

ALAMANCE

I observed the vote canvass of the Alamance County Board of Elections this past Friday, May 27th. It went smoothly as well.

I didn't see any "outsider" besides myself in attendance. The vote canvass was held in the BOE office. I made four notes:

1) There was only vote subject to interesting discussion. In one of the precincts, a voter took her ballot but did not fill it out. She bypassed the voting machines and fed it into the tabulator. The poll workers could not explain why she did this. A BOE member speculated the voter may have mistaken the tabulator for a voting machine? Anyway, after feeding it into the machine, the voter (a female, I think) informed a poll worker she, the voter, had submitted her ballot but had not voted for anyone. The poll workers decided she should have a second chance to vote and gave her a provisional ballot, which she completed and submitted. The precinct had immediately reported this incident "so the Alamance BOE would know that if the vote count was off by a ballot, this would explain it." Thus the Alamance BOE was on the alert, and it so happened that precinct was indeed off by that one ballot.

Evidently the precinct was rueful when it called, realizing "they probably shouldn't have handled it the way they did." The Alamance BOE definitely didn't think it should have been handled that way, while they did appreciate the precinct calling immediately to report what had happened to put the BOE on the alert. But they agreed on the need for more training of that precinct's poll workers before the next election. They asked among themselves, "Why was the voter not escorted to a voting machine and explained how it operated? Was a poll worker at the tabulator to check with the voter to make sure selections were made and to explain that once the ballot was cast, that was it? If not, why not? And if someone was there, why didn't they review the process with the voter? This can be addressed with training so it doesn't happen again."

2) A staffer had a conversation to share, that an Alamance citizen and local businessman Paul Keller (I think that's right) informed her he had applied for a mail-in ballot but it was taking so long to get it, he had ended up voting in person. Then he received his ballot. "It had been dated May 10, so I understand it wasn't the Board of Elections' fault I didn't receive it before _____ (I didn't catch the date) and that's on the Post Office. But I wanted to make sure you knew," He said. The BOE agreed they were accustomed to wonderful cooperation with the Graham Post Office, but they would touch base with them about this. (Note: I'm sorry I missed the first minute of this conversation. They'd been talking about favorite lunch places so I had picked up my book, then realized the conversation had changed to the interaction with Paul Keller. I don't know if he had come in the BOE office to personally turn in the mail-in ballot when he received it, or if he had thrown it away.)

3) The canvassing would have been finished likely an hour earlier, except one of the reports had a column that had combined the mail-in ballots and the provisional ballots. So the report was returned and two separate columns requested before the Alamance BOE would sign off on it. During the time it took for a new report to be generated, one member asked if it would be possible – in the future, not right then - to re-design the form to add a column allowing them to know when mail-in ballots came in, just for curiosity's sake, to see if people who voted by mail tended to vote later (closer to the actual Election Day) or earlier. The staffer said yes, that would be possible and she'd make a note to include that info on future reports;

4) Also, while they were waiting for the report, the Alamance BOE discussed the need for a precinct to be split in future elections due to development the precinct had seen. They consulted a precinct map on the wall and reviewed the precinct in question together. They agreed the precinct could be easily split along a major highway (I didn't write the #, but it was so big even I could see the route from where I sat.) They agreed either of two churches - Beacon Baptist and a second church they couldn't remember the exact name of (Church of the Way, maybe?) would be ideal spots for polling places and one had been contacted. Beacon Baptist, however, had not returned calls left on the answering machine. One of the Board members said he had a relative he thought attends the second church and would ask the relative for a specific name at the church to contact.

CABARRUS

Cabarrus rejected 19 voters, 20 ballots for absentees. Almost all were past deadline. But one person sent same two signatures in twice (hence the discrepancy in numbers). That person ended up voting in person. Another had no signatures. Was sent a new form but did not return it and do not know if voted in person.

All rest accepted by all board.

There was discussion of a local community who had had its polling place closed and moved to a spot 5 miles distant, with no good public transportation to it. An informal poll, conducted by a local election worker (who brought the issue before the board), suggested that the new polling place was too inconvenient for the many persons without cars. The board discussed reasons the old polling place had been closed, reasons why the current location was chosen, and scheduled a meeting for public comment on the matter. They were going to look at alternative locations that would be on the bus line or within walking distance. But they stressed that the state will need hard data to support opening a new polling place.

Also discussed were how supply orders were calculated and signage for the curbside voting.

The name of the place with the polling place issue I think was called Logan

CARTERET

Betty Smith was an attendee – stated she was representing herself. Not sure she isn't with another organization – based on her conversations but she did not say. There was another female attendee also - did not get her name.

Apparently, the only "hiccup" was with a provisional ballot that was stamped provisional by the poll workers but incorrectly placed in the voting machine by the voter and cast as a vote. So, discussion about how the various numbers worked out - but in the end – all understood and approved the tallies. Luckily, it was marked – made it easy to rectify the count. The provisional ballots were reviewed/approved at a meeting the day before (assuming you were aware)

The hand count in 2 precincts matched.

Of note – there were 32 blank ballots cast. Speculation as to why. One board member (Dale) shared that rovers on election day stated folks were coming to vote but didn't see the name of the person on the ballot that they wanted to vote for.

Possibly cast their vote/ballot anyway or didn't know what to do with the ballot or simply wanted to "cast" a vote.

As you know – if someone is unopposed – may not have appeared on the ballot – since this was a primary. Or they couldn't vote a certain way due to their registration status.

Susan C. mentioned this may be a point of education for the LWV – difference between a primary and general election. Also, that you can change your registration – just not on the day of an election. Also, that if you are unaffiliated – you can vote in a primary – just have to pick an affiliation to receive a ballot.

Assuming the reports will be posted as part of the public record – only thing handed out to the "audience" was the Meeting Agenda.

CATAWBA

All calm today at Catawba County's canvass today. Catawba County had 17.7% voter turnout (19,394 out of 108,370 registered voters), so a bit better than historical for primary elections.

The most interesting note was that Quentae Hill has been asking for a recount. He is third behind Al Hoover and Hank Guess for Hickory mayor. The top 2 candidates will appear on the July 26 ballot. A lawyer for the NCSBOE ruled that this was a multi-party contest and by statute, a recount can be requested if there is less than a 1% difference of votes cast for these 2 candidates. Quentae Hill received 548 votes; Al Hoover received 569 votes so 1% of these votes is 11.2 (I think they said round to 12). FYI, Hank Guess received 3376 votes.

Looking forward, we have no run-offs for Catawba County in July. We will have the Hickory municipal elections 7/26.

DARE

The meeting was over in 22 minutes: they reviewed statistical reports for the 16 precincts in our county, total ballots cast, they described the required audit and provisional ballot processes. That was it! Quick and easy! There wasn't any discussion of complaints, issues, or discord.

GASTON

1) They certified without any issues.

2) Talked about the increasing problem with staffing and aging precinct workers and judges. Had problems with some commenting and then just not showing up so they are wondering how to combat that issue.

3) They discussed the need to get to know the county lawyer and invite him to meetings so that if an issue arose they knew who they were working with. She was unsure if they had had an issue before and this was because of that or they were just being preventative.

4) I had told the volunteers to wear their LWV buttons at least to these meetings and if asked why they were there explain about Vote411 and how the LWV covered these counties and we were following up

by attending canvass. Kelly said that a board member asked her who she was and why she was there. She started out being a little defensive but at the end talked about how they had tried to set up a League in Gaston County but it didn't happen and she would like to talk to some one about that again.

GUILFORD

There were three challenges, all of which ended with the voters' votes being counted.

Most of the meeting consisted of an extensive discussion about early voting. For the two weekends, all members agreed the the polling sites would be open Saturday-Sunday, July 16-7 and Saturday, July 25, from 8-3.

The challenge was the number of polling places. Carolyn Bunker (League member and BOE member) had spread the word that, at least one of the two Republican BOE members proposed that there be only 2 voting sites: the City Courthouse (which historically has the lowest vote count) and the Coliseum (which is not easy to get to and, after parking, involves a long walk).

Three members of the public spoke in favor of expanding the number of sites. In the end, 4 out of 5 BOE members voted in favor of having 6 sites (propitiously placed around the city and accessible to minority neighborhoods), with the City Courthouse open just regular business hours (8-5). Because this was not a unanimous vote, the plan will be submitted to the NCSBE for approval or modification.

HENDERSON

The canvass meeting at the Henderson County Board of Elections was well attended (about 10 members of the public) with a couple of people representing the Republican Party, several from NCVIT (a voter integrity group) and five from the LWCHC. Some from the voter integrity group and a past leader of the local Republican party have also been at machine testing and hand eye count meetings so we are becoming familiar and cordial with one another.

During a break from the canvass proper the president of our Board of Elections spoke directly to the audience to explain some of the procedures. Charlie Medd has always been open and receptive to the public and wanted to make sure everyone understood the process used when the machine could not read a ballot and a new one was created. After canvass was finished, he entertained a few questions from the public.

The integrity group questioned what they thought was a variation from the statutes. When I asked one sitting near me about their concerns, they said they have had members at many of the recent hand eye count and canvass meetings and are uncomfortable with the variations between procedures at different BOEs and want the statutes tightened up. So, they seem to understand that the statutes leave many details to the local BOEs, they just don't like it. She said she thought if everyone did everything the same way the public (their group?) would have greater confidence in the voting system and plan to send a letter to the state legislature regarding amending statutes to systemize and be more specific as to processes. On its face that sounds reasonably neutral, it will be interesting to see how this all shakes out.

LINCOLN

Director and 5 BoE members.

All provisional and absentee ballots had been handled in a previous meeting. There were none to be discussed on the 27th. The election was certified and dismissed by 11:10.

I was the only one in attendance.

MECKLENBURG

Director and 4 or the 5 members present

Protest

I attended the BoE meeting on May 25th where they heard a protest registered by Tigress Acute McDaniel who was not protesting the vote count which was something 2000 to 48,000 for Vi Lyles. She was stating there was voter intimidation and vote buying at the Beaties Ford Library site being done by the Black Political Caucus. I am attaching a copy of the protest. This protest did not have any specific examples or names and was Dismissed without Prejudice to give her a chance to amend. As a side note Tigress has sued Mecklenburg County so often that she is no longer allowed to do so and has also been banned from Guilford County. She now suing the Black Political Caucus and alleging protests to the BoE.

Provisional Ballot Review 308 provisional ballots.

- Approved approx 198 out of precinct.
- Rejected approx 110 for out of county, not being registered, and out of state. All members agreed on decisions.

There were 3 felons on parole who voted. 1 was rejected because they tried to correct their mistake. 2 were rejected and the "R" insisted they were sent to the NCSBE for further review.

All absentee and provisional ballots were reviewed on the 25th.

Recount

We have one race that will be going into recount. NC District Court 26 Seat 18. They are 102 votes apart and needed 104 to avoid a recount.

NEW HANOVER

The process was efficient and smooth with just a few ballot challenges which were discussed thoroughly and handled democratically by BOE vote.

There are two county Board of Education Democratic Primary candidates who were within two votes of each other, Jennah Bosch and Nelson Beaulieu. Mr. Beaulieu has until this Tuesday at 5 pm to request a recount. If there is a recount, it will take place on the following Monday or Tuesday and at least one BOE member from each party will be present.

ORANGE

I went to the Orange County Canvass on May 26 5-8PM. It was uneventful with only me as an observer at the site and three online observers.

The five board members were all present: Jamie Cox, Chair; Shawnee Seese, Secretary; Kathy Brodie; Elvira Mebane; Jason Roberts. Three were Democrats, 2 were Republicans. The atmosphere was friendly and before the official Canvass, chatty.

Rachel Raper, Director of the BOE explained how decisions were made as to whether an Absentee Ballot would be counted or rejected and the same for the Provisional Ballots. Rachel Raper told the BOE members that the voting machine had been checked by a mechanic before using it and Rachel checked that the voting machine was doing accurate counts by doing an initial count, which showed 0, and checking the counts display after the Absentee ballots were fed into the machine. The numbers tallied. BOE members verified the counts.

They fed in each of the Absentee Ballots that had been accepted, and read out the results, with BOE members verifying each printed out sheet's accuracy.

Statistics:

136 Supplemental Absentee Ballots - Approved

32 Civilian Absentee Ballots - Rejected

1 Military Absentee Ballot - Approved

14 Civilian Overseas Ballots - Approved

27 Civilian Overseas Ballots - Rejected

The main reason for rejecting Absentee Ballots was that they were postmarked after 5PM on Primary Election Day. The problems that arose were with Absentee Ballots that had been sent by metered mail, as those do not show a postmark. Rachel Raper said she'd work with the post office to get them to postmark the metered mail enveloped that have ballots for the November elections.

Other problems were with where the voter signed, above or below the line where they were supposed to sign.

The actual votes were very much in line with the in-person votes.

They repeated the procedure with a different voting machine for the Provisional ballots. Election workers had been encouraged to give out Provisional Ballots rather than argue with a voter. Rachel Raper explained the categories that would result in being given a Provisional ballot:

- Jurisdictional Dispute: e.g. a voter whose property extended over both Orange and Chatham Counties. The election worker at the poll let him vote in Orange County as his property is mostly in Orange, and the BOE approved his Provisional Ballot;
- When someone moves to another county, Orange writes to verify they really moved. The NC BOE changes their registration;

- When someone's voter registration card was sent out but came back 2 times, they are denied, but if they go to vote, that counts as registration and they are immediately reinstated for the next election;
- If someone starts voting and then stops without disposing of their initiated ballot, it counts as having voted. So if they come back to vote on Election Day, they are given a Provisional Ballot;
- If two people have the identical name (e.g. father and son) and they were thought to be the same person.
- If there was some other issue, where they want to vote on a hand counted ballot, they just have to fill out a yellow authorization paper.
- If they voted using the wrong party ballot only the votes for the non-partisan offices were counted.

Statistics:

89 Provisional Ballots

5 partially approved

59 Not approved

25 fully approved

The accuracy of the ballot counts was again tested and found to be correct.

Then they hand counted and machine counted two sample precincts, sorting them by candidates. They counted U.S. Senator for North Carolina, and U. S. House of Representatives.

The BOE members were very thorough and cooperative. If there was a mismatch in counting, they recounted, if need be, several times.

Each board member had a turn counting votes for candidates. They were very methodical, laying out the ballots for each candidate by tens and then counting the extras.

Kathy Bodie found a batch of blank ballots. No one was sure where they came from.

At the end each BOE member signed his or her name and party affiliation to verify machine totals. Meeting adjourned between 7:30 and 8PM.

PERQUIMANS

The only other observer there was the Chair of the Perquimans Republican Party. Some notes below:

0900 AM - counted provisional ballots. 17 total; 4 unapproved

- system showed voter had moved to Currituck County and voter registration had been changed; she voluntarily showed the Director her drivers license which had her address as Currituck
- voter did same day registration at one-stop; she was not yet ready to vote and was advised that she had to vote during one-stop but she did not; she did come back to vote and voted with provisional ballot, which was rejected

- father and son - indicated they had never moved but DMV records showed license changed but never registered to vote. They have now been registered to vote and will be notified.

(I asked about the use of identification for provisional ballots; Director assured me identification was not requested for any provisional ballots; however, all of the individuals volunteered to show her their Drivers License.)

If you need specifics on the 13 approved, please let me know - I have that info in my notes. The main issue was USPS not providing the BOE with change of address. The Director said she thought the number of 17 provisionals was not out of the ordinary but did state her goal is to continue to work to have less.

1000 AM - Supplemental Absentee Ballots - counted 4 absentee ballots received after Board met on 5/27. 9 absentee ballots were counted on 5/27.

- 2 were hand-delivered within the time frame
- 2 were mailed and received/postmarked after the end of the time frame and were not counted.

1040 AM - Canvas Meeting

- 11 total Absentee Ballots Counted
- 13 total Provisional Ballots Counted
- 802 ballots submitted during early voting
- 1438 ballots submitted on election day

Total Votes: 2264 (approx 22.6% of population voted)

A Hand to Eye Count was done on 5/19, with 2 judges from reviewing and counting the ballots for the Senate Republican and Senate Democratic primaries. Matched tapes and did hand to eye count of each ballot.

Of note, the current Director (Kathryn Treiber) is leaving; new Director has been selected (who was in attendance at the Canvass). A new Deputy Director has also been selected but not yet onboard. Kathryn will be hired on a part time bases to help with the upcoming mid-term election.

RANDOLPH

The meeting was held both virtually and in person. I was the only observer in the room and there was one observer online representing the Democratic Party. Three Elections Board members were in the room and two online, one recovering from COVID and the other abroad. The Elections Department Director and several staff members were also present in the room. The meeting began at 9:00 and was very low key. There was little discussion about the individual ballots.

Dispensation was as follows: There were 20 supplemental absentee ballots (those coming in after election day but still on time). There was a question about the address on one of them. Staff followed up and found that they had voted the correct ballot. All 20 ballots were accepted.

There were 254 provisional ballots (those cast on election day but not counted due to discrepancies.)

- 66 voters were out of precinct.
- 7 had the wrong NC House seat. Staff copied the ballot submitted to a clean ballot but did not fill in the House seat. The Board reviewed these new ballots for accuracy.
- 5 had been removed from the rolls after not voting in two federal election cycles and some had also moved to a new address. These voters were restored to the rolls and address changes were submitted.
- 3 were unreported address changes. The address changes were submitted.
- 1 where the party listed in the book did not agree with the voter registration online
- 1 where it was not apparent why the ballot was provisional
- 1 voter was issued the wrong ballot and voted it then asked for a correct ballot
- 3 unaffiliated voters
- 2 where the address was new construction and not yet showing up in the addressing system
- 1 changed party too late for it to take effect
- 1 mistakenly listed as deceased
- 1 error by a poll worker All of these were approved as valid and the votes were cast.

The following were not approved

- 125 registered Democrats who wanted to vote the Republican ballot
- 1 voted Democratic ballot then wanted to vote the Republican ballot
- 8 Libertarians- there was no Libertarian ballot
- 24 unregistered individuals
- 1 who was denied because the voter registration card was returned 3 times
- 1 who had already voted at one-stop early location There was one new voter who did not have an ID. Staff will follow up and ask them to bring an ID to the office.

My numbers do not add up to the totals presented by the Elections Director. I may have missed two ballots over the length of the meeting.

WAKE

PRECANVASS

A. Sample hand/eye count – The State Board selected precincts 01-36 & 16-07 for the recount – the counters working today are experienced poll workers as well as individuals who help the Wake Board with preliminary and post election work. The recount was successful

B. Absentee by mail – mailed on or before election day, received by last Friday

- 873 civilian, 12 military, 20 overseas (all accepted).

Included 11 cures (missing voter signature), 5 visually impaired (federal level program). 3 overseas. These included several where staff had been able to resolve an issue through research and these were presented individually to the Board. All were approved by the Board.

- Absentee which staff recommended be denied: 4 torn and one not opened properly. (denied 3 of them), 12 witness info incomplete - denied

Absentee by mail determined by staff to need denial

112 received day after election and not postmarked. Received in the mail. Postoffice has a voter rep who Olivia communicated with about how important the postmark is. Ballottrax is no longer in place. Statute says must have postmark. They were all received the morning after the election but we have no recourse. Must disapprove. SAD. Jerry found one postmark on the back – it was approved, the rest were denied.

27 received on the 2nd and 3rd day after the election with no postmark. Denied

20 received May 20 with postmark after the election. – denied.

19 received after May 20 – (one mailed April 25) – denied.

Motion to approve 908 – total approved today

C. Provisionals from May 17 Primary (each is also a voter registration form and update form) Note: the two page attachment contains more detail if needed.

- Recommend for full approval – 460 approved
- Recommend for partial approval – 115 partially approved
- Recommend Not Approval – 401 denied
- Board Review: 17 presented - 6 approved; 11 not approved

CANVASS – 5/27/2022 – 11:00

There were no additional cures, No CAVAs, No additional military overseas after yesterday's pre-canvass. So – reports were able to be run before the meeting and there are no outstanding items before the Board –summary reports are available.

The Canvass proceeded but consisted only of Board Members signing multiple forms and nothing of note for the minutes.

SECOND PRIMARY (July 26) EARLY VOTING SITES, DATES, and HOURS

Had one city wide race and two Cary races that did not meet the minimum percentages required for a win without a runoff so there will need to be a second primary. The required requests have been received for the primary.

- 3 not meeting percentage requirement - Sheriff, Cary Council C, Cary at Large
- 1 voter in Durham county affected – trying to do a one time transfer of that voter to avoid Durham having to run a 2nd primary
- Gary has to go back to County Commissioners for more money to run the 2nd Primary (will temporarily use November election money)

Proposal from the chair (Erica Porter)

– Hours: M-F 8-7:30, second Saturday (8-7:30) & last Sun 1-6.

- There will be two sites: Herbert C Young in Cary and the Board of Elections