

**CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
REGULAR MEETING
June 14, 2006**

The Craven County Board of Elections held a Regular Meeting on June 14th at 10:00 a.m. in the in the First Floor Conference Room of the County Administration Building. Chairman, William Miner opened meeting at 10:00 a.m. with Secretary, Esther Hardin, Member, M. Ray Wood and Director, Tiffiney Miller, present.

Citizens from the Ernul Precinct were sent a notice informing them that the Board of Elections would discuss the polling place for the Ernul Precinct at this meeting and that public input would be taken.

The following residents were present: Hillary Gaskins, Betty Whitford, Benjamin Dail, Perry Morris, Gloria Miller, Jean Whitford, Gene Whitford, Floyd Gaskins, Linda Russell, Greg Mills, Haywood Toler, Roger Russell, Lucille Mills and Lindbergh Mills.

After much discussion it was decided that the Board would request special permission from the State Board of Elections to use the new Little Swift Creek Volunteer Fire Department as a polling place for the Ernul Precinct. Special permission will be needed as the Fire Department falls between the Ernul and Truitt Precincts.

The Board thanked the residents of the community for their interest and input on this matter. The group left after discussion was held and the regular meeting continued.

Mr. Miner said that after the regular meeting he would like to call an executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Wood expressed concern because he had to leave because of a family medical appointment. It was decided that the Board go into executive session at this time so all members would be present. Tiffiney Miller, Director, was asked to leave the room.

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting, May 9th. Other minutes were given to the Board for review before the next regular meeting.

The Chairman called for the report of the Director.

Director's Report:

The Director said she had not received the final budget from the County Managers office. Mr. Miner attended the budget hearing and the Director asked if he would like to comment on this. Mr. Miner said that the last word he received from Mr. Blizzard was that he was glad the Board had taken part in the budget process.

The Director said that the storage room needed to be addressed. All items and equipment have been secured and this has left no room to prepare equipment in the area. Work space is

desperately needed in this room. Mr. Miner said that he would contact Mr. Blizzard to discuss this issue.

The Board was given a copy of the ES&S billing information. This listed all equipment received to date with the invoice break downs. Mr. Miner asked if the equipment that needed repair was included. Ms. Miller said that this was not included here and was listed as equipment repair and this had been completed. The company picked up the terminals that needed repair and they had already been returned and secured in the storage room.

Mr. Miner asked what the cost of the modification of the booths had been. Ms. Miller said she had gotten piece mill invoices and did not have a total cost as of yet.

The Director said that the State Board sent out a memo on the State Training in Asheville. Reservations weren't able to be made at the conference hotel and the Director made reservations at the Best Western and the Marriott. Ms. Hardin and Mr. Miner asked the Director to check the facility on the computer.

The Director received information from the Institute of Government on the July training. The Director and one of the staff members will attend this session.

UNITY (Equipment software) training that has been scheduled in Goldsboro but the Director had talked to Keith Long and he said the State is trying to get HAVA funding so that programming will not have to be done at the County level in November. If this happens, UNITY training will be held in the spring of 2007.

Certifications of Nomination were sent to all candidates that were on the ballot that were nominated in the May Primary.

The Director said that the campaign audits had been completed. Five committees received letters outlining the missing or corrected information in order to complete their reports.

Filing for the Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor opened on June 12th. No one has filed at this time. There is one seat open this year on this Board.

New Business:

The office received 312 new voter registrations for the month of May. The Activity Report was e-mailed to the Board and has been posted on the web site. New stats were given to the Board. The office received 234 changes in information, 153 voters were removed, 888 verification mailings were sent and 26 confirmation mailings were sent.

Mr. Miner asked Director if she had done the follow up on the felon conviction of Mr. Gary Connelly. Mr. Miner said he received the information that Mr. Connelly was still an active felon and the information he provided was not true. Mr. Connelly was removed from the active voter file until his citizenship is restored.

Discussion was held on the HAVA move voters and removed voters. Ms. Miller said that the State was now removing voters automatically that moved from one county to another. This was discovered when a report was done in the office. The State was contacted because these voters do not show up on the regular removed voter report. This will be corrected at the State level. The Director has asked for the criteria used by the State to verify the voters before removal. The county has no control over this removal system.

Monthly budget information was given to the Board. The Director said she had to transfer funds from one line item to another but funds in the Election budget would cover this and no additional funds would be needed.

The Board was given a copy of the Precincts in Craven County with the number of registered voters with comments or concerns listed by each precinct. The Board requested this information at an earlier date. This list will be reviewed by the Board and discussed at the next Regular Meeting. The four main areas of concern are George Street, Fort Barnwell and parking at the Vanceboro precinct and the Grantham 2B precinct. It will be more cost efficient to request any precinct changes at one time so they can be grouped together for approval. Mr. Miner asked that this be placed on the Agenda as a continuing item.

Old Business:

The Director said that the precinct official's checks were mailed by the Finance Department. The actual payroll is done in the office by Ms. Miller and sent to Finance for processing.

The Board was sent a copy of the executive summary of the Precinct Uniformity project as requested. The Director said that she had trouble getting someone to sit in the office while the staff attended the Symposium. Ms. Miller sent an e-mail to Ms. LeDrew in the Finance Department and asked if she could spare a staff member for these two days as this is the normal procedure. This is a busy time of year for the Finance Department because of year end and they weren't able to assist this time. The Human Resources department was contacted to find out if we could call in a precinct official for these two days but a reply was never received from HR. The Director said that she understood that Mr. Miner had received a call about this from Mr. Blizzard. Mr. Miner said that the call was why did the Director not go to Mr. Blizzard? A lot of departments experience this same problem and they always work with them. Mr. Miner said he thought he knew the answer was that it just wasn't a place where you would expect to get help from. The Director said she followed the same procedures she had always followed in staffing the office when everyone needed to be out, which is very rare and there had never been a problem. The Director said she did not understand why if there was a problem Mr. Blizzard did not contact her directly. Mr. Miner said next time the Director needs to contact Mr. Blizzard.

The Board was given a copy of the Agenda for the Symposium. The Director asked the Board for direction about the staffing problem because everyone was registered to go. Mr. Miner said that they could each go one day or half days.

The next regular meeting will be held on July 5th.

The office will be closed July 3rd & 4th

Soil and Water filing opened June 12th and ends July 7th at noon.

Mr. Miner said that under new business that when he got the call from Mr. Blizzard he made another request that he would pass on. When the Director takes leave a leave form should be submitted to Mr. Blizzard so he can balance the time, Mr. Blizzard said that the Director had not been doing this. Mr. Miner said it was no big deal. Ms. Miller said that this was discussed before by the previous Board and she was told that she did not need to do this and was only following the instructions of the Board. Mr. Miner said he realized that and then we would change what the Board says. Mr. Miner said he could see Mr. Blizzards point; he has to account for payroll and attendance. Mr. Miner said if the Director had to go, to go and to fill out the form later Mr. Blizzard had never denied one.

The Director said that she would like to say she thought that the Board and Director were supposed to be working as a team and it did not appear that way. Mr. Miner said we definitely are, what happened was he ran into Mr. Blizzard on the way to the budget meeting and Mr. Blizzard told Mr. Miner he would like to get together with him to discuss a few things. Mr. Miner said sure but had no intention, then Mr. Blizzard called about the business of the stand in for the office and he was upset about it and said lets chat about this. Mr. Miner talked to him and said Mr. Blizzard is pleased that the Board is getting involved in the Elections office as well as the County. Ms. Miller asked if all the Board Members went to this meeting or knew about it. Ms. Hardin was out of town and Mr. Wood knew about the meeting but was not able to attend. Mr. Miner said it was no big deal, Mr. Blizzard explained some problems and issues and apologized for yelling but that Ms. Miller had ticked him off and he said he would try to never do it again and that no one else was in the office when this happened. Ms. Miller said she did not believe that was true.

Mr. Miner said that Mr. Blizzard knew there was some friction between us. Mr. Miner said this is what was talked about during the executive session. Do we what to change our attitude from what it has been; it is us verses the county. You have been told that this Board is an adversary of the County and I have been part of it. That was Gloria's position, I don't know about Walter, but it was Mr. MacDonald's. Maybe it isn't the best thing to do since particularly we are getting more and more involved, so maybe we should not be totally adversarial towards each other. Ms. Miller said she did not think that was the case. Mr. Miner said that Mr. Blizzard had seen the book too and that since Ms. Miller was a county employee and the book requires that the County provide the health insurance, vacation, salary, and all the benefits that go along with it and the Board agrees too, that by the book Ms. Miller is a county employee but Mr. Blizzard couldn't fire her or do the evaluations or that sort of thing. He is just looking for a more productive level of cooperation. The specific was this issue and the leave reports. Ms. Miller said if the Board instructed her to do that then she would like a request in writing from the Board that she do that. Mr. Miner asked the Director if she wanted a request in writing to abide by the book, Ms. Miller said the book did not say anything about a leave request to the County Manager. Ms. Miller said that was the whole issue. Ms. Hardin said so there was discussion about this before and Ms. Miller said yes this was discussed before. Ms. Hardin asked who was a part of that conversation. Mrs. Stanley, Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Miner said he was in on that discussion a year and a half ago. Ms. Miller said she had been following the Boards instructions.

Mr. Miner said that all Mr. Blizzard was saying is that the Director was a county employee. Ms. Miller said yes, this was said before, the previous Board put this in the minutes and she would think this Board would want that as well. Mr. Miner asked if Ms. Miller wanted every little issue, this was the only one he knew about. Ms. Miller said no but when the Board is going to redirect her then the minutes should say that or it should listed as a duty of the Director that she complete a leave form for each hour she is not in the office to Mr. Blizzard. Mr. Miner said to put in the minutes that the board agrees that level of activity as a county employee is directed. Ms. Miller asked if she needed to report to Mr. Blizzard when she was out of the office on Election matters. Mr. Miner said no, it meant to report only when not performing her job, kid gets sick or goes to the dentist, you get called out immediately, no big deal. The next day or so to put in a leave form, it shows up on your time sheet. All he is saying is balance the time sheet with the leave request. Ms. Hardin asked was he asking for a time sheet on file, the Director said the time sheets are submitted.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Members Present:

William Miner, Chairman
Esther Hardin, Secretary
M. Ray Wood, Member
Tiffiney G. Miller, Director

Esther Hardin, Secretary

Approved: July 5, 2006

(Note: Mr. Wood was not able to stay for the entire regular meeting)