

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Linda J. Sutton
Chair

Michael Flatow
Secretary

Jonathan S. Dills
Member



Robert H. Coffman
Director of Elections

Lamar Joyner
Deputy Director

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 7, 2012

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Elections was held in the Cooper Cardwell Elections Room on February 7, 2012. The meeting convened at 5:30 PM, Chairman Linda Sutton presiding.

Board Members in attendance: Chairman Linda Sutton, Secretary Michael Flatow,
Member Jonathan Dills

Board Members not in attendance: none

Staff Members in attendance: Director Robert Coffman, Deputy Director Lamar Joyner, Judy Speas

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Sutton requested that the Board review the minutes of January 10, 2012. Member Dills moved and Secretary Flatow seconded the motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2012. Motion carried.

One Stop Plan

Chairman Sutton stated that the Board previously asked Mr. Coffman for additional information and a recommendation concerning Early Voting sites to be used in the 2012 Primary Election. Mr. Coffman explained the proposed Primary One Stop Voting sites by indicating them on a displayed Forsyth County wall map. Guests were also supplied with the Potential One Stop Voting Sites: May 8, 2012 Primary document. Potential sites included Carver School Road Library, Kernersville Fire Station #2, Lewisville Library, Polo Park Recreation Center, Rural Hall Library, Southside Library, WSSU (Anderson Center) and the Forsyth County Board of Elections government center location. The map demonstrated that the sites provided representation in a nice geographic spread around the county. Statute requires that the office location be an Early Voting site. The potential sites provide that the urban center of the county have appropriate coverage for the higher population density while no Early Voting site was recommended where the residential population is less developed. Mr. Coffman reviewed that the recommended sites provided for several important considerations: geographic coverage of the county; consideration of cost of operating Early Voting; and, assuring that the urban center has appropriate representation. Mr. Coffman explained that Early Voting begins on Thursday, April 19, 2012, and concludes on Saturday, May 5, 2012, by North Carolina statute. The Board and guests examined a 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document. The office location was recommended as the only Early Voting location from April 19th through April 27th, including Sunday, April 22nd. The additional seven locations would operate from April 30th until May 5th when the voter concentration increases. The Board also examined a 2008 Primary Election One Stop Voting document that detailed the locations and voter turnout. Multiple Early Voting locations at a Primary Election are relatively new to the office. They were initially provided

in the 2008 Primary Election. It is hoped that major congestion on Election Day will be greatly reduced by providing multiple Early Voting sites in the 2012 Primary Election. The 2012 Primary Election Early Voting location proposal eliminates two previously used sites, the Winston-Salem Clark Campbell Transportation Center and the Malloy/Jordan Heritage Center; and, adds the Rural Hall Library. Mr. Coffman added that the Kernersville Early Voting location was recently changed to Kernersville Fire Station #2 to eliminate parking problems.

Chairman Sutton stated that the Board would allow guest speakers three minutes each to present their views. Several citizens offered their opinions in support of keeping Winston-Salem State University as a 2012 Primary Election Early Voting site. A few citizens presented opinions to the contrary.

Chairman Sutton requested a response from the Board members. Secretary Flatow thanked everyone for attending the meeting and presenting valid points of view. He stated that there were several considerations involved which includes funding limitations for the proposed Early Voting sites. The Board would always propose to operate as many sites as possible within the available budget. Member Dills thanked everyone and stated that he appreciated their interests and concerns. The struggle for the Board is to balance the good stewardship of county funds with the achievement of majority voter participation. Also, it is important that citizens have faith in the Board members and feel that they are not ruled by partisan politics. Unfortunately, this particular issue has been historically involved by partisanship. All details of the issue would be thoroughly examined before a vote is cast. However, maximizing voter participation should not be done at the sacrifice of the appearance of impropriety; limiting sites in other county areas; and, being mindful of county funds.

Chairman Sutton asked whether there were questions regarding the proposed Early Voting hours of operation. The first Sunday afternoon, April 22nd, was proposed in the Early Voting schedule as the second Sunday afternoon had previously proved to be more complicated for staff operation. Chairman Sutton suggested that the Board make a recommendation for the 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document. After discussion, it was decided to make a motion on the dates/times (hours) separately from the proposal of locations. Chairman Sutton asked the Board for a recommendation for the dates/times of the 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document. Secretary Flatow proposed that the dates/times of the 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document be approved. Member Dills seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Sutton suggested that the Board make a recommendation for the locations of the 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document. Secretary Flatow proposed that the locations of the 2012 Primary Election Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times document be approved. Chairman Sutton seconded the motion. Motion carried with Member Dills dissenting. Chairman Sutton stated that an alternative plan could be submitted to the State Board of Elections when a unanimous vote is not reached. Member Dills agreed that he would work with the Elections staff and submit another One-Stop plan. The State Board would approve one of the two plans. The deadline for submission for the 2012 Primary Election Early Voting plan would be the fourth week of March.

2012 – 2013 Budget

Mr. Coffman explained that the Budget Department should complete the analysis of staff costs within another month. At that point, it would be incorporated into the proposed Elections budget; and, the Board should meet to complete the budget proposal. It must be submitted to the County Manager's office at the end of February. Mr. Coffman stated that the template of the proposed budget, including the prior year, current actual and proposed year budgets, would be emailed to the Board. When comparing budget years, the Board was reminded that cost amounts vary greatly depending on the election schedule year. The Board planned the next meeting for two weeks in order to discuss the proposed budget plan.

Other Business

Member Dills stated that he had not received a waiver of conflict involving the litigation. Mr. Coffman stated that the county counsel was preparing for discovery in the lawsuit.

Adjournment

Chairman Sutton thanked the guests for attending the meeting. The next regular meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Elections will be held in the Cooper Cardwell Elections Room on February 21, 2012 at 5:30 PM. Chairman Sutton entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Dills moved to adjourn the meeting; Secretary Flatow seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Approved:

Linda J. Sutton, Chair

Date

Michael Flatow, Secretary

Date

Jonathan S. Dills, Member

Date

Attachments on File: Potential One-Stop Voting Sites: May 8, 2012 Primary, Proposed One-Stop Early Voting Locations, Dates/Times (2012 – Primary Election), Forsyth County One-Stop Voting Primary Election 2008