

Eddie L. Edwards III
Chairman

Bridgette C. Cowan
Member

Jimmy E. Hull
Secretary

Charles Wright
Member

Nicki T. Artis
Member

Anne C. Risku
Director

County of Wayne

Board of Elections

Wayne County Board of Elections Board Meeting June 13, 2023

Eddie L. Edwards, III, Chairman
Nicki T. Artis, Member (absent)
Charles Wright, Member
Anne Risku, Director

Jimmy E. Hull, Secretary
Bridgette C. Cowan, Member
Andrew Neal, Staff Attorney

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Edwards.

I. Approval of the June 13, 2023 Agenda

1. Mr. Hull made a motion to approve the June 13, 2023 agenda. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 11, 2023

1. Mr. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2023 meeting. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

III. Director Update

1. **Voter Photo ID:** Ms. Risku updated the Board on the status of voter photo ID. Staff is waiting on guidance from the NCSBE in regards to the production of voter photo IDs at the county office. The change will also require extensive Precinct Official training. The Legislature has not provided any funding for implementation of voter photo ID. Ms. Risku informed the County Commissioners that she will be requesting budget amendments to fund the implementation. Staff will do outreach throughout the community. Mr. Edwards stated that once guidance is received it will be a great opportunity for Board Members to also step in and help educate the public so voters do not arrive at the Polling Place unprepared.
2. **Legislative Updates:** Ms. Risku presented the Board with various pieces of legislation concerning elections administration that are before the General Assembly.
 - i. Mr. Wright asked about the “good moral character” clause of the current Observer statutes and the possibility of pre-emptively removing individuals who were previously removed. Mr. Edwards stated he was hopeful those individuals would not be put forward again but that the Board could possibly have proactive conversations with the local Party Chairs. Ms. Cowan stated she prefers the Board wait and take action as necessary. She also asked could the Board permanently ban individuals for cause. Ms. Risku stated that the process would be undertaken each cycle.
 - ii. Mr. Wright asked for further clarification on the new voter photo ID law in respect to absentee voters. Ms. Risku explained the voter photo ID law does not apply to UOCAVA voters but does apply to civilian absentee voters.
 - iii. Ms. Risku informed the Board that several individuals who were previously eligible to vote were removed due to the new NC Supreme Court decision on felon enfranchisement. Mr. Wright asked what happens if a felon votes. Mr. Neal explained that such cases are referred to the NCSBE’s investigations unit. Ms. Cowan asked how convicted felons know they are ineligible. Mr. Neal replied that probation or parole should inform them of their status. Ms.

Eddie L. Edwards III

Chairman

Jimmy E. Hull

Secretary

Nicki T. Artis

Member

Bridgette C. Cowan

Member

Charles Wright

Member

Anne C. Risku

Director

County of Wayne

Board of Elections

Risku stated that anyone flagged in the system is sent a letter prior to removal from the voter rolls.

- iv. Ms. Risku explained that the NC Supreme Court also determined that the General Assembly may redistrict legislative and congressional districts and that is expected to happen between the November Municipal election and December candidate filing.
- v. Ms. Risku presented the Board with two proposed election laws recently filed in the General Assembly that include changes to election administration and the structure of State and County Boards.

3. **Budget:** The County budget was passed last week. Instead of a \$150 per month raise, the Commissioners approved a \$75 per month raise for Board of Elections members. Mr. Wright encouraged Board members to attend next year's budget meeting with Ms. Risku.
4. **Municipal Candidate Filings:** Filing begins at 12pm on July 7th and ends at 12pm on July 21st. Staff is going to try to provide more campaign finance education to the candidates. Mr. Hull asked if Party Chairs could assist with that. Ms. Risku explained that Party Chairs are welcome to stop by if they have questions. Mr. Hull asked had she ever met either Chair. Ms. Risku responded that she met the current Republican Party Chair prior to his appointment but that she had not met the current Democratic Party Chair.
5. **2023-2025 Board Member Appointments:** Ms. Risku provided the Board with a timeline for the upcoming Board Member appointment process.
6. **Summer Intern Program:** The BOE is taking part in the County's summer intern program and will have an intern in the office beginning next week.

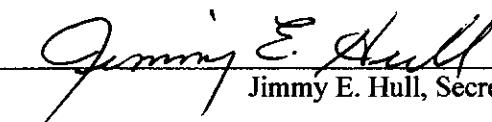
IV. Public Comment: Barbara Dantonio, 152 Parks Rd, Goldsboro, NC, stated that the Democratic Party had submitted the three currently serving Democratic Board Members for reappointment. She then stated that about a year ago she came in to request data and was informed of the \$15 fee for all data requests. She stated she shouldn't have to pay for data and she didn't know what was wrong that day. Ms. Risku explained that there is a \$15 fee for all data requests created by BOE staff but that the information is free on the NCSBE's website. Ms. Dantonio stated that she was going to talk to somebody about it. Mr. Neal stated that he could explain it to her: the Board is authorized to set fees for data requests and the Board set the \$15 policy many years ago.

V. Board Comments

1. Mr. Edwards thanked Ms. Risku for the updates and Mr. Neal for his assistance.

VI. Adjournment

1. With all business having been conducted, Ms. Cowan made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Hull seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.



Jimmy E. Hull, Secretary