

CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS REGULAR MEETING

Chatham County Board of Elections Office

984 Thompson Street, Suite D

Pittsboro, NC 27312

GoToMeeting

March 16, 2021 – 5:30 P.M.

The Chatham County Board of Elections met at the Chatham County Board of Elections office at 984 Thompson Street Suite D, Pittsboro, NC 27312 on March 16, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. via GoToMeeting. Citizens were given the opportunity to submit comments or concerns via email to the Director by 5:00 p.m. to be addressed during citizens input on the agenda.

The following people were present: Chair Laura Heise, Secretary Charles Ramos, Member Amy Meek (remotely), Member Frank Dunphy II, Member Mark Barroso, Director Pandora Paschal, Deputy Director Steve Simos, Election Specialist Chance Mashburn and temp employee Donald Lyerly.

Call to Order

Chair Laura Heise called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed the public. Secretary Charles Ramos led everyone in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Chair Heise stated that a quorum was present, and Member Amy Meek joined virtually. Chair Heise reminded citizens who joined the meeting about the public input process and how to submit information to the Director to be addressed by the board during the meeting. There was no public input for this meeting. Chair Heise stated the first order of business is to see if the board had any additions for the agenda. There were no additions made.

Approve Minutes

Minutes from November 12, 2020 were presented for approval. Member Frank Dunphy II made the motion. Member Mark Barroso seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Minutes from February 16, 2020 were presented for approval. Member Frank Dunphy II made the motion. Secretary Charles Ramos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Outline How Minutes Should be Written

Chair Heise stated that after the question-and-answer session with County Attorney Robert Hagemann that she felt the board should adopt some guidelines as to how the minutes should be written. Chair Heise presented the Suggested Guidelines for Board of Elections Minutes, which were provided by Director Pandora Paschal, at her request, for the board's comments.

Member Mark Barroso thought the Suggested Guidelines for Board of Elections Minutes provided by the Director included everything that was needed to provide accurate minutes. Secretary Charles Ramos asked what reference was used to obtain the suggestions. Director

Pandora Paschal stated she googled writing minutes for small boards. The guidelines contained everything County Attorney Robert Hagemann suggested should be included in the minutes. Member Frank Dunphy II stated that he thought the outline was ok, but there were a couple of adjectives included that he might take issue with. The words "short" and "brief", he did not find either of these words in any of the sources he looked at for how to write minutes. Member Mark Barroso agreed with Member Frank Dunphy II, but he stated that the readers do not need a word for word account of the argument. They want succinctness. Presenting objective honest and succinct summaries is a good way to go. Chair Laura Heise stated there would always be some ambiguity about whether something is brief or brief enough but thinks the goal of using simple language and making clear arguments that are not a lot of pages is a good goal. If a board member looking at the minutes thinks that the argument is not adequately described that board member can propose additional language to adjust the stated account. Deputy Director Steve Simos stated based on what was written on the suggested guidelines if the words "short" and the word "brief" were taken out would that be sufficient. Member Frank Dunphy II stated that was better. He presented the board with his sources for taking minutes. 1). County Attorney Robert Hagemann 2). Page 817 of the N.C. Election Law Manual which deal with minutes, 3). SBOE board member training module on minutes taken in December 2020. Member Mark Barroso reminded the board that the recording will be available if a court or a citizen wanted a verbatim recollection of the meeting. The summary would be the written minutes and the recording will be the verbatim account. Member Amy Meek agreed with Member Mark Barroso about the journalist example of the who, what, when, and why, while keeping the minutes compact and still get to what Frank is asking for. The board concluded that since the recorded minutes will be available for reference if needed by a court or for public record request the Suggested Guidelines will be used. On some occasion's minutes may be longer due to long discussions or conflict between members or staff.

Chair Laura Heise asked for a motion to accept the Suggested Guidelines for Board of Elections Minutes with the words "short" and "brief" removed. Secretary Charles Ramos made the motion. Member Amy Meek seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Special Minutes for Board Conflict

The board discussed the proposed draft of a process for special minutes to document board conflict presented by Member Frank Dunphy II. Chair Laura Heise stated that she did not object to having the argument spelled out in this manner, she would prefer that the board not vote on them as official minutes because it is very much an argument and whomever is involved in the argument presenting facts that other people may not agree with them. The board may agree to have the arguments added, but it would be preferred not to have them as a part of the legal document. Member Mark Barroso stated that the viewpoints should only include what was stated at the meeting, Member Frank Dunphy II agreed with Chair Heise that the viewpoints will not be included in the regular minutes, but as an addendum in text. Chair Heise stated there should be some guidelines on how these viewpoints are written. She also stated that she did not want them to accuse board members or staff members of malfeasance or failure. She

stated she believes questions can be raised about processes, but she really does not want to go public with opinions that are attacking other people in this body, that is inappropriate, and she does not want anything like that attached to the minutes. Member Mark Barroso stated the opinions should be written following the guidelines for writing the minutes. The viewpoints will be posted on the Board of Elections website as an addition to the minutes for posterity. After deliberating the board agreed to adopt the proposed Document for Board Conflict during a meeting (See attached document) as an addendum to the Suggested Guidelines for Board of Election Minutes. In conclusion Chair Heise stated that she is willing to include the draft that Member Frank Dunphy II introduced as long as there is no inflammatory remarks or personal observations as a part of the viewpoint. The board will not vote on these viewpoints as they come up; they are attached but are not a part of the official minutes. The viewpoints are not voted on and they do not express the views of the entire board. Member Frank Dunphy II suggest putting something in the text that says "see two opposing viewpoints that has not been voted on" on the addendum or that has not been approved by the board. This is just documenting when there are two or more differing opinions.

Secretary Charles Ramos made the motion to adopt the proposed Board Conflict document with the following language included: 1). Make clear these viewpoints are addendums and not voted on. 2). There shall not be anything inflammatory, or any personal observations included. 3). Deadline requirements 5 business days from receipt of minutes, and material must reflect what was discussed at the meeting. Chair Laura Heise seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Member Frank Dunphy II raised the question, how will a reader who reads the minutes know where to go search for the addendum? Deputy Director Steve Simos stated it will be notated in the minutes. Deputy Director Steve Simos wanted it to be clear that if a viewpoint is written and the resolution has been final it should not be brought up in the new meeting. A notation of the conflict viewpoints will be noted on the Suggested Guidelines for Chatham County Board of Elections Minutes as an attached addendum.

As stated in the guideline's minutes will be sent to board members one week prior to the meeting, or at least three business days before the meeting when we are not amid an election.

FY 2022 Budget

Director Pandora Paschal presented the budget for FY 2022 to the board for their approval. The board reviewed each line item. Questions were addressed by the Director and staff. Chair Laura Heise made the motion to approve the budget as submitted. Secretary Charles Ramos seconded the motion. All were in favor. Director Pandora Paschal informed the board of additions that may be made to the communications line item for additional MIFI's and service for use of tablets by election officials at polling places to look up voters waiting in line. Funds for possible 2nd Primary election will be added as contingency.

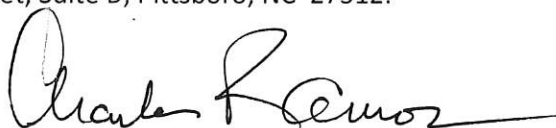
Chair Laura Heise made the motion to approve the FY 2022 budget. Secretary Charles Ramos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Director's Report

At the request of Chair Laura Heise Director Pandora Paschal gave the board an update on what the office has been doing the last few months and what is being planned to look ahead for this year with the possibility of not having any elections because 2021 is a year following the federal census, some municipalities must redistrict to correct population imbalances (See attached Director's Report)>

Chair Heise stated if there was no further business the meeting would be adjourned. Member Frank Dunphy II made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Mark Barroso seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

The next meeting will be April 20, 2021 at 5:30 P.M. at the Board of Elections office at 984 Thompson Street, Suite D, Pittsboro, NC 27312.



Charles Ramos, Secretary



Pandora Paschal, Attest