Mr. Coffman explained the issue to the candidate involved and he agreed to discontinue the method of assisting absentee voters. Mr. Coffman stated that he would also like to speak to the absentee voters regarding the exact assistance given to them. Member El-Amin moved and Chairman Raymond seconded a motion that Mr. Coffman should contact the absentee voters to further investigate the issue and report to the Board at the next meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Raymond questioned two absentee ballots that were mailed to the Forsyth County Detention Center at 201 N. Church Street. Mr. Coffman explained that the voters may not have been convicted of a crime. The voters would be allowed to request absentee ballots if held on a misdemeanor, waiting on an arraignment or in the process of a trial. Mr. Coffman agreed that any felony conviction status could be checked through the Department of Corrections. If an absentee ballot had been processed in an illegal manner, it would be retrievable. Chairman Raymond moved and Secretary Russell seconded that Mr. Coffman check the legal voting status of Robert B. Tolliver and Steven B. Tisdale residing at 201 N. Church Street and report to the Board at the next meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Modified Voter Registration Drive Policy**

Secretary Russell reviewed that Chairman Raymond had entered a motion in the last meeting that would require an individual conducting a voter registration drive to complete a contact form upon return of the voter registration forms. In the policy, the registration forms may be rejected if the individual did not sign the required contact form. In the past, improperly completed ballots were turned in and there was no way to contact the individual conducting the voter registration drives. Even though there was a concern, the procedure must comply with the law. Secretary Russell stated that a motion of a revised voluntary policy may be helpful in correcting the issue. Secretary Russell moved:

When a person conducting a registration drive brings registration forms to the board, the board will ask that person if they wish to leave their contact information with the board so that they can be notified if there are issues with their registration forms. If the person consents, the board will hand that person a form requesting the same identifying information from Ken's earlier proposal. If the person declines, the board will accept the registration forms as required by law.

Chairman Raymond offered one amendment for consideration that the proposal state that it would go into effect upon approval of a sample form provided by the Board of Elections staff. Member El-Amin objected to the motion, stating that even if it were a voluntary process, some may have concerns that it may be required. Secretary Russell questioned whether it would be acceptable if the sample form stated in bold letters or large font that it is only a voluntary form. Member El-Amin responded that he would not want anything to get in the way of anyone being able to vote. Secretary Russell moved to adopt the policy that was presented with Chairman Raymond's changes and that the document states that it is only a voluntary form. Chairman Raymond seconded the motion and asked for a vote from the Board. Chairman Raymond and Secretary Russell voted aye; Member El-Amin voted nay. **Motion carried.** Mr. Coffman agreed to send a draft of the form document to the Board members by email.

### **Other Business**

Member El-Amin thanked Mr. Coffman for a recent email of the State Board of Elections training. Secretary Russell stated that he enjoyed attending the training. Chairman Raymond stated that he looked forward to the next training.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Raymond moved and Secretary Russell seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Approved:

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Ken Raymond, Chair

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stuart Russell, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fleming El-Amin, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachments on File:** none