

# BRUNSWICK COUNTY

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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Meeting Minutes · Absentee & Special Meeting · May 7, 2024 · 5:00 p.m.

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**Board Members Present:** Secretary Stuart Smith, Member Paula Clarity, Member Randy Pelton, and Member Timothy M. Randall

**Board Staff Present:** Director Sara LaVere, Deputy Director Melissa Chambers, Deputy Director Adrienne Rushton, Elections Computer Technician Butch Johnson, Election Logistics Technician Ryan Childress, Voter Registration Clerk Cathy Newland, Outreach and Training Specialist Robyn Believeau, Assistant Computer Technician Walter Norton, and Absentee Assistant Christy Souter

**Bipartisan Duplication Team Present:** Julie Paladino and Christy Souter

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### **Meeting Opening**

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order and everyone in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Clarity made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Pelton made a motion to approve the minutes for the April 30, 2024 Absentee Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Consideration of Absentee Ballots**

Mr. Johnson verified the seal number on the vDrive seal as 37471347. The current ballot count was verified as 62.

There are 16 absentee ballots for consideration:

Recommended for approval:

#### **Civilian ballots**

- 15 Civilian ballots

Board members each reviewed a minimum of two ballots.

Ms. Clarity made a motion to approve 15 Civilian ballots as recommended by staff. Motion carried unanimously.

### Ballots Requiring Board Review

- One Civilian ballot was received in a sealed return envelope, but the ballot envelope was unsealed.

Numbered memo 2021-03 provides that when the ballot is inside the executed ballot envelope which is not sealed but the ballot envelope is received in a sealed return envelope, this anomaly is not a deficiency.

Ms. Clarity made a motion to approve the Civilian Accepted ballot as recommended by staff. Motion carried unanimously.

The bipartisan team opened the approved ballots and removed ballots to be scanned.

After scanning was complete, Mr. Johnson announced that 16 ballots were scanned today with no overvotes. Ms. LaVere confirmed that was the number of ballots approved.

The ballots were placed in a bin and sealed, with seals signed by Mr. Pelton and Mr. Randall. The secure vDrive was placed in a storage container and sealed. The following vote count and seal numbers were logged and will be confirmed at the start of the next meeting.

- Ballot count: 78 total
- Ballot bin: 2617005 and 2617057
- vDrive storage container: 37471381

The board signed an audit sheet confirming the number of ballots scanned today and seal numbers.

Mr. Pelton made a motion to recess the meeting until 6 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

The board returned from recess at 6 PM

### Special Recognition

#### Dogwood Award Winner

#### Presentation:

- Ms. LaVere wanted to congratulate Ernestine Bryant, who has been working in elections as a poll worker in Brunswick County for 48 years. She recently was recognized with the Dogwood Award. Ms. LaVere and the Board joined in Attorney General Josh Stein's recognition and appreciation of her dedication and long-time service to Brunswick County.

- Attorney General Josh Stein honored longtime chief judge Ernestine Bryant with the Attorney General’s Dogwood Award in 2023. These awards are given out annually to recognize people who are working to improve the health, safety, and well-being of their fellow North Carolinians.
- “The right to cast your ballot safely and securely and know it will be counted is central to our democracy,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “Ms. Bryant has been a dedicated precinct chief judge for years in Brunswick County. She and other poll workers like her are the backbone of our elections.”
- Photos with Sara LaVere, Director, Brunswick County Board of Elections

I Voted and Future Voter Sticker Contest Winners

Presentation:

- Ms. Rushton recognized the winners of the first sticker contest in Brunswick County
- Recognition of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners of the “I Voted” and “Future Voter” sticker contest
- Students received a trophy, certificate, gift card and set of their stickers
- Photos of students with Sara LaVere, Director, Brunswick County Board of Elections
- Art teachers for each student will receive set of stickers
- Art teachers of 1<sup>st</sup> place winners will also receive a gift card



Mr. Pelton made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.