



DURHAM COUNTY Board of Elections

DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Minutes of Board Meeting

Thursday, August 9, 2018, 5:00 p.m.

Members present

Chairman Luke Farley
Vice Chairman and Secretary Philip Lehman
Member Michael Gray

Staff present

Elections Director Derek Bowens
Deputy Director Sam Gedman
Election Manager George McCue

County attorney present: Senior Assistant County Attorney Willie Darby

Audience members present: See attendance sheets

Meeting opening

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

Mr. Lehman moved to adopt the agenda as prepared by staff. This motion was seconded by Mr. Gray and passed 3-0.

Mr. Gray moved to approve the minutes for the July 17 meeting as prepared by staff. This motion was seconded by Mr. Lehman and passed 3-0.

Director's report

Mr. Bowens provided updates on voter registration list maintenance and office finances, as well as legislation and litigation affecting the State's elections. He noted that a summary of the end of the 2017-18 fiscal year would be ready for the Board's next meeting.

Mr. Bowens reported that a planned acquisition and implementation of new voting equipment would be delayed past the November 2018 election due to timing concerns.

Mr. Bowens also reported plans for the office to receive a security review offered to election offices by the Department of Homeland Security.

Submissions from the office's contest to decide upon a Durham-specific "I voted" sticker were unveiled. Mr. Bowens reviewed the process for the public to vote on their favorite out of the thirty submissions to select three finalists, with the Board selecting the winning design at its next meeting.

Finally, Mr. Bowens provided an update on preparation for the November 2018 General Election.

New business

A planned oath ceremony for incoming Board Member Pamela Oxendine was tabled because the State Board of Elections & Ethics Enforcement had not yet formally appointed her based upon party recommendations. Mr. Bowens noted that the State Board would be meeting before the Durham County Board of Elections' next meeting in September, so the ceremony could happen at that meeting.

The Board considered a resolution to adopt a time for counting absentee ballots as allowed by statute (starting at 2:00 p.m. on Election Day and 2:00 p.m. on the day preceding county canvass). Mr. Lehman's motion to approve this resolution was seconded by Mr. Gray and passed 3-0.

The Board considered a resolution to adopt a time for a special meeting to tally write-in votes on the Friday following Election Day. Mr. Gray's motion to approve this resolution was seconded by Mr. Lehman and passed 3-0.

Public comment and questions

For the benefit of the audience, Mr. Lehman provided details on Ms. Oxendine's planned appointment to the Durham County Board of Elections. Ms. Oxendine, who was present, introduced herself and provided remarks.

Audience member Susan Pochapsky provided comments on meeting protocols and voter education.

Audience member Susan Weaver inquired about laws and authority governing conflict of interest concerns of Board Members. Mr. Darby and Mr. Bowens provided information on this subject.

Several audience members, including Durham County Democratic Party Chairman Stephen Gheen, provided comment on protocols for curbside voting. Audience members expressed dissatisfaction at the current State policy that generally does not allow electioneering in the curbside voting area. Mr. Gray provided his perspective as a former voting site supervisor. The Board discussed a possible proposal coming from Durham County that the current State policy be revisited. Following discussion, the Board's consensus was to consider this matter further as an agenda item at a future meeting.

General discussion; adjournment

Chairman Farley introduced two topics to be considered in a future meeting:

- A proposal that the Board consider adopting parliamentary meeting procedures as laid out in a resource text produced by the UNC School of Government. Chairman Farley requested that staff obtain an electronic text version of that content.
- A proposal that the Board consider starting regular meetings at 5:30 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m. to allow members of the public and Board Members more leeway to get to the meetings at the end of the workday.

Following general discussion, the Board adjourned on a motion by Mr. Lehman that was seconded by Mr. Gray and passed 3-0.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. Lehman", is written over a solid horizontal line.

Philip Lehman, Secretary