

**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
January 12, 2023

The regular meeting of the Transylvania County Board of Elections was called to order by Chair Champion at 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

**Present**

Board Members:	Present	Staff Members:
Chair: Sara Champion		Director: Jeff Storey
Secretary: Lee McMinn		Deputy Director: Laura Owen
Sandra Watson		Deputy Director: Julie Dennis
Wendy Warwick		
Judith West		

Visitors: Jeff Brewer, Barb Jackson, Herschel Johnson

**Review and Approval of Agenda**

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

**Review and Approval of Previous Minutes**

The board reviewed the amended minutes from the October 18, October 25, and November 1, 2022 board meetings. The minutes from the November 18, 2022 meeting was also submitted for board review. **Secretary McMinn made a motion to approve the board meeting minutes for October 18, October 25, and November 1, 2022, as amended and to approve the minutes submitted for November 18, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2023 Board Meeting Schedule**

The director presented the board with the draft 2023 board meeting schedule to review, which maintains meeting on the second Thursday of each month unless otherwise posted. Explanations were given of the board appointment process that happens in July of each odd year. The governor appoints the local county board of elections chair and the State Board of Elections appoints two local county members from each of the top two political parties in the state. The July meeting date has been altered to coincide with the board appointments. **Member Watson made a motion to approve the board meeting schedule for the 2023 calendar year. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **DIRECTOR UPDATES**

Director Storey provided the board with chief judge and election officials feedback and lessons learned from the 2022 General Election. Topics included supplies, parking, signage, and hours.

The director presented the board with a beginning draft of the FY 2023-24 budget and will provide the upcoming timelines once they have been released from county administration. An updated budget proposal will be reviewed by the board at the next meeting. The director reviewed with the board several line items that will change from the previous year due to the number of elections held within the fiscal year.

Director Storey indicated an upcoming board topic for the year will probably involve the Brevard #2 precinct location. There is interest in moving the precinct to the newly completed Mary C. Jenkins Community Center. The director explained the process involved for the board to consider precinct relocation. The board asked the director to initiate contact with the City of Brevard and the Community Center relaying an interest to explore the community center as a possible polling site.

The director explained the biennial list maintenance process that staff went through to remove inactive voters. The recent list maintenance procedures removed 1,157 inactive voters who had no record of contact with the board of elections since August 3, 2020.

## **BOARD AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Member Warwick commented on the discussions that took place at the North Carolina Association of Director's of Elections District 1 meeting in Haywood County. Member Warwick enjoyed hearing the feedback from fellow county boards of elections and felt emergency management training should continue to be a focal point. There was further discussion on various emergency preparedness methods. The director pointed out that our county provides great support for managing power outages, building, logistics, and security issues, etc. but welcomes the continual review of election related emergency plans.

Member Warwick asked about the feasibility of including a curbside cart as shown at the district meeting in the budget. Information will be provided to the board for the next meeting.

Member Watson asked if we knew what caused the communications issues on Election Day. The director was told there was a disruption to the backbone that provides services to the county but had no further information. The board asked if a formal explanation could be obtained. Director Storey noted it was reported to the State Board of Elections and no further information has been available, but will follow up on the item.

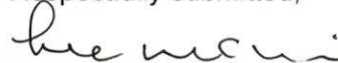
Member Warwick complimented the efforts taken for voter outreach and emphasized the need to continue that for future elections which could aid in the recruitment of election workers.

Herschel Johnson added, in terms of voter outreach, that poll observers acted as ambassadors to the board of elections after observing the voting process. Observers spread the word that elections held in Transylvania county are secure, fair and accurate. Mr. Johnson added that many observers are now interested in working as election officials for future elections.

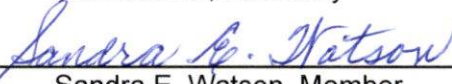
Jeff Brewer felt elections were run efficiently but voiced concern about the accessibility to early voting sites in the county. The perception being that one voting site in Brevard may not be sufficiently serving the needs of the public in outlying areas such as Lake Toxaway and Balsam Grove. Mr. Brewer made comparisons to similar counties in size and asked the board to consider additional early voting sites for future mid-term elections. Chair Champion indicated it would be helpful to get turnout data from similar counties that had multiple early voting sites. Member West added reviewing turnout data from the Rosman early voting sites would be beneficial as well. Director Storey indicated the board is always evaluates polling sites each election and there are several factors involved in the board's decision in addition to turnout percentage to include location, hours, workers, interest level, and accessibility. Member West commented if there is evidence to support additional early voting sites, the board would welcome those options, but also suggested a significant portion of some outlying areas prefer Election Day voting. Chair Champion mentioned that much of the working public seems to cross through the centralized part of the county during the three week period of early voting and participate accordingly. Member West stated that as a board, all are committed to making voting accessible so collecting data to assess the inquiry would be welcome. Member West thanked Mr. Brewer for the data and found it interesting and useful. The board agreed to continue the discussion in future meetings.

**On a motion by Member West, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.** The next scheduled meeting will be at 10 a.m. on February 9, 2023, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

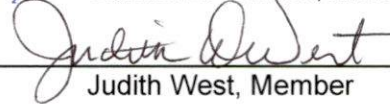
Respectfully submitted,



Lee McMinn, Secretary



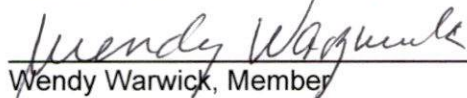
Sandra E. Watson, Member



Judith West, Member



Sara G. Champion, Chair



Wendy Warwick, Member

Approved by Board on: 2-9-2023