

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Ken Raymond
Chairman

Stuart Russell
Secretary

Fleming El-Amin
Member



Robert H. Coffman
Director of Elections

Lamar Joyner
Deputy Director

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING MINUTES – JULY 30, 2013

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Elections was held in the Cooper Cardwell Elections Room on July 30, 2013. The meeting convened at 10:31 AM, Chairman Ken Raymond presiding.

Board Members in attendance: Chairman Ken Raymond, Secretary Stuart Russell,
Member Fleming El-Amin
NC State Board Member Paul Foley

Staff Members in attendance: Director Robert Coffman, Deputy Director Lamar Joyner,
Chris Duffey

Primary Early Voting

Chairman Raymond thanked everyone for their attendance of the meeting and interest in elections. He recognized a number of people that wanted to speak concerning the issue of Early Voting. Public speaker cards were completed and three minutes were allowed for each speaker. Public speakers included:

Molly Leight
Jane Dougherty
Joanne Allen
Gardenia Henley
Evelyn Terry
James Knox
Susan Campbell
Bobby Ray Wilson
Linda Sutton
Paul Lowe
Martha Logemann

After the public speaker session, Chairman Raymond moved and Member El-Amin seconded a motion to close the session. **Motion carried.**

Discussion of Primary Early Voting sites:

Chairman Raymond introduced discussion of the issue of Primary Early Voting by distributing documents to the Board members. The documents detailed the municipal election voter turnout for 2001, 2005 and 2009.

Member El-Amin began discussion by stressing the importance of transparency in a democracy. He read from NCGS 163-227.2 regarding requests of early voting sites. Board members may unanimously designate early voting sites; or if not unanimous, one member has the right to appeal the decision with the State Board of Elections. Member El-

Amin stated that he had taught Civics for 30 years and required the students to vote at eighteen years of old. Member El-Amin stated that he believed two designated sites would benefit the community by placing them in the west and east sides of the city. This would offer relief to the Board of Elections office. The City would underwrite the cost of the election. The additional sites would be no burden on the Board of Elections budget. Secretary Russell briefly stated that the handout materials display a 3.66 percent turnout in the 2009 Municipal Primary. Therefore, the statistics do not show a need for additional early voting sites for this primary. Also, the Mayor initially issued the request of the additional sites; and, as Mayor, he has access to the disposition of funds. It is also a concern to provide special consideration to a candidate. For these reasons, Secretary Russell stated that he would not agree to support any additional Early Voting sites for this primary. Chairman Raymond thanked the Board members for their comments. He stated that the 2013 Primary included eight ward offices and the mayor's office on the ballot. The similar election in 2001 had only 96 early voters. The current amount of \$5000 per site would not be cost effective for a very small amount of voters. Chairman Raymond also stated that the Board should not agree to increase sites with the Mayor, a candidate who has control of the City funds, when there is another opposing candidate in the race. Voters would not be suppressed in voting since the turnout percentage does not show a need for additional sites. Therefore, Chairman Raymond stated that he does not support additional early voting sites for the primary. Chairman Raymond moved to vote on the issue. Member El-Amin made a comment regarding his recent visit to the State Board of Elections. He found that it was a commonplace procedure for every city to request and pay for early voting sites in municipal elections. Member El-Amin stated that he will appeal to the State Board of Elections if the additional Early Voting sites do not pass in the vote. Chairman Raymond stated that the request of additional sites came directly as an email message from the Mayor. He asked for clarification regarding the expense of the municipal elections, whether the city or the county shoulders the burden of cost. Mr. Coffman explained that statutorily the county is reimbursed municipal election expenses in the odd numbered years by the city. In the even numbered years with the state and federal offices, the county is responsible for all costs associated with the elections. Chairman Raymond presented a motion to add additional early voting sites for the 2013 Winston-Salem Primary Election. Member El-Amin voted in favor; Chairman Raymond and Secretary Russell voted in opposition. **Motion failed.**

Primary Precinct Consolidation

Mr. Coffman explained the need of a temporary precinct consolidation for the 2013 Winston-Salem Primary. Due to changes in district lines, a small number of voters are eligible to vote in the Primary in some precincts. Letters to the voters would be mailed at least 45 days before the election. Information regarding the precinct consolidation would appear in the newspaper and signage would be placed at the precincts.

Member El-Amin voiced concern that the precinct move would cause confusion to voters, especially in the precincts where more than 100 voters are affected. Secretary Russell was also concerned with those precincts. Secretary Russell moved to adopt the 2013 Winston-Salem Primary precinct consolidation plans without the precincts with more than 100 voters (071 – Lewisville Elementary and 092 – Macedonia Baptist Church). **Motion carried unanimously.**

Other Business

Chairman Raymond suggested that the time for the next meeting be set for August 20, 2013 at 6:00 PM. Six o'clock in the evening was discussed as a standard time for the regular meetings.

Closed Session

Chairman Raymond moved and Secretary Russell seconded a motion for closed session by stating: I move that the Board go into closed session to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

Motion carried. Board members went into closed session at 12:42 PM. Board members exited closed session at 12:50 PM.

Adjournment

Chairman Raymond moved and Secretary Russell seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried** and the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 PM.

Approved:

Ken Raymond, Chair

Date

Stuart Russell, Secretary

Date

Fleming El-Amin, Member

Date

Attachments on File: none