

BRUNSWICK COUNTY

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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Meeting Minutes · Absentee Meeting · October 14, 2025 · 4:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Chair Randy Pelton, Secretary Edward Lewis, Member Paula Clairty, Member Joe Myers, and Member David Smudski

Board Staff Present: Director Sara LaVere, Deputy Director Melissa Chambers, Deputy Director Adrienne Rushton, Elections Computer Technician Butch Johnson, Candidate Coordinator Noelle Powers, Election Logistics Technician Ryan Childress, and Absentee Assistant Christy Souter

Bi-Partisan Duplication Team: Gwen Causey, Julie Paladino, Myrtle Stevenson, and Patricia Vandergrift

Meeting Opening

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

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Smudski made a motion to approve the agenda, amended to add a discussion of Numbered Memo 2023-06 (as updated on 10.8.2025). Motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of Absentee Ballots

There are 14 ballots for the board's consideration.

Mr. Johnson verified the seal on the vdrive as 37471330; Ms. LaVere verified it matched the seal number placed at the end of the meeting on October 7.

Upon opening the central scan, Mr. Johnson verified a ballot count of 2; Ms. LaVere verified it matched the ballot count from the meeting on October 7.

Ballots recommended for approval:

Civilian ballots:

8 Civilian ballots recommended for approval. The board spot checked ballots recommended for approval. Ms. Rushton provided a summary of what is reviewed on a civilian ballot return container; voter signature, appropriate witness signature and information or notary, and a copy of an acceptable form of photo ID.

Mr. Smudski made a motion to approve the ballots as recommended by staff. Motion carried unanimously.

The ballots were opened by the bipartisan team. It was discovered that one ballot contained white out and was appropriately duplicated by the bipartisan team.

Overseas ballots:

5 Overseas ballots that have been received electronically and duplicated by the bi-partisan team ahead of the meeting. The ballots were reviewed by the board.

Ms. Clarity made a motion to approve the ballots. Motion carried unanimously.

Duplicated ballots were scanned into the central scan.

Ballots for disapproval:

One civilian ballot was returned with incomplete witness information. The ballot has been spoiled and reissued to the voter.

Ms. Clarity made a motion to disapprove the ballot. Motion carried unanimously.

Information only: 0 Pending Cure ballots

After scanning was complete, Mr. Johnson announced that 13 ballots were scanned today with the total scanned for this election as 15.

Ms. Rushton confirmed that the number of ballots approved today was 13.

The ballots were placed in a bin and sealed, with seals signed by Mr. Smudski and Ms. Clarity. 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: 15
- Ballot bin: 5723151 and 5723152
- vDrive storage container: 37471329

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

Discussion of Numbered Memo 2023-06

Ms. LaVere provided a summary of the revised memo that was issued by the state on October 8, 2025. This memo provided updated guidance regarding observers in non-partisan elections. Precincts in which parties have a candidate registered to that party, even though it is not displayed on the ballot, may have observers. Unaffiliated candidates may also appoint observers that may serve in the precincts in which that candidate appears on the ballot.

Deadline to submit observer names to the board of elections is noon on the day before the observer is going to observe.

Mr. Smudski asked for clarification as to whether the parties had been provided with the updated information. Ms. LaVere confirmed that party chairs were provided with updated information from the state via email on October 13 and it was posted on the Board of Elections website.

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