



## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** **BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

Teddi Benson Chairperson  
John Adams, Secretary  
Debbie Burris, Member  
Dree Wynkoop, Member  
Tasha Medley, Member

### **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

October 15, 2024  
5:00 PM

The Montgomery County Board of Elections (BOE) met October 15, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the BOE office located at 327 N. Main Street in Troy, NC. Board members present were Teddi Benson, Chairperson; John Adams, Secretary; Debbie Burris, Dree Wynkoop and Tasha Medley. BOE staff present were Rhonda Johnson, Director of Elections and Kimberly Walter, Deputy Director of Elections.

Chairperson Benson called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Benson informed the members of the board that the minutes from the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting weren't available for approval at this time.

Board Meeting Agenda was approved. Member Dree Wynkoop made a motion to approve the agenda and Member Tasha Medley seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Director, Rhonda Johnson presented the Director of Elections report. See attached.

### **Old Business**

#### Precinct Official Approval

Before Precinct Official approvals were started Member John Adams, Secretary wanted to bring up a topic to discuss. He along with Member Dree Wynkoop and the County Board of Elections office received a phone call from a Precinct Official who was concerned about receiving \$9 an hour to do the same work as a judge who gets \$10 an hour. Member John Adams went on to explain, "Assistants are there to assist not to do the heavier responsibility jobs." Member John Adams' main concern was why assistants and judges are making different amounts when they basically do the same job.

Director Rhonda Johnson then explained how assistants are trained, to only do the assisting in the precinct.

Member Tasha Medley then questioned how Karen Britt was switched from a judge to an assistant. Member John Adams' explained the letter that went out to Karen Britt.

Tasha asked if Teddi was getting those appointment letters. Director Rhonda Johnson let Tasha know our office has never sent the chair the appointment letters.

Member John Adams shared that Mrs. Britt was upset and wanted to verify her position in the precinct.

Rhonda stated she would look at Karen's letter of Appointment and see what position she was assigned to work. There was no explanation of why Karen's position was changed.

Member Tasha Medley stated that she was concerned about the changes on the precinct official list. She explained that the board is finding out other things are happening with the list after the fact and would like for the whole board to be notified of any precinct official changes regardless of their party.

Director Rhonda Johnson agreed to make the entire board aware of any precinct official changes regardless of their party affiliation.

Conversation concerning Karen Britt and her complaint resulted in the board agreeing that precinct officials need to be paid fairly for the position that they are appointed to, also when the office staff are contacting appointed precinct officials they are to let that official know the position they have been appointed to.

The board needs to be clear of where everyone is placed, Member Tasha Medley said according to a G.S. Chairperson Teddi Benson should be the one to replace a precinct official that has resigned.

Board was made aware that the pay scale is decided by the board.

Motion was made to raise Precinct Official salaries, Judges and Assistants to be paid the same hourly wage. Member John Adams made a motion, Member Dree Wynkoop seconded the motion all were in favor.

Budget has been set for the current wages; this pay increase will be going forward after this election.

#### Precinct Official Approvals

Jamal Moore-Biscoe-Assistant-Democrat-Approved

Pat Cagle-Candor-Assistant-Democrat-Approved

Abbey Hurley-Little River-Judge-Democrat-Approved

Jerry Osbourne-Mt. Gilead-Assistant-Republican-Approved

Robert James-PeeDee-Assistant-Republican ---see below

Republican Party Chair Kelsey Brown said he had not approved Robert James to work, he did not recall a conversation with Director Rhonda Johnson concerning Robert James being approved for work. When asked by the board if Kelsey wanted Robert James to be approved or did he have another name in mind to work, Kelsey requested Sharon Mason be approved to work, he had already spoken to her and wanted her approved.

Member Tasha Medley wants it noted when we speak to the Republican or Democrat Party chair about precinct officials.

Member Tasha Medley also recommended a better way to record scheduling and placing Precinct Officials.

Deputy Director is familiar with Google docs and will work on a plan going forward using this process.

Republican Chair Kelsey Brown presented for approval the following:  
Sharon Mason-Republican-Assistant-Pee Dee-Approved  
Robert James-Republican-Approved for Backup Only-

Democrat Party Chair Rosa Little presented for approval the following:  
Bridgette Bennett-Democrat-Judge-Star-Approved  
Deborah Ashby-Democrat-Assistant-Troy 1-Approved  
Madison Ratliff Wall-Democrat-Assistant-Star-Approved  
Mary Elliott-Democrat-Assistant-Troy II-Approved

County Board of Elections office needs to call Lynn Varner for 10/21 6pm training

### **Public Comment**

Kelsey Brown-List received today-he called about Jerry Osbourne working in Mt Gilead. Kelsey was coming up to get a list. Kelsey got the list and just found out about Robert James. He was able to call and speak to Kimberly Walker-and was ok with her placement. Recommends a better way to keep up with Precinct Official placement and changes.  
**Emphasized we need a better way to keep up with Precinct Officials.**

Jimmy Johnson addresses the approach that Rhonda receives from others in her office, when they make requests. He referred to the objective of the office being to work together.

Member John Adams spoke that he had heard the recording of the conversation this morning and he heard tones from everyone, he further explained that asking a question doesn't warrant an overaggressive tone in the response. If you are asked a question and do not know the answer it is ok to respond by saying I do not know the answer I will have to get back to you. Director Johnson responded by explaining at the time she was working on the list and needed time before an accurate response could be made. Which brought up again, there needs to be a more accurate and unified way to document/communicate information concerning precinct officials.

Kelsey Brown stepped forward and produced the recording of his office visit that morning and played this recording for all in attendance to hear.

Brenda Ritter defended herself concerning the list, she said she didn't do the list, Donna Moore had done the list.

It was mentioned that party chairs need info about PO to have an educated decision on approvals.

Member Tasha Medley said as a board member she wants to know more and be notified as a group not only when it involves your political party. She wanted to know why only certain parties were notified.

Ex. When an email was made reference to earlier, Member Tasha Medley and Member Debbie Burris had to ask, "What E-mail?" They were not aware of any email.

We need a way to Track and Log incidences. Board encouraged Rhonda that she could tell anyone we can get back to you, everyone knows how busy we are, that way she would have time to find out the answer to anyone's question.

Director Rhonda Johnson spoke about the meeting with Kelsey this morning explaining that the only time she actually had an issue with Kelsey was when he accused her of blaming other people, when she wasn't blaming anyone, she was explaining that her, Donna and Brenda were all assisting with the Precinct Official list. She explained that she doesn't blame other people. Asked that she be given a chance to speak and accused Kelsey of not being professional.

Member Tasha Medley expressed that she desired personal issues be left out of the meeting, and we need to get back to working with the public. She described how the portrayed attitude in the last few meetings have not been the desired feelings-Referring to how Director Johnson and her husband had let their feelings toward Kelsey be known.

Rhonda interrupted Tasha and it went back and forth concerning professionalism in the office. Rhonda let them know she felt intimidated and not supported by the board.

Tasha stated she felt blindsided concerning information she was just now receiving.

On the precinct official list there are notes concerning Johnny working under Robert James, Teddi requested that information be removed. Director Johnson had explained earlier that the information about Johnnie was possibly a cut and paste error by Donna Moore, Office Assistant.

Louise Bennett requested to be able to work the first 6 hrs of her shift in Biscoe Town Hall and that her daughter Bridgette Bennett work the second half of the day during Early Voting. Director Rhonda Johnson approved this suggestion.

**New Business**

Absentee Ballot Approval

49 Absentee Ballots to be looked at tonight. Member Dree Wynkoop called the names as the members of the board inspected the envelopes for proper documentation.

48 ballots were approved

1 ballot was disapproved for improper documentation on the envelope. Office will get the cure letter out to correct.

7:10 Ballots are open-31 ballots approved last week.

7:18 ballots began to be cast into the Absentee Voting machine.

Member John Adams made a motion and Member Debbie Burris seconded the motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned 7:24

DS200 count ended at 79.

<u>Juddi Benson</u>	CHAIR
<u>Debbie R Burris</u>	SECRETARY
<u>[Signature]</u>	MEMBER
<u>Dree Wynkoop</u>	MEMBER
<u>Jasha Myers</u>	MEMBER