

COUNTY OF CARTERET BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1702 Live Oak Street, Beaufort, NC 28516
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes, February 3, 2021
9:00 AM

I. Meeting Called to Order

Chair Susan Cuthrell called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

Board Members Present: Chair Susan Cuthrell, Vice Chair Jeanette Deese, Secretary Dale Gillikin, Member Marjorie Holland, and Member Gerald Godette

Staff Members Present: Director Caitlin Sabadish and Deputy Director Margot Burke

Others Present: Jackie Starkey; NewsTimes

II. Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Deese made a motion to approve the February 3, 2021 regular meeting agenda. Member Godette seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

No public comment.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Director Sabadish presented the minutes from the January 6, 2021 Regular Meeting for approval. Secretary Gillikin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Holland seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

V. Discussion of FY21-22 Board of Elections Budget

Director Sabadish presented the recommended budget for fiscal year July, 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 excluding salary line items. Director Sabadish reviewed each line item in relation to the election schedule and provided the Board with comparable budgets and expenditures to support staff's recommendations. Staff noted that the recommended budget is due to the finance department by February 19, 2021, the recommended budget is set to be presented to the Board of Commissioners on May 17, 2021, and the public hearing to adopt the budget is set for June 7, 2021. Vice Chair Deese asked that staff provide the Board with the recommended budget prior to it going before the Board of Commissioners on May 17, 2021.

The Board discussed potential salary increases for the department based on the salaries of other comparable counties. Chair Cuthrell opened the floor for salary increase recommendations for staff. Vice Chair Deese recommended that the Board give a percentage increase for staff and also noted the cost of living increases that staff gets each year for consideration. Secretary Gillikin highlighted the salary increase recommendations provided by HR to include an increase due to qualifications that exceed what is required for the position (i.e. education, experience) and noted that a salary increase would be justified for Director

Sabadish because she has a Master's degree in a position that only requires a two-year (2) degree. Vice Chair Deese recommended a three percent (3%) increase for the Director. Member Holland countered to increase the salary more than three percent (3%) due to the successfulness of the presidential election cycle. Secretary Gillikin made a motion to propose a five percent (5%) increase. Member Holland countered to increase the Director salary to at least sixty thousand annually (\$60,000.00) to make the annual salary comparable to other counties in the state that are of similar size, particularly referring to Surry County with forty-seven thousand (47,000) registered voters at a salary of sixty-five thousand seventy-six dollars annually (\$65,076.00) and zero to two (0-2) years of experience in a Tier two (2) county and Franklin County with forty-six thousand two hundred fifty-five (46,255) registered voters at a salary of sixty-three thousand dollars annually (\$63,000.00) and zero to two (0-2) years of experience in a Tier two (2) county. Secretary Gillikin made a motion to request an eight percent increase for the Director's salary. Member Holland seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

In discussion of the Deputy Director annual salary, Secretary Gillikin noted that comp. time is an additional factor to consider when requesting the increase, as last year Deputy Director Burke got paid out an additional ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for the comp. time hours that she worked over two-hundred forty (240) hours. Chair Cuthrell proposed a two and one-half percent (2.5% increase). Member Holland countered with a three percent (3%) salary increase. Member Holland made a motion to increase the Deputy Director salary by three percent (3%) and increase the Election Specialist II salary by two and one-half percent (2.5%). Vice Chair Deese seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Currently the Director salary is fifty-five thousand two hundred seventy-six dollars and thirty-five cents annually (\$55,276.35). The Board recommended an eight percent (8%) increase, putting the requested salary amount at fifty-nine thousand six hundred ninety-eight dollars and forty-five cents annually (\$59,698.45). Currently the Deputy Director salary is forty-six thousand six hundred ninety-three dollars and fifty-three cents annually (\$46,693.15). The Board recommended a three percent (3%) increase, putting the requested salary amount at forty-eight thousand ninety-three dollars and ninety-four cents annually (\$48,093.94). Currently the Election's Specialist II salary is thirty-three thousand one hundred twenty-nine dollars and sixty cents annually (\$33,129.60). The Board recommended a two and one-half percent (2.5%) increase, putting the requested salary amount at thirty-three thousand nine hundred fifty-seven dollars and eighty-four cents annually (\$33,957.84). Vice Chair Deese asked that Director Sabadish to input the discussed salary increases to include FICA and additional benefits as well as provide the Board with a summary of the part-time wage line item. Staff agreed to provide the Board with a completed copy of the requested budget prior to submitting to the finance department on February 19, 2021.

VI. Director's Report
a. Express Vote Update

Director Sabadish presented the most recent quote from ES&S for the purchase of the Express Votes for the Board’s review. Director Sabadish explained that the quote presented is the final quote to include thirty-eight (38) ExpressVotes and an ES&S credit of \$13,921.50 for the trade in of the old AutoMarks and the M650 Scanner, making the final purchase amount \$126,818.50. No formal action was required by the Board.

VII. Board Comments

Chair Cuthrell opened the floor for Board comments. No action was required by the Board.

Member Holland

Member Holland noted that 2021 is the year that new Chief Judges and Judges need to be appointed for the precincts and asked that staff provide the Board with their appointment recommendations prior to the appointment meeting to be held on the Tuesday following the third Monday in August of this year as outlined by G.S. §163-41.

Chair Cuthrell

Chair Cuthrell shared the discussion had at the last State Board meeting concerning two members from the Camden County Board of Elections. At the meeting the State Board of Elections members had a hearing to decide whether or not the two Board members from Camden County should be removed due to their inappropriate behavior displayed on social media. Chair Cuthrell reiterated to the Board to be mindful of their actions on social media as even “liking” a political post showing favoritism to one candidate over another could be cause for removal. The Board and staff appreciated the reminder on the State Board’s social media policy.

VIII. Adjournment

Secretary Gillikin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Member Godette and the motion was passed unanimously.

Susan Cuthrell, Chair

Jeanette Deese, Vice Chair

Dale Gillikin, Secretary

Marjorie Holland, Member

Gerald Godette, Member