

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Linda J. Sutton
CHAIR

Frank M. Dickerson
SECRETARY

Jerry D. Jordan
MEMBER



Robert H. Coffman
Director of Elections

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING – April 27, 2010

Present: Linda J. Sutton, Chair
Frank M. Dickerson, Secretary
Jerry D. Jordan, Member

Staff: Rob Coffman, Director of Elections
Lamar Joyner, Deputy Director of Elections
Judy Speas, Senior Office Assistant
Rebecca VanderKlok, Office Assistant
Kevin McGuckin, Assistant County Attorney

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM in the Government Center Multi-Purpose Room B.

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes for April 20, 2010. Ms. Sutton entertained a motion for corrections or additions to the minutes. Mr. Dickerson moved to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Absentee Ballots

The Staff recommended 101 absentee ballots for approval, four for disapproval and one for provisional status. Ms. VanderKlok explained that four were disapproved for reason of no witnesses and one was in provisional status for no identification. Second absentee ballots were mailed to allow these voters to submit an approved ballot. Mr. Dickerson moved to approve the recommendation of absentee ballots by staff. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Dickerson requested an explanation of the procedure during the public comment session of the meeting. Ms. Sutton explained that an individual who wishes to address the board should complete a request card and would be allowed three minutes to speak. The Board would address the concerns after the speaker's point of view was expressed. Public speaker cards were distributed before the meeting was called to order.

The first individual to speak was Vic Johnson, Jr., incumbent and candidate for School Board District 1. Mr. Johnson expressed two concerns that were viewed at the government center early voting site. Mr. Johnson explained that he had witnessed individuals electioneering inside the building. He described the electioneering as wearing clothing and stickers that supported candidates. Mr.

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Johnson also questioned whether candidates should be allowed to assist voters in the voting booth. Ms. Sutton asked Mr. Johnson whether he understood NCGS 163-166.8, the election law regarding voter assistance. This North Carolina election law states that any registered voter shall be entitled to assistance with entering and exiting the voting booth and in preparing ballots. Mr. Jordan agreed with Mr. Johnson that electioneering should not occur in the voting enclosure and that the office staff do strive to prevent it. However, the staff may not restrict candidates from assisting voters with physical disabilities, illiteracy or blindness if the candidate is that voter's choice for assistance. Mr. Dickerson asserted that the staff can not question the voter's preference or request for assistance. The second speaker was Constance Johnson, who described instances of electioneering that had occurred at the government center early voting site. She stated that voters were being assisted by candidates wearing clothing and stickers supporting themselves. She asserted that the voters had not stated to the poll worker that assistance was needed. Mr. Jordan explained that election law does allow campaign hats, pins, shirts and literature to be worn or carried while in line to vote or while voting. These items are not considered to be electioneering at that time. However, there should be no persuasion to cast a vote in any particular way at that time. Also, the voter should state to the chief judge that they request assistance from the person of their choice and the reason for the assistance. Mr. Jordan stated that the Board would neither be able to investigate whether a voter truly had a problem that required assistance during voting; nor could they discriminate against their choice of person for assistance. However, poll workers would be reminded that voters should request the assistance and state the reason.

Other Business

Mr. Coffman explained a document titled One Stop Transaction Statistics detailing voter amounts from April 15 to April 27 for the 2010 Primary one stop voting at the Forsyth County Government Center. He stated that the early one stop voting would continue until Saturday, May 1 at 1:00. Mr. Coffman stated that training in the operation of e-poll books was continuing this week and that the poll workers would also have paper label poll books for additional assistance in the Primary Election.

Adjournment

Ms. Sutton requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jordan moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM. The next Board of Elections meeting will be on Election Day, May 4, 2010 at 4:00 PM in the Board of Elections Conference Room.

Linda J. Sutton, Chair

Frank M. Dickerson, Secretary

Jerry D. Jordan, Member