

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 – SEPTEMBER 17, 2013 WINSTON-SALEM PRIMARY ELECTION CANVASS DAY

Meeting Called to Order

A 2013 Winston-Salem Primary Election Canvass Day meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Elections was held in the elections storage room on September 17, 2013. The meeting convened at 11:27 AM, Chairman Ken Raymond presiding.

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

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

Public Comment Session

Chairman Raymond opened the meeting with a public comment session. Guests were instructed to complete a public speaker card and to state their name and address when called. Speaking time would be three minutes and include any questions which would be answered after the close of the public comment session. Speaker Joanne Allen of PO Box 284, Winston-Salem, NC questioned the absentee voting process. With no other speakers present, Chairman Raymond asked for a motion to close the public comment session. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to close the public comment session. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Coffman then explained absentee voting for nursing home residents. In the current election year, nursing home residents may request an absentee ballot on an application or in a hand-written letter. With the 2014 legislative changes, multi-partisan teams would be visiting care facilities when assistance is requested. Curbside voting is available for all qualified voters. Voters may request assistance in communicating with the poll worker. Secretary Russell confirmed that the county board must defer to the statutes enacted by the General Assembly and the State Board of Elections on the process of absentee voting. Chairman Raymond agreed that the county board of elections is bound by current law.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Raymond requested that the Board members review the minutes of September 3 and September 10, 2013. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to approve the Board minutes of September 3 and September 10, 2013. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Approval of Absentee Ballots Returned

Mr. Chunn recommended 20 supplemental absentee ballots for approval, 5 supplemental absentee ballots for disapproval and 8 supplemental absentee ballots for pending status. Mr. Coffman explained the pending status of the 8 supplemental absentee ballots by distributing the State Board of Elections Order in the Matter of: Timely Transmission of Civilian Absentee Ballots. A different process for returned absentee ballots was followed under the prior State Board of Elections. If the ballot was received by Friday of Election week with no postmark, the assumption was that it was mailed by Election Day and the ballots were approved. Under the current policy of the State Board, anything received after 5 PM on the day before Election Day must be postmarked by Election Day to be approved. Therefore, the 8 absentee ballots in pending status are not timely because they were not postmarked. Secretary Russell read from NCGS 163-231(b), Transmitting Executed Absentee Ballots to County Board of Elections:

Ballots issued under Article 20 of this Chapter not postmarked by the day of the election shall not be accepted by the county board of elections.

Mr. Coffman stated that many ballots arrive with no postmark from the Postal Service. Member El-Amin suggested and Mr. Coffman agreed that the voters of the 8 supplemental absentee ballots in pending status and the 5 supplemental absentee ballots in disapproved status should be notified of their ballot's result. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion that the thirteen voters be informed of the status of their absentee ballot by referring to the General Statute. **Motion carried unanimously.** Chairman Raymond moved and Member El-Amin seconded a motion to approve the staff recommendation of 20 supplemental absentee ballots for approval and 13 supplemental absentee ballots for disapproval. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Hand/Eye Audit

Mr. Coffman suggested that the staff should conduct the mandatory hand/eye audit with the Board in attendance in the adjoining storage room. The purpose of the audit is to compare the number of actual paper ballots against the Election Night vote total. Precinct 013 – Sedge Garden Elementary School (15 votes) and Precinct 603 – Diggs-Latham Elementary School (136 votes) were randomly chosen by the State Board of Elections for the hand/eye audit after the 2013 Municipal Primary Election. The ballot item chosen to be audited was the Mayor of Winston-Salem. After the ballots were removed from the sealed ballot boxes, a team of three employees completed the hand/eye audit. The team members marked each precinct reconciliation tally sheet with fence posting to record all votes. Both Precincts 013 and 603 vote totals matched exactly with the Election Night report.

Approval of Provisional Ballots

Mr. Coffman explained the Provisional Voters Statistics by Result report showing 26 provisional ballots from the 2013 Municipal Primary Election. Staff recommended 9 provisional ballots for disapproval, 3 for partial approval and 14 for approval. Reasons for disapproval were unincorporated voters; no ballot in the envelope; no registration; and, removed voters. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to approve the staff recommendation for provisional ballots. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Certification of Primary Election

Mr. Coffman stated that there were 11,375 ballots cast after the provisional ballots and supplemental absentee ballots were tabulated into the official results for the 2013 Municipal Primary Election. Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to certify the results of the 2013 Municipal Primary Election. **Motion carried unanimously.** Board members signed the Abstract of Votes document which would be mailed to the NC State Board of Elections, the City of Winston-Salem and retained at the Forsyth County Board of Elections.

One Stop Plan for Municipal General Election

Mr. Coffman distributed and explained the proposed One-Stop Early Voting Location, Dates, and Times schedule for the 2013 Municipal General Election. The municipalities of Bethania, Clemmons, Kernersville, Lewisville, Rural Hall, Tobaccoville, Walkertown and Winston-Salem would be involved and would reimburse the election cost. Traditionally, only one Early Voting location has been scheduled for the municipal general election. Early Voting would operate from Thursday, October 17, 2013 until Saturday, November 2, 2013. Secretary Russell moved and Member El-Amin seconded a motion to approve the One-Stop Early Voting Location, Dates, and Times document. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Other Business

Mr. Coffman presented the Election Schedule with the required meetings for the 2013 Municipal General Election. Board meetings for the approval of returned absentee ballots were scheduled for 6:30 PM on October 15, 22 and 29, 2013. Chairman Raymond questioned Mr. Coffman’s response to the public record request of the Civitas Institute organization.

Adjournment

Member El-Amin moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried** and the meeting was adjourned at 12:24 PM.

Approved:

Ken Raymond, Chair

Date

Stuart Russell, Secretary

Date

Fleming El-Amin, Member

Date

Attachments on File: State Board of Elections Order in the Matter of: Timely Transmission of Civilian Absentee Ballots; SBOE Order on Civilian Absentee Voting in Municipal Elections email dated 8/7/2013; Forsyth County One-Stop Early Voting Location, Dates, and Times; Provisional Voters Statistics by Result report.

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