



ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2019 – 3:00 pm

Regular Meeting

The Rockingham County Board of Elections met Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at 3:00 pm in the Commissioners Chambers.

Board Members Present: Royce Richardson, Chair; Toni Reece, Secretary; Leanna Lawson, Member; Jeff Parris, Member; and Bonnie Purgason, Member

Staff Members Present: Tina Cardwell, Director; and Amy Simpson, Senior Deputy Director

Other Persons Present: John Morris, County Attorney; Members of the public

ITEM #1 – MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chair Richardson. Chair Richardson welcomed those in attendance.

ITEM #2 – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Parris made the motion, seconded by Member Lawson, and the vote was unanimous to approve the October 15, 2019 agenda.

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Secretary Reece made the motion, seconded by Member Parris, and the vote was unanimous to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2019 Regular Board Meeting correcting the spelling of Member Purgason's last name under Item #6.

ITEM #4 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

After the reading of Public Comment Rules by Director Cardwell, the following individuals appeared to speak:

Wally White – 314 Von Ruck Road - Eden, NC

When I left your May meeting, I left unhappy because my name had been used by Ms. Purgason as a way to make a complaint against Royce Richardson. Saying that at the April meeting he had told me that as a member of the board of Democrats that this Board needed Elections Officials. She said that in an email exchange, Royce had said that he had, he believed he had said that that needed to go out to all parties and she said that she had gone and listened to the April recording and then she read this quote, I have listened to the recording of both meetings now. She read a quote unto Royce Richardson saying, "Since you are on the Board for the



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party, I, we need Election Officials.” But I listened to the recordings this week and she misquoted you, she left six words out. What you said and this is in the April recording at twenty-six minutes and forty-six seconds into the recording, “I know you are on the Board for the party, I need to, we need to get out to both parties, we need Election Officials.” By removing those six words, she took a non-partisan statement and made it a partisan one and used my name to do it. Now, it was a complaint, that was a local complaint that has now gone onto being a complaint with the State Board. It’s a complaint to the State Board using facts that are untrue. If we are all going to work together, we have got to do so civilly and we’ve got to do so by starting using the truth. What the State complaint says from the Chair of the Republican Party, it says Mr. Richardson has been anything but unbiased. At the Board of Elections monthly meetings he has openly encouraged the Democrats attending the meeting to present him with Democrats willing to work the precincts, the same encouragement was not made to me or anyone from our party attending. It was not plural, it was one meeting, it was not plural, it was one Democrat, me, it was not ignoring anyone else there because I was the only observer present at the April meeting. So, this statement in the State Board, which is based on an untrue statement made at the local Board, takes us further and further from the truth, and makes it harder and harder to work together. We all have different opinions on political stuff, and I see that the clock is not working, I’ve been waiting for it to go. We all have to work together, I will go sit down, but we all have to work together and we really should start by using the truth to do so. I beg you to do that. Thank you.

Roxanne Griffin – 108 S. Wilson St. – Madison, NC

I am the Chair of the Democratic Party in Rockingham County. For as long as I have been associated with the Democratic Party it has been my observation that the operation of this Department has been exemplary in it’s delivery of service to the citizens of this county. While there have been partisan disagreements as to the extent of Early Voting opportunities offered voters, I was always left with the impression that this Board has been in compliance with the Statutes governing it’s operation and have no quarrel with the manner in which decisions have been made, though, I may have disagreed with the decisions themselves. But, as I have observed the interactions of this Board and the County Commissioners over the past year, I can only shake my head at the degree of partisanship now being exhibited with regard to this office. Not being one to sit by in dismay over behaviors I believe are detrimental to the public, I have taken the time to research a considerable number of allegations which threaten to undermine the efficiency of and confidence in this Board and by extension, the Board’s it, the Board excuse me, the Department it governs. What I have found are numerous assumptions being made and we all know what “assume” spells. I therefore encourage the members of this Board, my Republican counterparts and the County Commissioners to step back from the partisan abyss and take a look through the lens of neutrality to determine the difference between the facts and rumors, misstatements and half-truths, ulterior motives and misunderstandings to do



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otherwise is a disservice to the citizens and voters of this County. We have a snowball and it's going downhill rapidly and it's getting bigger and bigger and bigger. I charge all of you as Members of the Board of Elections to research and get to the bottom of the problems before they turn into a monumental mess. Thank you very much.

ITEM #5 – 2019 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS PREPARATIONS UPDATE

- a. Director Cardwell informed the Board she had included the 2019 Precinct Official Training Manuals in their packet.
- b. Director Cardwell informed the Board that the Mock Election went well and was successful.
- c. Director Cardwell provided each Member of the Board information pertaining to One Stop (Early) Voting in their packets.
- d. Director Cardwell informed the Board she had provided them with a list of Precinct Officials that would be working on Election Day, with several vacancies that would need to be filled during Executive Session.
- e. Director Cardwell informed the Board of several changes on Canvass Forms but everything else remained the same.

Director Cardwell informed the Board that the Early Voting List, ADA Checklist and the Precinct Supply Checklist would be given to the Chief Judges during Chief Judge Pickup.

ITEM #6 – 2020 PRIMARY ELECTION PRECINCT STAFF REQUESTED BUDGET

Director Cardwell informed the Board, as far as she knew, the Commissioners had been provided all requested information. She explained the Board could vote on a One Stop (Early) Voting Plan based on current law in order to provide a more accurate figure for the budget. Discussion took place about reviewing budget for more cuts and how Precinct Officials are paid.

ITEM #7 – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Director Cardwell informed the Board we received 37 Registration Forms from the events attended in September and the cost was around \$247.00.

Director Cardwell gave an update regarding the security system for the doors at the Board of Elections Office and explained why it was not on the last agenda for the Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Director Cardwell informed the Board we have not received any correspondence concerning the Joseph Irving case since the hearing had taken place.



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ITEM #8 – NEW BUSINESS

Discussion took place regarding Precinct Officials and how to track their hours for future reference in preparation for budget. It was determined Director Cardwell would provide requested information after each election.

Secretary Reece stated that the Board had always strived to operate as a Democracy but after the last Commissioners Meeting, it was apparent, the Board were operating under a dictatorship. After hearing the public comments this is something the Board definitely needs to work forward and make sure that we as a Democracy and that we are all involved in the actions of this Board. Secretary Reece said she thought it was very important from this point forward that the Board works together.

ITEM #9 – EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6)

Member Parris made the motion, seconded by Member Lawson, and the vote was unanimous to go into Executive Session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) at 3:53 pm. The Board went back into open session at 4:03 pm.

ITEM #10 – APPOINT 3 VACANT PRECINCT OFFICIALS JUDGE POSITIONS

Member Purgason made the motion, seconded by Secretary Reece and the vote was unanimous to appoint Dorothy S. Harris to fill the position of Democratic Judge at the Draper Precinct for the Municipal Election only.

Secretary Reece made the motion, seconded by Member Lawson and the vote was unanimous to appoint Velma Loy to fill the position of Republican Judge at the Eden – 1 Precinct.

Member Purgason made the motion, seconded by Secretary Reece and the vote was unanimous to appoint Barbara Garland to fill the position of Democratic Judge at the Leaksville – 2 Precinct.

Secretary Reece made the motion, seconded by Member Purgason and the vote was unanimous to appoint Joyce Vaughn to fill the position of Republican Judge at the Leaksville – 2 Precinct.

ITEM #11 – ADJOURNMENT

Secretary Reece made the motion, seconded by Member Lawson, and the vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 4:27 pm.

Next meeting is set for October 15, 2019 – Absentee Meeting – Immediately Following the Regular Meeting



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Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Cardwell, Director

Royce Richardson, Chair