

# **BOTETOURT COUNTY ELECTORAL BOARD**

**June 21<sup>st</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

On June 21, 2023, a post-election meeting of the Botetourt County Electoral Board was held in the Registrar's Office in Fincastle. All members of the Electoral Board were present, as was Traci Clark, the GR/DOE. Also present during part of the meeting were Karen Wickham, Chief Deputy Registrar, and Tammy Thompson, Deputy Registrar. Chairman John Rader called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Vice-Chairman Ed Clark then moved to approve the minutes from the meetings held on April 25<sup>th</sup> and May 4<sup>th</sup> which had been previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

Traci then gave the Board a brief report on the Republican Primary Election which had been held on the preceding day, June 20, 2023. There had been no significant problems with the conduct of the election. Secretary Buck Heartwell added that each of the four precincts which had been involved in the election had been visited by the Board and no problems were reported or observed.

Traci then provided each Board member with a printed summary of the election results. The Board proceeded to canvass the votes by comparing these totals, which had been taken from the Statement of Results as tabulated in each precinct, with the totals shown on the digital tapes produced by the voting machines. The figures reconciled exactly.

Following this process, the canvass was continued until Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, when the provisional votes, and the absentee ballots postmarked not later than June 20<sup>th</sup> and received by June 23<sup>rd</sup>, would be canvassed.

Karen and Tammy then left the meeting.

The Board then took up the issue of reappointment of the Registrar whose term was expiring at the end of June. Following a brief discussion, Buck moved that Traci Clark be reappointed General Registrar and Director of Elections for a four-year term beginning on July 1, 2023. The motion passed unanimously. The Board then agreed to conduct Traci's required performance review on July 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.

Finally, the Board discussed the ongoing criminal investigation into whether one of the primary candidates had misrepresented that he met the residency requirements for the district in which he was registered. Approximately 25 citizens had complained about this to Traci and her staff. No one knew the status of the investigation, but Buck offered that the Special Agent who was conducting the investigation had recently reported to the prosecutor. It was the feeling of the Board that if the candidate had committed a crime, then he should be prosecuted even though he had lost the election. The public should be aware, the Board reasoned, that there would be serious consequences for anyone who attempted to compromise the integrity of a county election.

There being nothing further to come before the Board, the meeting was continued until June 26, 2023, at 10 am to complete the canvas.

On June 26, 2023, the continued post-election meeting of the Botetourt County Electoral Board was held in the Registrar's Office in Fincastle. Vice Chairman Ed Clark and Secretary Buck Heartwell were present. Chairman John Rader participated remotely by telephone. Also present was Traci Clark, The GR/DOE. John called the meeting to order at 10:36 am.

Buck then made a motion for the Board and Traci to go into closed session pursuant to sec. 24.2-653.01(B) of the Code of Virginia to determine the validity of eight provisional ballots which were cast on election day. The motion passed unanimously.

After approximately 15 minutes, the Board and Traci returned to open session. A roll-call vote was taken certifying that (1) only public business lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and (2) only such matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting, were heard, discussed or considered. Traci announced that all eight of the provisional ballots were voted by citizens who had taken advantage of same day registration. The applications which had accompanied the ballots were found to be in order. Buck then moved that the provisional ballots be voted. The motion passed unanimously. The resulting votes were added to the candidate totals as follows: Mac Scothorn – 3 votes; Robert Young – 2 votes; Walt Michael – 2 votes; and Billy Martin – 1 vote.

Traci then announced that three absentee by mail ballots, postmarked and received as required by law, needed to be canvassed. These votes resulted in 1 additional vote for Billy Martin, and 2 additional votes for Mac Scothorn. After the election totals had been adjusted accordingly, Buck moved that the election be certified. The

motion passed unanimously. The Board directed Traci to file copies of the election abstracts and the final summary with these minutes in the Board's minute book.

The next meeting was set for July 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. There being nothing further to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.