

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

J. Eric Elliott
CHAIR

Linda J. Sutton
SECRETARY

Jerry D. Jordan
MEMBER



Robert H. Coffman
Director of Elections

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING- OCTOBER 28, 2008

Present: J. Eric Elliott, Chair
Linda J. Sutton, Secretary
Jerry D. Jordan, Member

Staff: Rob Coffman, Director of Elections
Lamar Joyner, Deputy Director of Elections
Pamela Johnson, Administrative Assistant

Guest: Lori Sykes, Assistant County Attorney

Call To Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:11 PM in the 2nd Floor Community Conference Room.

Approval of Minutes- October 21, 2008

The Board reviewed the minutes for October 21, 2008. Ms. Sutton moved to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Session

Rep. Larry Womble, 71st State House, spoke to the Board regarding One-Stop issues. Rep. Womble stated he is getting complaints from citizens regarding long lines and long waiting periods. Rep. Womble stated the Board of Elections should have planned better for the early voting and should be able to open more sites. He also shared his concern about the One-Stop staff not explaining to voters that straight party votes do not include the President.

Mr. Jordan stated additional sites cannot be added because the Board of Elections is maxed out on voting machines.

Discussion of Directive from State Board of Elections Regarding Hand-Outs to Voters for Straight Party Voting Instructions

The Board and Staff discussed an email from the State Board of Elections directing County Board of Elections offices to provide a hand-out for voters explaining that straight party voting does not include the president and non-partisan offices.

Ms. Sutton stated the Board had already discussed this matter. As with the earlier case where the Board was sued over the issuance of extra instructions, the assistant county attorney advised that doing this creates 2 classes of voters, those who have already voted without the additional instructions and those who will vote after having received the additional instructions. Mr. Elliott stated he was against handing out the straight party instructions after so many citizens have already voted. The Board and Staff discussed the possible confusion with straight party voting.

Lori Sykes, Assistant County Attorney, spoke regarding the straight party voting not including the President. She stated straight party voting laws have been in effect in North Carolina for 40 years. She stated it is clear on the paper ballots and the electronic voting equipment gives a voter the opportunity to check the ballot before casting his or her ballot.

Other Business

The Board and Staff discussed the One-Stop locations. Mr. Coffman gave the Board a report showing the One-Stop activity.

Mr. Jordan stated he had complaints that observers were not being allowed to observe.

The Board and Staff discussed Election Day preparations. Mr. Coffman stated that all the precincts were completely staffed.

Mr. Coffman stated the Staff at the Winston-Salem Forsyth County School Administration requested the precinct location be changed within the building. Mr. Coffman stated it was requested that the precinct be moved to the atrium area. He stated this area was much larger and would be a better place for voting. The Board agreed to the change as long as there is plenty of signage indicating where to go vote.

The Board and Staff discussed KidsVoting. Mr. Joyner stated Forsyth County is one of 20 counties participating.

Approval of Absentees

There were 2900 absentees recommended by Staff for approval and 46 recommended for disapproval. The Board reviewed 3 that were

recommended for disapproval due to the signatures being in the wrong place. Ms. Sutton moved to approve the 3 with the signatures in the wrong place. Mr. Elliott seconded the motion and it passed 2-1. There were 13 additional disapproved absentees reviewed by the Board with signatures in the wrong place. Ms. Sutton moved to approve the additional 13 absentees with signatures in the wrong place. Mr. Elliott seconded the motion and it passed 2-1.

Mr. Jordan moved to approve 2918 absentees and disapprove 31. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board and Staff ran the ballots through the counter. There were a total of 2923 ballots. The total approved did not match the total counted. The Board agreed to have the Staff reconcile the totals and report the findings to the Board at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Jordan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 PM.

J. Eric Elliott, Chair

Linda J. Sutton, Secretary

Jerry D. Jordan, Member