

DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Minutes of Board Meeting

Thursday, June 8, 2017, 5:00 p.m.

Members present

Chairman Bill Brian

Secretary Dawn Baxton

Member Margaret Griffin

Staff present

Elections Director Derek Bowens

Chief of Staff Kate Cosner

Deputy Director Sam Gedman

Deputy Director George McCue

County attorney present: Senior Assistant County Attorney Marie Inserra

Audience members present: See attendance sheet

Introductory matters

Chairman Brian called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board reviewed minutes from its last meeting on May 25, 2017. Ms. Griffin moved to approve the minutes as amended. Secretary Baxton seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

The Board provided an opportunity for new Elections Director Derek Bowens to introduce himself.

Director duties

The Board reviewed proposed duties delegated to the Elections Director. Ms. Griffin moved to adopt the listing of duties, with a modification to make clear a duty to record and maintain meeting minutes. Secretary Baxton seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Memorandum of Understanding with Durham County administration

Ms. Inserra provided an update on a proposed new Memorandum of Understanding to be made between the Board of Elections and the administration of Durham County's government. Ms. Inserra reported that after meeting with Mr. Bowens, Durham County Manager Wendell Davis had agreed to sign the document. Chairman Brian inquired whether this agreement would allow the Board of Elections to create new positions and Ms. Inserra responded that it did not.

Ms. Griffin suggested that perhaps the issue lay with the use of the word “existing” in the following recital:

“WHEREAS, the Board of Elections retains authority to retain and/or terminate personnel and promote or demote personnel of the Board of Elections to existing positions within the classification and pay structure established by Durham County and in compliance with Durham County policies and position classifications that are within the budget allotments designed for compensation and benefits.”

The Board asked Ms. Inserra to inquire with the County Manger to see if he would be amenable to that change, and if not, Chairman Brian would wish to speak with him on the matter. Mr. Bowens asked to also join that meeting if it were needed.

Director’s report

Mr. Bowens provided an update on litigation involving redistricting and Board member appointments.

Mr. Bowens next discussed the status of the department’s budget for the upcoming year. A meeting with the department’s assigned General Manager was scheduled for Tuesday, June 13 at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Brian asked Mr. Bowens to let Board members know if they should attend that meeting. Ms. Griffin moved that the Director should advocate for a new Election Specialist position for the office. Secretary Baxton seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Bowens deferred to Mr. Gedman to report on preparations for the 2017 municipal election. Mr. Gedman reported that a follow-up survey had been sent to persons who worked as pollworkers in 2016 to initially gauge interest in serving as a pollworker in 2017.

Closed session

Following a brief question-and-answer session for audience members, Secretary Baxton moved for the Board to go into closed session for authorized purposes pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 143-318.11(a)(3) relating to potential litigation involving VR Systems and other potential claims, and 143-318.11(a)(6). Ms. Griffin seconded that motion, which passed 3-0. The Board began its closed session at approximately 5:50 p.m.

Adjournment

The Board returned to open session at approximately 7:50 p.m. Ms. Griffin moved to lift its litigation privilege on a post-election report generated by the consulting firm Protus3, keeping redactions on personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Secretary Baxton and passed 3-0. The Board also announced it had directed staff on other matters not requiring public announcement.



Dawn Baxton, Secretary