



Beaufort County Council

Board of Elections & Registration
15 John Galt Road
P.O. Drawer 1228
Beaufort, SC 29901-1228

Board of Elections and Registration Board Minutes

July 21, 2010

3:00 p.m.

102 Industrial Village Rd. Bldg #2
Beaufort, SC

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Clifford at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Clifford introduced those in attendance. He also introduced the newest board member, Ms. Norma Stewart. Ms. Stewart was appointed by the Governor as of July 16, 2010.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mr. Scott Marshall, Executive Director.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ron Clifford, Chairman
James Rowe
Norma Stewart

Emile Bernard
Dean Hewitt

Ellen Bray
Hugh O’Kane

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Scott Marshall, Executive Director
Eric Montgomery, Programmer

Marie Smalls, Dep. Director

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Richard Brooks, Bluffton Today Newspaper
Morris Campbell, Dep. Administrator
Jacob Martin, Citizen

Robert Achurch, County Attorney
Paul Sommerville, Councilman

Mr. Clifford explained that two letters were received from the Governor’s office appointing Ms. Stewart, as well as Ms. Beverly Dore, to the board. Mr. Clifford noted that Ms. Stewart’s appointment, though not unexpected, was of questionable timing given that the board member she is replacing, Ms. Marilyn Caprielian, had not yet submitted a letter of resignation to the Beaufort County Legislative Delegation. He announced that Ms. Dore, who will fill the empty seat left by Mr. Curtis Pauling’s resignation in March, had a prior commitment to attend that pre-dated her board appointment, and that she would not be able to attend the meeting.

Mr. Clifford called for Public comments. There were none.

The minutes of the May 26, 2010 Board meeting were presented. Minor corrections were made to the attendance roster. It was motioned by Mr. Dean Hewitt, and seconded by Mr. Hugh O’Kane, that the minutes be accepted with corrections. The May 26th minutes were voted upon and approved unanimously.

The meeting minutes of the June 10, 2010 Board of Canvassers were presented. It was motioned by Mr. Hewitt and seconded by Mr. Jim Rowe that the minutes be accepted. The minutes were voted upon and approved unanimously.

The meeting minutes of the June 24, 2010 Board of Canvassers were presented. It was motioned by Mr. Emile Bernard and seconded by Mr. O’Kane that the minutes be accepted. The minutes were voted upon and approved unanimously.

The meeting minutes of the June 24, 2010 Board of Elections and Registration were presented. It was motioned by Mr. Hugh O’Kane, seconded by Mr. Dean Hewitt that the minutes be accepted. The June minutes were voted upon and approved unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Marshall recommended to the Board that the existing committees needed to be refined, with discussion and voting as follows:

- *Poll Worker Management Recruitment Committee*- The majority of the Board felt that this committee may not be needed because each Board member is responsible for recruiting. Ms. Stewart was concerned about the quality of Poll Managers performance due to age. Ms. Ellen Bray said that she would like to see standardized training. Mr. Bernard was concerned about the lack of correct responses from poll workers in various situations at the Polls. The Board voted to eliminate this committee.
- *Special Projects* – The Board voted unanimously to eliminate this committee.
- *Facilities Committee* – The Board voted unanimously to keep this committee.
- *Satellite Location Committee* - The Board voted unanimously to eliminate this committee; with the understanding that concerns for a satellite office would be channeled through the Facilities Committee.
- *Finance Committee* - The Board unanimously voted to keep this committee.
- *Rules Committee*- It was motioned by Mr. Hewitt and seconded by Mr. Rowe that the Board form this committee. The Board voted unanimously to create this committee, with Mr. Rowe volunteering to chair it.
- *Legislative Committee*- It was motioned by Mr. Rowe and seconded by Ms. Bray to retain this committee.
- *Precinct Realignment* – The Board agreed to retain this committee by unanimous vote. Mr. Marshall suggested that this committee begin meeting very soon.

Mr. Clifford committed to managing initial committee assignments via email.

Poll Manager Pay is also unfinished business; however, Mr. Marshall suggested that this issue be discussed as part of a larger temporary election worker pay discussion at a later board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

No new Business

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Petitions:

The Executive Director briefed the Board on the number of petitions that were received by the office. Fourteen (14) petitions were received:

- County-wide petition was received for the office of Treasurer-- Mr. Doug Henderson with 9,698 signatures.
- School Board 1 – one candidate
- School Board 2 – one candidate
- School Board 5 – two candidates
- School Board 7 – four candidates
- School Board 8 – one candidate
- School Board 9 – one candidate
- School Board 11 - one candidate
- Soil and Water Conservation District – two candidates

Extension Office:

The location for the extension office south of the Broad River will be in the Bluffton Recreation Center at 61 Ulmer Road, Bluffton. Targeted date for opening is September 1, with office hours yet to be determined.

EVRL (Electronic Voter Registration List):

The County administration inserted \$30,000 into the department's FY 2011 budget for laptops that will be used to operate the EVRL system. The department will work with MIS and Purchasing to execute the buy. The implementation date of EVRL is to be determined.

Budget:

The budget approved for fiscal year 2011, to exclude personnel and reimbursables, is \$218,295. The initial budget request was for \$319,465. Among the impacts of the budget reductions will be that fewer staff and Board members will be funded for the annual SCARE Legislative Conference in January, 2011.

Stipend:

Due to the Governor's veto, the South Carolina Election Commission does not have funds to subsidize stipends for county Board Members. Other counties are being polled on how they will handle this issue. Board members input is also solicited. A recommendation will be presented to Administration for the funds.

End of Executive Director's report.

It was motioned by Mr. O'Kane that the Board enter into Executive Session under SC Code 30-4-70A(1) to seek legal counsel from the County Attorney. It was seconded by Mr. Hewitt, voted upon and passed unanimously.

The Board took a short break before entering into executive session to discuss its next step regarding protest activities associated with the Bluffton 2008 Town Council Election.

Mr. Ron Clifford, Chairman, reconvened the Board 5:29 p.m. and briefed the results of the executive session as follows:

There was a lengthy discussion with the County Attorney, Mr. Robert Achurch, about the range of actions the Board could take. The Board's 2008 decision to order a new election for the Town of Bluffton was appealed to South Carolina Election Commission by the two top voter getters, Mr. Hamilton and Ms. Mitchell. The South Carolina Election Commission's decision was later appealed to the South Carolina Supreme Court by Mr. Fulgham and Mr. Thomas, who lost the election. The South Carolina Supreme Court ruled that SEC did not have jurisdiction over a decision regarding the Town of Bluffton Election, therefore remanded the case to the Beaufort County Circuit Court. In view of the SC Supreme Court's decision, the Board agreed to wait on a decision from the Circuit Court before moving forward. The Board voted unanimously to wait on the Circuit Court's decision.

Mr. Marshall informed the Board that the Mid-session SCARE Conference will be held on August 2, 2010 on Hilton Head Island.

The next board meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 25, 2010 at 3:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.