

**Buncombe County Board of Elections**  
**Asheville/Buncombe County Board of Elections**

**Monitor Name:** George and Elaine Elam and Cheryl Williams in person

**Date & Time:** May 14, 2024 5:00 PM

**Names of Board Members Attending:**

Jake Quinn, Chairman

Mary Ann Braine, Board Member

Steven Aceto, Board Member

Glen Shults, Secretary

Sally Stein: Board Member

**Names of Buncombe Co Staff Attending:** Corrine Duncan, Director; Devin Whitney, Elections Technical Specialist; Justin Tate, Absentee Coordinator; Anna Katherine Moore, Administrative Coordinator and Clerk to the Board; Bria Bailey, Elections Technical Specialist

**Location of Meeting:** 59 Woodfin Place, Asheville NC

**Observers:**

3 Republican, 3 LWVAB, 1 Sheriff's Deputy

**Agenda Items**

**I. Agenda** for this meeting approved by acclamation

**II. Office Updates – Corrine Duncan, Director**

- Corrine: introduced the new candidate coordinator, Nate Spire (?) He comes from Bryson City, went to UNCA, was an Army Paralegal, and has done Americorps. This is his second day working with Victoria.
- We h1,240 voters as of 4 pm. As of yesterday there were 122 absentee voters and 262 early voters.
- At 7:30:will be able to post the absentee numbers immediately. They will be unofficial waiting for any absentee ballots and the provisional count. Then we will close our one site and wait for the flash drives to arrive.
- Results may take a bit longer due to only having 3 workers at each site.
- Final official results will be released during Canvass the 24th.
- All counties are doing the same.

**III. Vote on the Early Voting Implementation Plan for the 2024 General Election (G.S. § 163-166.35, SL 2023-140) – Neggy Fox**

- The Proposed Early Voting Plan is for 14 sites, provided a Southwest site can be secured.
- Hours will be weekdays 8-7:30 ; Saturday 10/19 & 10-/26 10-3 ; Sunday 10/27 10-3; Last Saturday 11/2, 8-3.

- Staff is recommending Reynolds Village site over the North Asheville Library due to uncertainty about proposed renovations and traffic issues entering and exiting.
- The public engagement survey that was extended closed on Friday. There were over 1200 responses, 800 comments, and only 1 additional comment recommending the Upper Hominy Fire Station since the extension.
- There was no change in feedback with 75% approval of the plan as is. 16% approve with minor changes, 5% did not approve, 4% approved with major changes.
- Neggy showed a slide summarizing the survey comments, pro and con.
  - 12% - Need more weekend voting
  - 11% - Early Voting duration too long
  - 7% - Need additional sites in rural areas
  - 7% - Concerns about UNCA site
- There was concern over whether construction around UNCA will be accomplished prior to Early Voting. They will use good signage to direct voters.
- Southwest site Beaverdam Community Center is not suitable.
- Pole Creek Baptist: waiting for response.
- Hominy Baptist: waiting for response.
- Maple Ridge Baptist: declined request.
- Staff recommends the original 13 sites with the ability to add a site later. Neggy stated she could attend the Hominy Fire Board of Directors meeting to ask for reconsideration. She has spoken to the Fire Chief and he said might be worth attending, to put a face on the request and answer questions, and to try to mitigate whatever happened in 2012. That meeting is Thursday at 7 pm.
- Ms. Stein said even if they don't get approval from the Fire Board, then the meeting might help relations in the future, and suggested maybe taking a Board member.
- Mr. Aceto stated having no rural contingency "gives him a roaring case of hives", and he would be "distracted" at a plan with no rural site. He would rather have a certain rural site than a contingency site. He would be very reluctant to vote for a plan with just the 13 sites.
- Mr. Quinn attempted to clarify Mr. Aceto's remarks.
- Mr. Aceto would like to go straight to the Jupiter site that wants us there, and maybe that would help with future rural sites.
- Mr. Shults stated the Southwest area is better due to the population. But if that doesn't work maybe Jupiter.
- Mr. Aceto stated that by engaging the skeptics before they turn into cynics, they might be won over and be more energetic to engage in the future.
- Ms. Stein said she does not see the need to push Hominy too hard but we should help them understand the importance of the site. She thinks we should try Hominy and then go Jupiter if that fails.

- Ms. Braine asked if we present a plan to the State and then request another site, would the State approve the request?
- Corrine stated that the State is looking for an approved plan. So if we have the 13, then we have the choice of adding a 14th site by the 21st.
- Ms. Braine said she would lean toward Jupiter because Hominy doesn't seem to want us. She doesn't want to push Hominy.
- Mr. Quinn Jake said he likes the Upper Hominy site due to it being a really great site, and noted that the Chief wants us to approach the Fire Board and maybe win them over. If that fails we might use Jupiter. He wants a plan that all five Board members will approve.
- Corrine said she was ok with either Hominy or Jupiter, and preferred sending staff to Hominy to answer questions. Relationship building is important. The Hominy Fire Chief is already working with the staff of Emergency Management planning. And thus, we already have a good relationship. Both of the sites are not near amenities, and she expects a low turnout.
- Mr. Aceto spoke of his prior volunteer fire credentials, as well as working with Black Mountain Fire. He is willing to go out to Hominy as an advocate. He is concerned that if a plan with 13 sites is submitted the State might not approve additional sites
- Mr. Shults asked if the State is usually flexible in these circumstances? Corrine said we have till the 21st to present an approved plan.
- Corrine clarified the intent of staff in addressing the Hominy Board would not be to pressure and would be respectful. Her opinion is to offer more information.
- Ms. Stein asked if we were voting tonight on a plan?
- Mr. Shults said he wants a site that allows campaigning, and Reynolds Village is private property and does not allow campaigning. Mr. Aceto agreed. Discussion followed on Reynolds vs. North Asheville Library.
- Ms. Braine likes Jupiter because they want us there.
- Mr. Quinn brought up the traffic issue with North Asheville Library. It was last used in 2018 and he expects it would be even busier if used in 2024.
- Ms. Braine asked about the Reynolds site being small. Neggy said she was going after a site on either side of the one used prior and both would be larger.
- Ms. Braine asked if we have a commitment on the sites. Neggy said yes , but not sure which of the two places either on either side, possibly two doors down from the 2018 site.
- Corrine said library is free but we will have to pay for Reynolds. In 2018 the charge was \$5 or 6K. She imagines the cost would be higher now.
- Mr. Quinn said he was more concerned with safety at the Library, with the possibility of vehicles being hit on entering or exiting.
- Mr. Aceto made a motion to approve 14 sites with either Hominy Fire or Jupiter Fire being the 14th site for the 2024 general election naming the previous 13 sites and hours. Jake amended the motion to include the

previously stated voting days and hours. Corrine asked to include inclement weather policy. Jake read the policy.

- Mr. Quinn repeated the motion from Mr. Aceto. The motion passed 5-0
- Mr. Quinn and Corrine described the ongoing relationships with county organizations such as law enforcement and emergency departments.
- Mr. Quinn proclaimed a recess for dinner at about 7:10. The Board reconvened at about 7:20.

• **IV. Preliminary Absentee Results (GS § 163-234) – Bria Bailey**

- Bria presented three copies of the absentee abstract to the Board.
- Mr. Quinn made a motion to approve the ballots received before 5pm 5-13-24. The motion passed 5-0.
- There was a DS-200 on a table in front of the Board.

**V. Close Early Voting Polls (GS § 163-182.2)**

- At 7:30 Bria proceeded to close the polls on the DS-200. A tape was printed out.
- Awaiting the precincts.
- The tape was passed to the Board members.
- Next meeting is on 5-17-24 @ 3:30
- The abstract was approved @ 7:56

**VI. Next Meeting Date**

5/17/24 at 3:30 pm

**Location:** 59 Woodfin Place