

**Madison County Board of Elections
Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2018**

The Madison County Board of Elections met on Tuesday, October 23, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Elections Conference Room. The meeting recessed and moved across the street to the Finance Office Conference Room. In attendance: Dyatt Smathers, Chair; Sandra Tolley, Vice Chair; Ray Lewis, Secretary; Jerry Wallin, Member; Kathy Ray, Director; and three (3) members of the public.

Call to Order

Chair Smathers called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Agenda

Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve the agenda as amended to add a personnel session following UOCAVA absentee applications.

Chair's and Members' Reports

Chair Smathers announced that it was great to be gathered as a Board given the recent court rulings that cast doubt on the authority of four-member boards to act or meet. The Panel overseeing *Cooper IV* has stayed its October 18, 2018 Order until 11:59 p.m. on December 3. The stay means all county boards may continue to meet and conduct election processes. He also commented that he has visited all early voting sites and things are running smoothly. He complimented the poll workers and office staff for their willingness to step up and do a great job.

Member Wallin commented that he has visited all sites. He expressed concern about the need for poll workers. He suggested increasing the compensation as a recruitment incentive.

Vice Chair Tolley has heard positive remarks from the community about all the early voting sites including the new Board of Elections site. People have also expressed gratitude that each municipality got to keep an early voting site.

Member Lewis added that Mars Hill Public Library has become the county's most used early voting site and complimented the poll workers.

The Chair finalized the report by adding that more early voting directional signs will be placed at the intersection of US 25-70 Hwy and Robert's Hill Road.

Director's Report

The Director commented that Mars Hill Public Library early voting statistics are comparable with the 2016 Presidential election turnout for the first days of early voting. Hot Springs Community Center and the Board of Election sites are comparable with the 2014 mid-term election.

The Director indicated that Mars Hill Public Library early voting staff needs to be increased by adding two more poll workers.

The Director commented that the new Board of Elections Office has served the county well as a temporary site. The county has worked diligently to make the space both functional and comfortable for all election activities. Providing both office space and early voting services at the new site has presented some challenges; however, all activities are running smoothly. The fire proof cabinets and office furniture remains at the former Board of Elections office.

Contacts are being made to ensure that Sandy Mush, Laurel, and South Marshall Precincts are prepared for Election Day.

Approval of Minutes

Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve the October 16, 2018 meeting minutes.

Same Day Registration (SDR)

Discussion ensued regarding the procedures for SDR and Mars Hill University students. The North Carolina State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement provided the county board with guidance on the SDR process for college students. Chair Smathers obtained the University's student listing and residential addresses for cross reference with the SDR applications and college IDs.

Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve 6 Same Day Registration Applications that were processed at the Mars Hill Public Library early voting site.

Approval of Absentee Applications

The Board reviewed the civilian absentee ballot applications presented for approval. **Moved, Seconded (JW, RL) and Carried (4,0) to approve 22 CIVILIAN absentee applications.**

The Board reviewed the one-stop absentee ballot applications presented for approval. **Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve 1,698 ONE-STOP absentee applications.**

The Board reviewed the UOCAVA ballot applications presented for approval. **Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve 4 UOCAVA absentee applications.**

The Board reviewed the absentee ballot applications presented as spoiled and reissued. **Moved, Seconded (RL, JW) and Carried (4,0) to spoil 3 CIVILIAN absentee applications.**

Personnel

Moved, Seconded (DS, RL) and Carried (4,0) to approve Russell Taylor as an early voting poll worker.

Moved, Seconded (DS, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve the transfer of early voting poll worker DeLora Buckner to the Mars Hill Public Library.

Moved, Seconded (DS, JW) and Carried (4,0) to approve increasing the early voting poll worker hourly rate to \$12.50, beginning October 16, 2018 and for all future elections.

The Chair instructed the Director to check the budget for an increase in the flat rate of pay for Election Day poll worker assistants and judges and bring a recommendation to the next board meeting.

Citizens Comments

A citizen commented that the struggle to procure funding, staff, and equipment for elections could be lessened by moving to a vote by mail system.

A citizen referenced a Democracy NC report stating that 237,000 voters turned out the first day of early voting for this mid-term election, doubling the number from comparable elections. He also shared that the report indicated there was a 37 percent increase in the young African American / Black turnout.

Announcements

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 30, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment

Moved, Seconded (JW, RL) and Carried (4,0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes Approved 10-30-18

Kathy Ray

Kathy Ray, Director

Ray Lewis

Ray Lewis, Secretary

Dyatt Smathers

Dyatt Smathers, Chair