

**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
January 13, 2022

The scheduled meeting of the Transylvania County Board of Elections was called to order by Chair Champion at 10 AM on Thursday, January 13, 2022, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

**Present**

**Board Members:**

**Staff Members:**

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Chair: Sara Champion  
Secretary: Lee McMinn  
Sandra Watson  
Wendy Warwick\*

Director: Jeff Storey  
Deputy Director: Laura Owen\*

\*Remotely via Zoom

Visitors: Judith West\*, Kathleen Barnes\*, Virginia Pendergrass, Herschel Johnson, Barbara Jackson\*

**Review and Approval of Agenda**

Chair Champion asked for a review of the agenda. There were no amendments to the agenda. **Chair Champion made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Review and Approval of Previous Minutes**

The board was presented with the minutes from the previous meeting. **Member Watson made a motion to approve the board meeting minutes for December 9, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2022 Board Meeting Schedule**

Chair Champion asked the board to review the schedule. Member Watson wanted clarification on the start time for Tuesday board meetings. The director responded the regular meetings noted with an asterisk should start at 5 PM to coincide with the required absentee board meetings. Director Storey will modify the note on the meeting schedule to reflect 5 PM for those dates. **Member Warwick made a motion to approve the board meeting schedule. The motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Champion asked for conversation regarding whether to continue Zoom meetings. The director had gathered feedback from board members and felt the consensus was regular board meetings could continue to be held in-person and via Zoom while COVID is still a factor. Director Storey didn't think remote meetings are ideal given the limitations of the equipment on site but felt it would be prudent to continue while COVID concerns, and protocols were ramping up again.

### **One Stop Implementation Plan**

Chair Champion asked to continue the discussion from the December meeting regarding the proposed one stop implementation plan. The packet provided to the board includes the early voting turnout in the 2020 Primary, the previous hours for 2018 and 2020 Primary, the requirements as set forth by the State Board of Elections, and the 2022 proposed plan. Chair Champion asked the director to present the proposed 2022 plan to the board. Director Storey stated the proposed plan accounts for an expectation of a higher turnout than 2018 provided. The sheriff, county commissioners, and board of education contests should provide more interest than previous years. The proposed 2022 one stop early voting plan would have 152 cumulative hours with 11.5 hours on weekdays and 7 hours on the last two Saturdays. The plan is comparable to the availability provided in the 2020 Primary rather than 2018. The director felt the proposed plan would help with staffing on the open Saturdays and was in line with total hours available in 2020. The chair asked for thoughts on the proposal. Member Warwick felt the proposal was a nice compromise in relation to the Saturday hours and that the solution was satisfactory. Member Watson expressed disappointment with the length of state required hours on weekdays given prior turnout and how that affects early voting workers. Chair Champion commented it does necessitate having two shifts rather than one with 11.5-hour days. The chair asked if there was any further discussion before voting on the plan. **Secretary McMinn made a motion to approve the proposed early voting plan as presented. The motion unanimously carried.**

The director informed the board that county commissioners felt a run-off election is likely and asked for an estimate of the cost to make a budget amendment. Director Storey asked the board for feedback on the early voting location and hours in the event of a runoff election since that would affect the cost. The board felt the estimate should reflect the possibility of mandated hours congruent to the May 2022 primary early voting hours. The director will submit the estimate to the county manager.

### **Absentee Board Meeting Schedule**

Chair Champion asked the board to review the proposed absentee schedule for the May 2022 Primary. Secretary McMinn asked when absentee ballots had to be mailed. The director stated candidate filing doesn't finish until March 4. UOCAVA ballots would need to be available near the end of March. Chair Champion asked to confirm that any ballots received must be reviewed by the board at the next scheduled meeting. The director stated that was accurate. The board reviewed the schedule. Chair Champion asked to confirm that absentee ballots after Election Day must be postmarked on May 17 or before and received by Friday, May 20 at 5 PM. The director confirmed. **Member Watson made a motion to approve the absentee board meeting schedule as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Precinct Official Appointments**

Director Storey presented the board with additional recommendations from the local political parties for Election Day assistants. The director explained that Charlene Harbin, who resides in precinct, has agreed to being the Democratic Judge in TC7 and would replace the out of precinct member appointed in August. Director Storey indicated there is still a need for a Republican Judge in the Brevard #4 precinct and a temporary replacement for Lisa Tisdale in Cedar Mountain for the May Primary. **Secretary McMinn made a motion to approve the**

precinct officials recommended for Brevard 1, Brevard 2, Brevard 3, Brevard 4, Cedar Mountain, Dunn's Rock, East Fork, Little River, Pisgah Forest, TC7 and Williamson Creek precincts. The motion unanimously carried.

#### **Preliminary FY 22-23 Budget**

Director Storey provided the board with a preliminary draft of the budget for fiscal year 22-23. There is one election in November during the fiscal year. The director explained in the event of a runoff election that splits the fiscal year, the budget amendment for FY21-22 would carry over into FY 22-23. The Elections budget will need to be submitted by the end of February. The final draft can be reviewed by the board at the next regular meeting prior to the director submitting it to the county. Director Storey provided details to the board regarding equipment purchases, training & travel, and contract labor.

Judith West was astounded by the level of detail in the budget and asked if that was the normal expectation from the county. The director explained the level of detail varies based on the line item. The county required some itemized details while others require only an explanation if costs exceed a 5% change threshold. The director provides the board with a detailed account but doesn't necessarily have to provide that level of detail to the county.

#### **DIRECTOR UPDATES**

Director Storey informed the board the conference originally scheduled for January has been moved to March 14-15 and will be virtual. There will be an in-person state conference on July 31 – August 2 with a location to be determined.

It is unknown when candidate filing will resume until the courts have resolved the redistricting issue. The director will provide updates as received.

#### **BOARD COMMENTS**

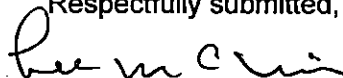
Secretary McMinn asked for an update on our online presence. The director indicated we had about 250 Facebook followers and would like to increase the numbers there. The elections website receives an average of 300 to 500 daily hits with around 100 unique identifiers daily. The director will resume Zoom calls with precinct officials to keep them informed and engaged and have them promote the website. The director cited previous outreach events that have been done prior to COVID including speaking engagements, booths at festivals, and media.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

In public comments, Kathleen Barnes thanked the board for having the meetings accessible to the public via zoom. The director and board indicated that regular monthly board meetings will remain on zoom while COVID is a factor and will re-evaluate whenever circumstances change.

**On a motion by Member Watson, the meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM.** The next scheduled meeting will be at 10 AM on February 10, 2022, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712 and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,



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Sara Champion  
Sara G. Champion, Chair

Wendy Warwick  
Wendy Warwick, Member

Lee McMinn, Secretary

Sandra E. Watson  
Sandra E. Watson, Member

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vacant

Approved by Board on: 2-10-2022