

COUNTY OF CARTERET BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1702 Live Oak Street, Beaufort, NC 28516
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes, August 17, 2021
9:00 AM

I. Meeting Called to Order

Vice Chair Marjorie Holland called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

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

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

Others Present: Jackie Starkey; News Times, Carol Geer; League of Women Voters

II. Approval of Agenda

Member Gillikin made a motion to approve the August 17, 2021 regular meeting agenda. Vice Chair Holland seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

Carol Geer made note that the League of Women Voters (LWV) will be hosting a voter registration drive during voter registration week at the Wayne West and Bryant Student Center all days from September 27, 2021 through September 30, 2021 from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm. Additionally, the League of Women Voters, in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce, will be hosting three candidate forums for the fall municipal races to include the Town of Beaufort, scheduled for October 6, 2021 from 6:00PM to 8:00PM via Zoom, the Town of Cape Carteret scheduled for October 12, 2021 from 6:00PM to 8:00PM at the Town Hall located at 102 Dolphin Street, Cape Carteret, NC 28584 and will be streamed via Zoom, and the Town of Emerald Isle scheduled for October 13, 2021 from 6:00PM to 8:00PM at the Town Hall located at 7500 Emerald Drive, Emerald Isle, NC 28594 and will be streamed via Facebook Live.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Presented were the minutes from the July 14, 2021 Regular Meeting, minutes from the July 20, 2021 Special Meeting, and minutes from the July 14, 2021 Closed Session Meeting for approval. Member Gillikin made a motion to approve the July 14, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes as amended to include the locations of the One-Stop sites as preliminarily discussed under item V(e) on the July 14, 2021 Meeting agenda and to approve the July 20, 2021 Special Meeting minutes as amended to include the attendance of Bette Gillikin at the July 20, 2021 Special Meeting, and to approve the July 14, 2021 Closed Session Meeting minutes as presented. Member Godette seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Approve One-Stop Implementation Plan in accordance with GS 163-227.6

Director Sabadish presented the recommended November, 2021 One-Stop plan to the Board for approval to include opening three (3) locations for One-Stop Early Voting as listed below to operate from October 14, 2021 through October 30, 2021. All locations will operate Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 6:00PM excluding the last Saturday which will operate from 8:00AM to 3:00PM.

- Board of Elections Office (BOE) – 1702 Live Oak Street Beaufort, NC 28516
- Fort Benjamin Park/Recreation Center (FBEN) – 100 McQueen Avenue Newport, NC 28570
- Western Park Community Center (WEST) – 275 Old NC Hwy 58 Cedar Point, NC 28584

According to G.S. § 163-227.6, “...a county board of elections by unanimous vote of all its members...” shall approve the sites and hours for One-Stop voting. Due to four (4) board members being present, Secretary Deese made a motion to table to discussion until all five (5) Board members were present. Member Gillikin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Member Gillikin made a motion to recess the meeting and reconvene Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 9:00AM to vote on the One-Stop plan. Member Godette seconded the motion to recess and the motion passed unanimously.

Secretary Deese made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting at 9:00AM Wednesday August 18, 2021 for the purpose of approving the One-Stop voting sites and hours as listed above for the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election. Member Gillikin seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the One-Stop plan for the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election.

VI. Sign Resolution for Temporary Municipal Precinct Merges

Director Sabadish presented a resolution requesting approval to temporarily transfer voters in certain precincts for the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election to include transferring voters from the North River precinct to the Beaufort One (1) precinct, voters from the Beaufort Two (2) precinct to the Beaufort One (1) precinct, voters from the Newport Two (2) precinct to the Newport One (1) precinct, voters from the Wildwood precinct in the Morehead City municipality to the Morehead Four (4) precinct, and voters from the Wildwood precinct in the Newport municipality to the Newport One (1) precinct due to low voter turnout and difficulties staffing each precinct. Secretary Deese made a motion to approve the resolution as presented to adopt the temporary precinct transfers for the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election provided that notice of adoption of resolution establishing the temporary precinct relocations be advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the county, a copy of this resolution be posted on the courthouse door and at the office of the county board of elections, and a copy of this resolution be mailed to the chairman of every political party in the county in accordance with GS § 163-128 no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the next election, and that notice of precinct change cards be mailed to all affected voters no later than thirty (30) days prior to the Election. Member Godette seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. Appointment of Chief Judges and Judges in accordance with GS § 163-41

Director Sabadish presented a list of recommended precinct Chief Judges and Judges to be appointed by the Board to serve a two-year term. Member Gillikin made a motion to approve the list as presented. Member Godette seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Director's Report

a. Wellness Check Update

Director Sabadish briefed the Board on the outcome and purpose of the State Board Wellness Check. The State Board required each county to complete a series of questions to ensure that all processes were congruent and that all Counties were compliant across the State. The State Board sent two (2) representatives to evaluate Carteret County on their Wellness Check. Director Sabadish explained that overall, the Wellness Check process was a very positive learning experience and the State confirmed that Carteret County is compliant with the rules and regulation established by the State Board in conducting and carrying out the elections process.

b. Precinct Official Training Dates and Correspondence

Staff presented a draft letter for the Board's approval to be sent to the precinct officials to include the One-Stop early voting schedule and training dates for the upcoming municipal election. After discussing the One-Stop hours, staff and the Board decided that each day of One-Stop should be split in to two (2) shifts so that our precinct officials work half days while also meeting the hour requirements outlined by HR. Staff explained that the letters would be sent out the following week after revisions have been made.

IX. Board Comments

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

Chair Cuthrell

Chair Cuthrell explained to the Board that she received several inquiries concerning election security and offered for the staff to post information about election security on the website and work to educate the public about election security and the steps that we take to ensure that our elections are secure and accurate.

Member Holland

Vice Chair Holland expressed the need for signs to be posted at the precincts that we are temporarily closing for the municipal election to direct voters where to go on Election Day. Staff agreed to have signs made for this purpose. Vice Chair Holland acknowledged the job well done on the Wellness Check and appreciated the work that staff put in to completing this. Vice Chair Holland reiterated Chair Cuthrell's comments on election security and requested that staff look in to hosting an open forum to address the public on some of the security issues and

general information regarding the elections and the processes in which they are conducted.

Secretary Deese

Secretary Deese reiterated Chair Cuthrell’s concerns about the transparency of election security and hosting a public forum. Secretary Deese noted that an open forum, or workshop, would be a beneficial in increasing voter confidence and voter awareness concerning these issues. Secretary Deese also noted that the State Board of Elections conference was very thorough and well put together.

Member Godette

Member Godette noted that the State Board of Elections conference was well put together and was interested in attending precinct official training in September. Member Godette also asked for clarification on the political sign ordinances. Director Sabadish explained that political signs shall not be placed in any right-of-way of the State highway system prior to the 30th day before the beginning date of One-Stop early voting under G.S. § 163-227.2. This ordinance does not apply to private property and there are no time restrictions, however, the permittee must obtain the permission of any property owner of a residence or business that is privately owned.

Member Gillikin

Member Gillikin complemented staff on the hard work put in to the Wellness Check and congratulated them on a job well done. Member Gillikin noted that the Wellness Check is especially good for reinforcement of the policies outlined by the State Board.

X. Adjournment

Secretary Deese 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

Marjorie Holland, Vice Chair

Jeanette Deese, Secretary

Dale Gillikin, Member

Gerald Godette, Member