

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 18, 2025 – 10:00 AM
REGULAR MEETING**

The Rockingham County Board of Elections met Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Rockingham County Governmental Center Commissioners Chambers.

Board Members Present: Ophelia Wright, Chair; Sarah Totten, Secretary; Nelson Cole, Member; and Thurman Hampton, Member.

Board Member Absent: Tom Schoolfield, Member

Staff Members Present: Paula Seamster, Director.

ITEM #1 – MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Wright called the Board meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chair Wright welcomed the Board members, those present in the meeting, and those who were watching online.

ITEM #2 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #3 – INVOCATION

Chair Wright informed the public that Member Schoolfield was not present and would be going through surgery and asked if Pastor Hairston to offer up a word of prayer for Member Schoolfield.

Invocation was given by Pastor William Hairston, Shiloh Baptist Church, Reidsville.

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Secretary Totten moved, seconded by Member Cole to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #5 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Hampton moved, seconded by Secretary Totten to approve the January 21, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #6 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Wright opened Public Comments. Chair Wright closed Public Comments.

ITEM #7 – RESOLUTION – MOVING VOTING LOCATION WITHIN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY PRECINCT – MATRIMONY

The Director stated that at the last Board meeting it was discussed that the Matrimony Precinct had very few parking spaces for the voters. Staff reached out to Pastor Kenneth Moore with Sharon Missionary Baptist Church about the possibility of using the Sharon Community Outreach Center as a possible voting site for the voters in Stoneville. Polly Makins, Member Hampton and myself met with Pastor Moore on Thursday, February 6th and the Sharon Community Outreach Center is available for the use of a polling site for municipal, primary, and general elections if this Board agrees. She stated that in the Board's packets was a resolution to approve or disapprove the move of the Matrimony precinct from the Vera Holland Building to the Sharon Community Outreach Center as well as changing the Matrimony precinct name to Stoneville Precinct. There are approximately 100 parking spaces at Sharon Community Outreach Center. The entrance is ADA compliant and

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there are approximately 10 van accessible parking spots. The Director asked if the Board had any questions or comments. She also asked if Member Hampton had anything to add.

Member Hampton stated it was a great facility and it would make it much easier for the Stoneville voters to have accessibility to the facility. He added that the building itself was part of a school, the gymnasium has been turned into a community center. Member Hampton stated that it was explained to the Pastor the time of days and everything it would take to make this work and Pastor Moore is onboard. He stated it is a great facility and it would be a great move.

Secretary Totten moved, seconded by Member Hampton to approve the resolution to move the voting location in Stoneville from the Vera Holland Building to the Sharon Community Outreach Center. The motion carried unanimously.

**RESOLUTION
MOVING VOTING LOCATION WITHIN
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY PRECINCT**

WHEREAS, the current voting location for the Matrimony Precinct is the Vera Holland Building; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statutes 163-128 provides that the County Board of Elections shall have the power from time to time to establish, alter, discontinue, or create such new election precincts or voting places as it may deem expedient.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rockingham County Board of Elections as follows:

1. That pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 163-128, voting for the Matrimony Precinct will cease to occur at the Vera Holland Building; and,
2. That pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 163-128, the Sharon Community Outreach Center will be the new voting location for the Matrimony Precinct; and,
3. The Matrimony Precinct name will change to the Stoneville Precinct; and
4. That all notice requirements of North Carolina General Statutes 163-128 be met for this change to be effective in advance of the November 4, 2025, primary election.

This resolution shall be effective upon the date of its signing by the Board's Chairperson.

ITEM #8 – REQUEST FOR FY 2024 – 2025 BUDGET REVISION

The Director stated that at a previous Board meeting she had informed the Board that there may be a need for a budget revision in the Postage line item. She stated that included in the Board's packet was a Budget Revision for \$7000 to be put in the Postage line item to cover the postage expenses due to the increase in postage due to the high volume of Absentee by Mail ballots, Early Voting

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Registration cards, the over 4,000 National Change of Address (NCOA) cards, we have exceeded our postage amount. The Director stated that staff will also need to mail out new voter registration cards for those affected by the Leaksville – 2 precinct closure and the change made today with the Matrimony Precinct. She stated that there is also a \$127 budget revision. The Director stated that the \$7,000 for the Postage line item will come from the Advertising line item \$4,000, Board Training \$1,500, and Staff Training \$1,500. She added that there was \$127 overspent in Temporary Salaries, and this can be covered by the line-item Election Precinct Staff by \$127. The Director asked the Board to approve the Budget Revision of \$7,127 for FY 2024-2025.

Member Hampton asked how the Staff Training reduction would affect training additional staff. The Director responded that the Staff Training line item was to cover conference training, and this was the remaining balance in that line item. She added that the next conference training will be in August of 2025 which will be in the next fiscal year.

Secretary Totten moved, seconded by Member Hampton to approve the FY 2024 – 2025 Budget Revision. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #9 – SCHEDULE FY 2025 – 2026 BUDGET MEETING

Chair Wright stated that the Budget Meeting had been scheduled for Monday, February 24, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Board of Elections office. She stated that the Budget may be completed in a day if possible. Chair Wright asked if there were any questions or comments.

ITEM #10 – PUBLIC COMMENTS RESPONSE

Chair Wright stated that at the last Board meeting there was some discussion about music and food at election precincts in Rockingham County. She stated that staff reached out to the State Board of Elections to see if music could be played, and food could be served during elections, and she read the response “food is allowed as long as it is being given to everyone whether they vote or not and no matter who they vote for. Music is fine as well as long as it is not so loud that it is disruptive.” Chair Wright stated that she wanted to make sure that the public comments were followed up on so that everyone could be on the same page. She asked if the Board members had any questions or comments.

ITEM #11 – DIRECTOR’S UPDATES

NC Supreme Court Seat 6 Protest Update

The Director stated the 4th Federal Circuit court sent the protest back down to the state level. Wake County Judge William Pittman ruled to not throw out the 60,000 votes of those that did not have a driver’s license or social security number on their voter registration. Griffin appealed this decision on February 12th, and it is now moving back to the NC Court of Appeals. Judge Jefferson Griffin stated that he would not participate in the decision. Following this appeal, the State Board of Elections and Judge Allison Riggs filed a bypass petition asking that the case be heard at the NC State Supreme Court instead of the NC Court of Appeals. Judge Riggs has recused herself from participating in the decision. She stated that this protest was still ongoing. The Director asked the Board if they had any questions.

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House Bill 66 Update

The Director stated that House Bill 66 was included in the Board's packet. She stated that it was introduced on February 5th to reduce the amount of early voting dates. If this bill passes Early Voting would begin on the second Monday before the election and run through the Saturday before Election Day for a total of 6 Early Voting days. The Director asked if the Board had any questions.

Secretary Totten asked if this bill was still in the House. The Director responded, yes.

House Bill 127

The Director informed the Board that she had put a second bill, House Bill 127, at the Board's seats. She stated that this bill was introduced on February 13th, and it is an act to require the State Board of Elections to develop a sample voter registration form to be used for organized voter registration drives. The Director stated that if this bill passes the sample voter registration forms would not be accepted by the Boards of Elections as valid registration forms.

Secretary Totten asked what the purpose of the bill was. The Director responded that the bill requires the State Board of Elections to develop a sample voter registration form for organized voter registration drives. Secretary Totten continued by saying that the Board of Elections would not be able to accept this form. The Director responded that in the bill it states that there will be a disclaimer on the form stating that it is not an official voter application registration form for voting purposes. Secretary Totten stated that it sounds redundant and sounds like an extra step for anyone that wants to register to vote.

Member Cole stated that these bills normally come from a new member. Secretary Totten responded that she did not think Representative Warren was a new member.

ITEM #12 – CLOSED SESSION

Member Hampton moved, seconded by Member Cole to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6)) Personnel. The motion carried unanimously.

Member Cole moved, seconded by Secretary Totten to go back into open session. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #13 – ADJOURNMENT

At 10:51 a.m. Member Cole moved, seconded by Secretary Totten to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula P. Seamster, Director

Ophelia Wright, Chair