

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS

**Linda J. Sutton**  
CHAIR

**Frank M. Dickerson**  
SECRETARY

**Jerry D. Jordan**  
MEMBER



**Robert H. Coffman**  
Director of Elections

## FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD MEETING – December 1, 2009

Present: Linda J. Sutton, Chair  
Frank M. Dickerson, Secretary  
Jerry D. Jordan, Member

Staff: Rob Coffman, Director of Elections  
Lamar Joyner, Deputy Director of Elections  
Judy Speas, Office Assistant

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### Call to Order

Ms. Sutton called the meeting to order at 1:08 PM in the Cooper Cardwell Elections Room.

### Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes for November 10, 2009. Ms. Sutton requested suggestions for corrections or additions. Mr. Jordan moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Dickerson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Board members signed the minutes.

### Budget Review

Mr. Coffman reviewed three separate budget documents regarding the 2009 elections with the Board members. The first was an overall budget document of all 2009 elections showing a 32% expenditure for the fiscal year. The second document detailed the breakdown of expenditures for the two primary elections, showing that expenditures were under budget. Mr. Coffman explained that the additional funds from the 2009 elections may be transferred to the remaining 2010 May primary election in the fiscal year. The third document detailed the 2009 Municipal General Election budget breakdown by each municipality. Mr. Coffman explained that the department expenses are completely reimbursable by the municipalities. Also, the extra amount budgeted could be reverted back to the county, except for the salary amount. Ms. Sutton questioned the grounds/maintenance department expense for the election. It was explained that the charge was for the transportation of election equipment to the precincts. Mr. Coffman reminded the Board that decisions for the 2010 May primary should be made in the early 2010 Board meetings.

Ms. Sutton asked whether there were any other questions regarding the budget and thanked the Board for their participation. Mr. Dickerson stated that it is helpful to review similar documents in advance of each meeting.

#### County/BOE Memo of Understanding

Mr. Coffman and the Board reviewed the Durham County Memo of Understanding document in order to be informed of this relationship agreement between county and state governments. Ms. Sutton stated that Memorandum of Understanding documents were discussed at the September State Board of Elections Raleigh meeting. No action was taken by the Board to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding document.

#### Assignment of Director's Duties

Ms. Sutton requested the Board members to present suggestions and concerns regarding the Duties of Director of Elections document that was previously presented for review. Mr. Coffman stated that a revised copy had been sent with corrections of statutory errors.

Ms. Sutton stated a concern that the Board is ultimately responsible for actions taken by the office; and for that reason, the Board should be aware of certain decisions in advance. Mr. Jordan and Mr. Dickerson stated concerns that micromanagement of the office may not produce any desired results. Mr. Dickerson stated that clear black and white management guidelines would need to be placed for the action of the Board members. For instance, the Board would not be able to approve all items of the budget while budgetary transfers should be considered. Ms. Sutton stated that the Board would need to maintain an understanding with the office and to be kept abreast of certain issues. It was stated that the Director should have the discretion to administer the office but to certainly notify the Board of major issues of concern. Issues mentioned were large personnel matters; significant complaints of media concern from a political party, etc.; State Board of Elections correspondence; budgetary item transfers over \$500; purchases of large ticket items of equipment and software licenses over \$5000; and service contracts over \$3000 not from the county purchasing process. In conclusion, the Board asked Mr. Coffman to add the above revisions to the Duties of Director of Elections document.

#### Other Business

Mr. Coffman stated that the Board should consider dates for the 2010 Board of Elections meeting schedule and early voting locations for the 2010 primary election soon.

The Board discussed several problems that existed at the precincts on Election Day. The Board stated that staff at school precinct locations must coexist with the precinct workers. Voters should also realize that the school locations are more congested at certain times of the day producing long lines and parking problems. The Board discussed the upcoming Census year and the fact that most redistricting would probably occur over the following two years.

Ms. Sutton questioned the upcoming procedure of pre-registration of sixteen year old voters in North Carolina. Mr. Coffman stated that new forms would be issued and that mailings would be sent as directed by the State Board of Elections.

Mr. Coffman informed the Board of a large mailing of voter registration cards that had returned from WSSU. The cards were returned a few months later than the usual amount of time. It was unsure whether the unnecessary delay occurred with the WSSU campus post office or the Greensboro post office. Mr. Dickerson stated that the Board of Elections office may prevent a reoccurrence of this incident by notifying the campus post office in advance of a large mailing.

Adjournment

The Board scheduled the next Board of Elections meeting to be January 5, 2010 at 1:00 PM in the Cooper Cardwell Elections Room. Ms. Sutton requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dickerson moved to adjourn. Mr. Jordan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:16 PM.

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Linda J. Sutton, Chair

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Frank M. Dickerson, Secretary

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Jerry D. Jordan, Member