

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

County Courthouse ♦ 842 West King Street Boone, North Carolina 28607

County Board of Elections

The Watauga County Board of Elections will meet Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 5:00p.m. in the County Administration Building located at 814 West King Street, Boone, NC 28607. This meeting is open to the public.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83087342292?pwd=fwZ8lbn0JVW64cY42wvGXkkU5664l.1>

Meeting ID: 830 8734 2292

Passcode: 427715

OR

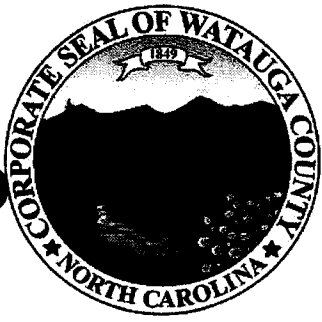
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February 18, 2025

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 4, 2024 AND JANUARY 14, 2025
4. NEW REGISTRATIONS AND STATISTICS
5. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE
6. NEW RIVER III PRECINCT POLLING PLACE
7. PUBLIC COMMENT
8. ADJOURNMENT



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The Watauga County Board of Elections met Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 5:00p.m. in the County Courthouse located at 842 West King Street, Boone, NC 28607. Board members in attendance: Chairperson Michael Behrent, Members Eric Eller, Leta Councill and Elaine Rothenberg, and Secretary Matthew Walpole. Also attending: Director Matt Snyder and Deputy Director Donna Houck. Member Rothenberg attended remotely, by zoom.

February 18, 2025

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Michael Behrent called the meeting to order.

2. PLEDGE

All present pledged allegiance to the United States flag.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 4, 2024, AND JANUARY 14, 2025

Member Eller moved approval of the minutes from December 4, 2024, and from January 14, 2025. Member Councill seconded the motion. Approved by 5-0 vote.

4. NEW REGISTRATIONS AND STATISTICS

Director Snyder reported 139 new registrants, bringing county total to 43,427 voters in the active/inactive category, and 37,038 in the active category. Member Eller moved approval of the report pending review, seconded by Member Councill. Approved by 5-0 vote.

5. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Director Snyder reminded the Board that voting equipment demonstrations by the two state-certified vendors, Hart InterCivic and ES&S, will take place next week on Tuesday February 25 (Hart) and Wednesday February 26 (ES&S), each at 5:00 p.m. in the County Administration Building. These meetings are open to the public, and precinct judges have been encouraged to attend. Storage are standards to ensure preservation of records and to reduce the possibility of maintenance issues of equipment were discussed. Plans for new facilities are contingent on the results of budget discussions this Spring.

Budget discussions relating to specific personnel will be handled in closed session, as per state requirements.

Director Snyder has noted that the adoption of a "virtual mail box" system by Appalachian State University may have been a significant contributing factor to the large number of voter address verification cards returned to the office in the Fall of 2024, forcing manual review and follow-up on thousands of voters. The letter of the law and the spirit of the law appear in conflict, but the Board and the Elections Office are bound by legislative requirements. As this may be a looming problem in other areas of the state as well, Director Snyder is requesting guidance from the State BOE, with the suggestion that this situation may need to be legislatively addressed.

A review of candidates who have had campaign finance documents routinely destroyed following the expiration of state-mandated time-tables was presented to the Board for review. No action was required by the Board.

The somewhat dormant association of County Boards of Elections is working to revive itself, following a period of quietude reinforced by Hurricane Helene. No action is immediately necessary, but the Board may explore this further at a later meeting.

6. NEW RIVER III PRECINCT POLLING PLACE


Director Snyder reminded the Board of the Election Day 2024 move of the New River III polling place from the hurricane-damaged Armory to the Watauga County Recreation Center. Positive reviews from all involved lead us to believe that this may be a good permanent change. Before taking any action, public comment will be solicited at a future meeting on this possible change.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT


There was no public comment at this meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT


Member Eller moved to adjourn, seconded by Member Council. Approved by 5-0 vote.

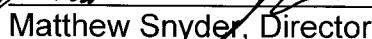

Michael Behrent, Chair


Leta Council, Member


Elaine Rothenberg, Member


Matthew Walpole, Secretary


Eric Eller, Member


Matthew Snyder, Director

Local Officials' Confidence in Electoral Process High After Election

Updated: 5 days ago

In the United States, distrust in the electoral process has grown in recent years, especially following the 2020 presidential election. Given their unique role in the electoral process, CivicPulse tracked local government leaders' perspective on this issue in the lead-up to and aftermath of the 2024 election, in partnership with Professor Josh Clinton at Vanderbilt University.

To do so, we fielded both a pre-election and post-election survey of local election officials and local elected policymakers (associated with county, municipal, and township governments as well as school boards). Preceding the election, we asked how likely it was that the vote count would be accurate, both in their own state and in the nation as a whole. Following the election, we asked the same questions retrospectively.

Prior to the election, confidence in their own states' electoral processes was high, with 93% of local officials saying an accurate vote count in their state was somewhat, very, or extremely likely. However, when it came to confidence in vote count accuracy in the United States as a whole, only 82% of respondents indicated trust in the vote counting process.

Most of this distrust came from local officials associated with the Republican Party, with 82% of those who said that it was not very or not at all likely that the votes would be counted accurately identifying as Republicans or as independents who lean Republican.

However, such doubts about the electoral process all but disappeared following the election, with 95% of local officials reporting confidence in the nation's electoral process, converging with trust in their own state's process (97%).

*Thinking about **your state**, how likely do you think it is that the votes will be counted accurately? Response options: Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely*

*Thinking about the **United States** as a whole, how likely do you think it is that the votes will be counted accurately? Response options: Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely*

In your own words, what, if any, are your biggest concerns about how votes are cast and counted in the United States?

Post-election questions:

Thinking about your state, how likely do you think it is that the votes were counted accurately? Response options: Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely

Thinking about the United States as a whole, how likely do you think it is that the votes were counted accurately? Response options: Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely

If you did suspect the integrity of an election was compromised, what actions, if any, would you take?

Press Contact

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Senior Research and Communications Associate

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Additional Resources

For access to the underlying data for this brief, email us at info@civicpulse.org.

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

NVRA REPORT

Reporting Period: 1/1/2024 - 2/1/2025

Totals

Active	41,236
Inactive	2,193
Total Registration	43,429

REPORTING PERIOD

Registrations Approved	7,737
Total Registrations Removed	9,350
Inactive Registrations Removed	3,864

New Registrations

00 - No Application Source	0
01 - Public Assistance	10
02 - Disability	0
03 - Other (ESC)	0
04 - Armed Forces	0
05 - DMV	1,857
06 - Mail-in	352
07 - In-person	2,346
08 - Library & High School	0
09 - Spanish Language Application	0
10 - Online Registration	1,378
17 - Registration Drives	2,457
21 - Medicaid Renewal	5
96 - Temporary FWAB Registrant	0
97 - Temporary FPCA Registrant	25
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	8,430

Duplicates

00 - No Application Source	8
01 - Public Assistance	6
02 - Disability	0
03 - Other (ESC)	10
04 - Armed Forces	0
05 - DMV	517
06 - Mail-in	1,259
07 - In-person	1,783
08 - Library & High School	0
09 - Spanish Language Application	0
10 - Online Registration	381
17 - Registration Drives	118
21 - Medicaid Renewal	3
95 - Voter Return of NCOA	105
96 - Temporary FWAB Registrant	3
97 - Temporary FPCA Registrant	180
98 - Voter Change On Confirmation	55

Changes of Information

00 - No Application Source	3
01 - Public Assistance	12
02 - Disability	0
03 - Other (ESC)	43
04 - Armed Forces	0
05 - DMV	1,069
06 - Mail-in	1,072
07 - In-person	3,923
08 - Library & High School	0
09 - Spanish Language Application	0
10 - Online Registration	1,029
17 - Registration Drives	750
21 - Medicaid Renewal	0
95 - Voter Return of NCOA	54
96 - Temporary FWAB Registrant	1
97 - Temporary FPCA Registrant	52
98 - Voter Change On Confirmation	27
99 - Voter Change On Verification	56
	<hr/>
	8,091

Verifications

# of 1st & 2nd verification mailings sent	22,766
# of 1st NCOA mailings sent	747
# of 1st verification returned undeliverable	5,241
# of verification returned by voter	136

Confirmations

# of confirmations returned by voter	78
# of confirmations sent	5,187
# of confirmations returned undeliverable	525
# of confirmations not returned at all	5

COUNTY STATISTICAL

Constitution	5
Democratic	10,659
Green	64
Justice For All	5
Libertarian	305
No Labels	111
Republican	12,225
Unaffiliated	20,046
We The People	9
American Indian	48
Asian	371
Black	790
Multi-Racial	420
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	14
White	37,629
Other	797
Undesignated	3,360

04 - Armed Forces	0
05 - DMV	249
06 - Mail-in	15
07 - In-person	178
08 - Library & High School	0
09 - Spanish Language Application	0
10 - Online Registration	89
17 - Registration Drives	1,791
21 - Medicaid Renewal	0
96 - Temporary FWAB Registrant	0
97 - Temporary FPCA Registrant	5

CAMPAIGN FINANCE RECORDS DESTROYED IN OFFICE

JANUARY 27, 2025

*Per G.S. 163-278.40 - Destroy in office remaining records 3 years after the close of a committee, unless it is a candidate committee and the candidate continues to hold elected office. In those cases destroy candidate committee records 3 years after the candidate has left elected office and has closed all candidate committees.

Ron Henries – Board of Education

Brenda Reese – Board of Education

Nancy Collins – Blowing Rock Town Council

Virginia Powell – Blowing Rock Town Council

Rennie Brantz– Boone Mayor

Matthew Bonestell – Boone Town Council

Joan Brook – Boone Town Council

Christy Cook– Boone Town Council

Sam Furgiuele – Boone Town Council

Dustin Hicks – Boone Town Council

Eric Woolridge – Boone Town Council

Kay Ehlinger – Seven Devils Town Council

David Blust – County Commissioner

Tommy Sofield – County Commissioner

STANDARD-7. PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: CANDIDACY, CAMPAIGN FINANCE, AND PETITIONS RECORDS

Records created and received by county boards of elections and used in connection with conducting local, state, and federal elections.

STANDARD-7: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: CANDIDACY AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE RECORDS AND PETITIONS			
ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
1.	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS Includes all reports, statements, and other documents filed with county boards of elections per Article 22A Regulating Contributions and Expenditures in Political Campaigns.	Destroy in office remaining records 3 years after the close of a committee, unless it is a candidate committee and the candidate continues to hold elected office. In those cases destroy candidate committee records 3 years after the candidate has left elected office and has closed all his candidate committees.	G.S. § 163-278.40
2.	CANDIDACY RECORDS Includes applications, pledges and notices, filing fee records, withdrawals, certification of registration and party affiliation, and all other related documentation.	Retain for election cycle plus term of office.	G.S. § 163 Articles 10 and 11
3.	CANDIDATES LISTS Records listing all candidates and offices sought.	Destroy in office when administrative value ends. Local Policy: Destroy in office after _____.†	
4.	PETITIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS FOR NEW PARTY (COPIES)	Destroy in office 1 year after submission of petition for certification of names.	G.S. § 163-96
5.	PETITIONS FOR ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA	Destroy in office 1 year from date of registration.	G.S. § 163 Article 19

*Records may be disposed of following minimum retention period only if released from audits or other official action (excluding litigation). If applicable, see Litigation Case File, STANDARD-1. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT RECORDS, item 33, page 9.

† See signature page. The agency hereby agrees that it will establish and enforce internal policies setting minimum retention periods for the records that Cultural Resources has scheduled with the disposition instruction "destroy when administrative/reference value ends." Please use the space provided.



EVS 6.3.0.0 Key Benefits Summary:

Enhancements from EVS 5.2.4.0 to EVS 6.3.0.0

This Key Benefits Summary provides information about the enhancements available with the ES&S Voting System 6.3.0.0 (EVS6300). Read the sections that are most relevant to your needs.



This system is an enhanced version of EVS 5.2.4.0. For more information about all system features and benefits of that release, refer to the *Key Benefits Summary: ES&S Voting System 5.2.4.0*.

- Executive Summary - a high-level overview
- General Overview - information relevant to election officials and poll workers
- System Enhancement Details, Product-Specific Enhancement Details, and Cross-Product Enhancement Details - detailed descriptions of each enhancement
- Product Versions - list of hardware and software versions in this release

Executive Summary

EVS6300 introduces new products, as well as enhancements to several existing ES&S products, creating a fully integrated election management system in full compliance with federal guidelines.

Election Management System

EVS6300 moves the operating system to Microsoft® Windows 10 Enterprise LTSC. It also provides security updates, including optional multi-factor authentication and updated verification procedures for all equipment. The method of data protection has also been updated.

New Hardware

EVS6300 introduces the **DS300®**, a new poll place scanner and tabulator; the **DS950®**, a high-speed central scanner and tabulator; the **ExpressVote® XL**, a large-screen vote capture and tabulation device; and the **ExpressTouch®**, an electronic vote capture and tabulation device.