

## TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

### ABSENTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 28, 2025

Chair Cruickshank called the meeting of the Transylvania County Board of Elections to order at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

#### Attendance

##### Board Members:

Chair: Jim Cruickshank  
Secretary: Judith West  
Nona Walker  
Phyllis Owen  
Thomas A. Smith III

##### Staff Members:

Director: Jeff Storey  
Deputy Director: Laura Owen  
Deputy Director: Julie Dennis

Visitors: Kelly Gee, Barb Jackson, Herschel Johnson, Debbie Lanier

#### **Consideration of absentee ballots**

Deputy Director Owen presented the Board with 9 civilian (CIV) absentee ballot applications to consider and approve. Secretary West made a motion to approve 9 CIV executed absentee ballots. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: 9 CIV  
Disapproved: 0  
Curable: 0

**Public comments:** None.

#### **Review and approval of agenda**

**On a motion by Member Walker the Board unanimously approved the agenda.**

#### **Review and approval of previous minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes for October 7, 2025 and October 14, 2025. There was a clarification regarding the verbiage used in the October 7 minutes, but no changes were necessary. **On a motion by Secretary West, the minutes for October 7 and October 14, 2025 were unanimously approved.**

The Board reviewed the minutes for October 21, 2025. **On a motion by Member Walker, the minutes for October 21, 2025 were unanimously approved.**

#### **Review and approval of public comments policy**

The director presented the final draft of the public comments policy for the Board's review. No further changes were made. Chair Cruickshank thanked the Board and staff for the effort to develop an official policy. **On a motion by Member Owen the public comments policy was unanimously approved.** The policy will be effective for all future meetings.

### **Consideration of 2026 primary early voting plan**

Director Storey presented the historical early voting plans and turnout spanning from 2014 to 2024. Of note, beginning in 2018, limitations were introduced that reduced the flexibility local county boards had to set hours, days, and sites for early voting. After reviewing the data, the Board agreed two Saturdays would be warranted with business hours on weekdays at the elections office as follows:

Weekdays: 8:30 am to 5 pm  
Sat, Feb 21: 8:00 am to 1 pm  
Sat, Feb 28: 8:00 am to 3 pm

The director indicated that plan may not be in compliance. Director Storey asked the Board for a secondary plan if the primary plan is not acceptable. The Board asked about the deadline for submitting the plan to the State Board. The director indicated that has not been released but the State Board has a meeting this week that may address the topic. The Board agreed to a secondary plan that will keep the Saturday schedule with weekdays being open from 8 am to 7:30 pm. **On a motion by Member Smith, the Board unanimously approved the primary and secondary early voting plans.** If the primary plan is not acceptable, the Board gave the director instructions to submit the secondary plan.

### **Director updates**

The director stated early voting was going well. Early voting turnout is above pace of the 2021 election by 130 voters as of Oct 27, 2025.

Director Storey provided the Board with a campaign finance update regarding late report submissions.

The director informed the Board he was invited and spoke with the local Democratic Women's Group on election law changes and a overview of the board of elections operations.

Director Storey informed the Board of a resignation and a vacancy in the East Fork precinct. Replacement recommendations will be submitted at the next regular meeting.

The director gave a quick comparative overview of previous and new provisional / absentee by mail procedures for Election Day as related to the election law changes.

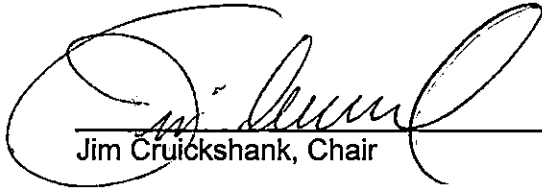
### **Board comments**

The Board reviewed their schedule for the next three weeks and confirmed dates / times of availability. There was no further discussion.

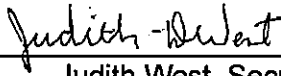
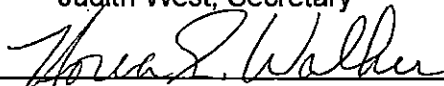
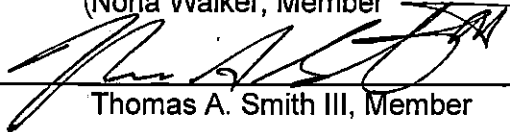
Member Smith asked how many incident reports have been filed for the election. The director stated only the one from last week regarding a hardware issue. Member Smith informed the Board and director of two incidents he was aware of that happened outside at the designated electioneering area and that those individuals will stop in the office to file an incident report. Member Smith indicated he would like those on the record. There were no further comments.

**On a motion by Chair Cruickshank, the meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.** The next scheduled meeting will be at 3 p.m. on November 3, 2025, at 150 South Gaston Street, Brevard, NC 28712.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jim Cruickshank, Chair

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Phyllis Owen, Member

  
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Judith West, Secretary  
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(Nona Walker, Member  
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Thomas A. Smith III, Member

Approved by Board on: Dec 11, 2025