

**MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
REGULAR SESSION  
Board of Elections Conference Room  
Wednesday, May 11, 2016  
3:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Smathers called the meeting of the Madison County Board of Elections to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Board of Elections Conference Room. In attendance were 2 members of the public; Dyatt F. Smathers, Chair; Ray Lewis, Secretary; Jerry Wallin, Member; Wade Gahagan, Deputy Director; and Kathy Ray, Director.

AGENDA

**Moved, Seconded (JW, RL) and Carried (3,0) to set the agenda.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (3,0) to approve the April 13, 2016 meeting minutes.**

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Smathers reported that he spoke with new school superintendent to inform him of school usage for the June 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional Primary and reviewed the circumstances at the Laurel School site.

He also reported that he spoke with the State Board of Elections and was granted permission to reduce the number of poll worker assistants from 6 to 5 at each precinct for the Congressional Primary.

Chair Smathers updated those present regarding the ongoing litigation to the congressional redistricting and the impact of Federal District Court Judge Schroeder's HB 589 decision. According to the Carolina Journal May 2016 edition, a panel of three judges will rule whether or not the new redistricting is constitutional. If not, the June 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional Primary could be called off even as late as one day prior to the election. The Judge Schroeder ruling upholds photo ID, and will eliminate Same Day Registration and out-of-precinct voting for all elections after the June 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional Primary.

MEMBERS' REPORTS

Member Wallin commented on the unpredictability of the judge's decision. He also expressed gratitude to Chair Smathers for following up with the State Board regarding the reduction of poll worker assistants for the June 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional Primary.

Secretary Lewis commented that Judge Schroeder's ruling was very thorough and informative.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The April 30, 2016 budget and expenditure report was presented. Some line items reflect deficits. Budget amendments have been submitted to cover the line items. The Director will meet with county commissioners to finalize the proposed budget for 2016-2017. The current budget contains sufficient funds for the upcoming Congressional Primary election expenses. No additional funding will need to be requested.

An NCADE Conference will be held in Wilmington April 9-11, 2017. The Charlotte Conference is scheduled for August 7-9, 2016.

Eight hundred fifty pounds of election documents and records were disposed of at American Recycling on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. The documents included various dated miscellaneous office documents, documents that have been superseded in administrative value, and disposable election records from the Municipal 2011, 2013, and 2015 elections and the May 2014 Primary Election.

#### NEW BUSINESS

A discussion ensued regarding the proposed deputy director job description and minimum qualifications. Member Wallin questioned whether an associate's degree is necessary; and cited, as example, the exemplary job performance of the former deputy director. Chair Smathers opined that 92 percent of the job will require technology and computer science or related field, and that the requirement is a necessity. Secretary Lewis commented that applicant's meeting the minimum requirements will require less training and mentoring. Chair Smathers underscored the importance of hiring election workers and office staff that have the level of computer literacy necessary for the job.

**Moved, Seconded (RI, JW) and Carried (3,0) to approve the deputy director job description as presented.**

The Board will review the annual office staff evaluation instrument for the director and complete it at the June meeting. The Director will complete the annual evaluation for the deputy director for presentation at the June meeting.

A discussion ensued regarding the deputy director's salary. The Chair presented a spreadsheet to refer to during a discussion.

**Moved, Seconded (DS, JW) and Carried (3,0) to increase the Deputy Director's salary by \$100 per month, \$0.63 cents per hour, effective immediately.** Secretary Lewis commented that the amount is a very modest increase.

**Moved, Seconded (DS, RL) and Carried (3,0) to increase the Director's salary by \$100 per month, effective immediately.** The Chair instructed the Director to prepare the necessary information and documentation for the finance department. Secretary Lewis complimented the former Board of Elections that hired the Director.

**Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (3,0) to approve the changes to the poll worker assistants as presented by the Director.** The Board agreed to keep an additional poll worker assistant at the Hot Springs and Spring Creek precincts unless needed by another precinct.

The Director presented information regarding the Certified Election/Registration Administration (CERA) Professional Education Program. She indicated that both she and the Deputy Director were willing to obtain the national certification with the Board's approval. She pointed out that the program was expensive but would promote a higher level of professionalism, knowledge, and skill. There are two upcoming trainings – one at Ft. Myers, Florida in July and a National Conference in Philadelphia in August. The Director indicated the certification could be completed in two years. Board members will review the program manual for discussion at an upcoming Board meeting. Secretary Lewis indicated he thought it would be a good investment in the Board of Elections employees, but he understood the budgetary considerations.

#### CITIZEN COMMENTS

A citizen commented that a 1 percent increase in salary is outpaced by the Federal reserves' targeted annual inflation rate of 2 percent.

A citizen questioned why Department of Social Services (DSS) records were not kept on upper levels of buildings in downtown Marshall to avoid destruction by flooding. The Chair responded that the DSS building was a single story building at the time of the floods. The Chair elaborated that the current administration building was purchased with federal flood reimbursement and insurance funds.

If the court decides the old 118<sup>th</sup> congressional district stands, there will still be a primary for the judges. The Chair responded there will be a primary, but it will be contingent upon the 3 judge panel's decision.

A citizen asked why election notices were not run in the newspaper as Public Service Announcements. The Chair responded that they were legal advertisements that required an affidavit for the election retention records.

A citizen commented that there would be significant savings as well as other benefits by pursuing vote-by-mail as is done in other states such as Oregon.

Comments were made regarding unaffiliated voters.

#### OTHER MATTERS

The Director informed the Board Chair and Secretary that they will be eligible for North Carolina Election Official Certification in August 2016 and May 2017 respectively.

The Director informed the Board that she is communicating with the school system to obtain onsite assistance for the Laurel School polling site on Election Day. The precinct elections staff needs someone readily available that has knowledge of the building and campus in the event of power outages and/or blown circuits, problems with water, problems with door and gate locks, or any other building related issues.

The Director informed the Board that the Board of Elections security cameras are being replaced with cameras and internet based monitoring. The current system is experiencing interference that seems to be either an electrical grounding or hardware problem. The decision to replace the system was made in collaboration with the Madison County IT staff.

**Moved, Seconded (DS, JW) and Carried (3,0) to hold the August 10, 2016 Board meeting at 9:00 a.m. rather than 3:00 p.m.** The public will be noticed accordingly.

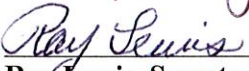
#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

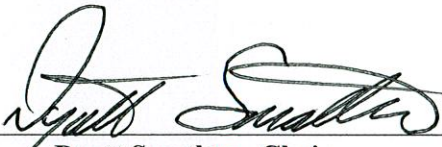
Absentee Meeting: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Board of Elections.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

  
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Kathy Ray, Director

  
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Ray Lewis, Secretary

  
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Dyatt Smathers, Chair