

Board Of Voter Registration and Elections of Berkeley County Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2023, 2023

Call to Order

The meeting of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Berkeley County was held in the Berkeley County Assembly room on September 9th, 2023, at 10:30am.

Board Members Present

Leon Brown, Truman Metts, Pam Lamb, Frances Taylor, Lee Dixon, Darel Trout, Chris Davenport, Don Saturday.

Let the record show we do have a quorum for this meeting.

Previous Meeting Minutes

Don Saturday: We will proceed with the acceptance of the previous meeting minutes of September the 14th 2023, those of you had copies of the minutes, if you want to take a couple of minutes to review those if not, I will hear any motion to accept these or recommendations for changes. Let me know if you have a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. When ready.

Frances Taylor makes a motion to accept the minutes as written and second by Board Member Trout.

Don Saturday: Any objections to that. Those in favor to accepting the minutes as submitted all in favor say Aye. Aye Any opposed? Unanimous, minutes have been approved.

Don Saturday: The minutes have been approved and they will be posted by the way at the appropriate time, we submit those to IT, and they post those for us. Now I want to go into the Directors report.

Directors Report

Director Brown: Good morning, on Tuesday November the 7th we had Municipal They elections in the Town of Jamestown, Moncks Corner, Summerville and the City of Charleston, Berkeley County Board of Canvassers only certifies the Town of Moncks Corner Election. That is the only Election we have the authority to certify. Those other respective Towns, Jamestown, Town of Summerville, and Charleston certify their own Elections as they have their own Municipal Election Commission. Within the city of Charleston Election on Tuesday we had a DS 200 that would not accept any Ballots. We were notified by the poll clerk at the Phillip Simmons Elementary School as soon as we were notified staff prepared another DS 200 and delivered it to that location, so that the voters could continue voting. In the meantime, anyone that was there and cast their vote, they voted on the voting Ballot marking device and deposited their ballot in the machine that was there in the emergency provisional slot as they should do and as they were instructed by training that we provide to them, provided by the South Carolina State Election Commission. All votes in that election were accounted for on election night. That precinct had to bring 2 blue ballot bins in because they had 2 DS 200s at that location so there for all ballots were accounted for in that election. The City of Charleston was notified of this before their certification begins at noon. We don't have anything from the Town of Jamestown as far as their results and the majority of the Town of Summerville is in the County of Dorchester and they will meet this afternoon to certify their results this afternoon. Polling locations a few at the last Board meeting, I believe Board Member Lamb stated someone had asked about moving the polling location Foster Creek 3 from the Hanahan number 3 fire station to the Bowmans Corner

Elementary School this is a process we have to go through with the board in order to make the recommendation to move from that fire station to the school cause it is larger the fire station there that we currently use has a smaller amount of parking on election day the time that precinct was created that Bowmans Corner Elementary School did not exist it's just within maybe 1000 feet of the fire station, but before any location can be moved the Board must approve that we want to use a different location and it must be submitted to the Berkeley County Delegation for their sign off and approval. If the Delegation does not approve the move from one location to another, we cannot use that location. There are several other locations in Berkeley County that we need larger facilities for, Hughie Fire Department is another very small fire department with inadequate parking. There are new developments in that area with approximately 500 new homes so we anticipate as people move into the area in these new homes and register to vote that will really over crowd that fire station even more so than it currently is. So having discussions with different churches in the area, the New Hope United Methodist church has agreed to become a polling location, but I also discussed with them the approval process, but they are willing and able to accept us there as a polling place where voters will have adequate parking in order to go to the facility. Also, the area along Clements Fairy Road yellow house in the village precinct is growing tremendously with new developments and we would need an additional location to vote in that area there is a Phillip Simmons High School there that we may be able to use. We already use Phillips Simmons Elementary school. The Carnes Crossroad area the I-17 and 176 intersection I am sure you all are aware of the growth there. They're building apartments there on Hwy. 17 right near that intersection. We currently use the Whitesville Road fire department that fire department is the largest fire department than the others we have discussed but the parking will just not be enough parking for voters in the future. There is a Carolyn Lewis School that is now in the Carnes Crossroads Subdivision and we're looking at maybe using that school as well. Also, in that area we use Net International Ministries as a polling location currently with the growth we will outgrow that location as well. We have a precinct called Cobblestone that votes at the Nets International Ministries church. There are no public facilities within that we can use as a polling location and that is why we are using Net International Ministries. There are only apartment buildings a few businesses and homes, so there is no public facility there. I would also like the Board to ask the Delegation for these areas that are quickly developing. The overgrowth of people into the area the facilities that are there. If the school district builds a school within that area if we could use that school as a polling location that way, we know it's a public place, we know that there would be adequate parking for the voters on election day.

Don Saturday: Absolutely, Berkeley County as everyone knows is growing quite rapidly and we are going to at some point, we will have to purchase more voting machines, we have storage issues, growth sometimes has a 2-edged sword. It's great to have new people coming into the county, but we have to make sure we have precincts available for them to vote and keep our lines reasonably short. I do recommend the Director reach out when we have these new schools to inquire as to whether or not we can have a precinct set up there. Any other comments in regard to that?

Chris Davenport: Quick question on that one for next year is kind of difficult because we have a lot of elections going on and all of those during the day school hours so the parking lots will be full. On Tuesday for Democratic Primary and Republican Primary both in February and school is in session.

Director Brown: Those Elections are on Saturdays and June Election school is normally out June for the Primary Elections and the General Election will be a school holiday. They will be out of school for the General Election there will be no school on the General Election in a Presidential Election year.

Chris Davenport: Thank You

Pam Lamb: Madam Director, I like the list and the idea of looking at places instead waiting until we are way behind. The Hanahan one is also a fire department that is incredibly too small on a dead-end road, but I can't offer any suggestions as to what the solution is. We may need to do something.

Director Brown: That is another location where there is no public facility within the area. Old Taranto, Eagle Landing vote at that fire department there that is in the Old Taranto area in order for those to have anywhere else to vote they would have to leave out of their community totally to go down Rivers to the old Hanahan area.

Pam Lamb: With the new road opening connecting Eagle Landing and Old Taranto to old Hanahan it is not, it is like 7 minutes from Old Taranto down to the old Elementary School. I know we have Hanahan School to at the elementary school but there is also Hanahan Gym and facilities there.

Director Brown: I will have to look at that because we do not want to overload a location just because it is a larger location, we do not want to overload the location and have more than the suggested number of registered voters voting at that polling location.

Pam Lamb: There is that consideration to is why I threw out the gym that is right there as well. Thank You

Director Brown: the Democratic and Republican preference Primaries are quickly approaching. The date for the Democratic Presidential Primary is February 3rd, 2024, which is a Saturday. Then you would meet as the Board of Canvassers on that Thursday to certify that election. The Republican Presidential Preference Primary will be February 24th. Early voting, we will have early voting for all elections the state will only reimburse the county for two early voting sites for the Presidential Preference Primary's. The parties are paying for this election so they are working with what they consider to be a shoestring budget so they will only reimburse us for two early voting locations.

Don Saturday: Do you have those to recommend those locations?

Director Brown: I would like the Board to recommend which locations you'd like to use. I believe you were going to keep them both the same for both the Democrat and Republican Primary.

Don Saturday: Yes, I agree.

Director Brown: Currently we can use three of the county libraries St. Stephan's, Hanahan and the Daniel Island Library and of course the Voter Registration Office can serve as early voting location.

Don Saturday: There is a dilemma because you've got people having to travel a reasonable or a distance even to get to the Hanahan library, Daniel Island and beyond. Then look up to the north part and you have country folks around St. Stephens, and they have to travel a great distance to get to Moncks Corner. If we eliminate St. Stephens so there's no flexibility, there it is set in stone we only have two locations.

Pam Lamb: Does the office count as one of the two locations?

Director Brown: Yes unless you don't want to and use one in the southern and northern end. It would make sense to use the Voter Registration Office as one of the locations. Some counties do not use their Voter Registration Office they have other sites they use as early voting centers, not in the office. Normally Charleston County in the past has never used their Voter Registration Office as an early voting site.

Pam Lamb: The Daniel Island Library was a new addition for just this past City Elections so for County wide things we, Hanahan library, St. Stephens library and the office have been the three.

Director Brown: Yes, those are the only locations we have used.

Pam Lamb: I suggest we use the office and the Hanahan library. Since it is aligned with what we have done, that most of the county is familiar with.

Frances Taylor: Mr. Chairman are we going to eliminate St. Stephan? So, people who have to drive from Jamestown and Sugarville will have to come down to Moncks Corner?

Don Saturday: Apparently so because it is not in the budget to provide early voting anywhere other than in two locations.

Darel Trout: We don't really have to hire extra people for the office, do we? As far as budget money wise I'm not really following that. When you go to an outdoors you have to completely staff it, logistics and all that. The office is already set up and all that. Am I correct?

Director Brown: We must use additional staff for early voting in the office because the office workers are still receiving telephone calls from voters wanting to know where to register, where to go vote, requesting absentee Ballot applications all of that is ongoing, so we still do staff additional help for early voting centers. I did request in the budget for three locations because I did not know the state would not reimburse. I would need to have a conversation with our finance department to see if we could still use one more additional location, as we want to treat everyone in the county the same. If we do the county seat, our office and an upper end that would better serve all the people in our community.

Don Saturday: Let's do that I don't know if it needs to be set in a motion for a quorum, just follow through as you have already decided to do. It would be ideal if we could keep St. Stephan in the early voting.

Darel Trout: If we can't what do we do, have a special meeting if they only allow us two?

Don Saturday: If they don't allow it then it will remain as.

Darel Trout: Which two?

Don Saturday: It will be Hanahan which the motion we can always amend the motion when she knows.

Darel Trout: Hanahan and the office?

Don Saturday: St. Stephan's, right? We need a motion to accept what you are giving us right now, is that correct?

Director Brown: Not exactly it's just that the state will not reimburse beyond the two locations. They county will have to pay the entire expense of an additional location.

Pam Lamb: With it being primary's and I expect it to be busy, but could we manage in the numbers of staff like not have quite as many as we would for say like the Statewide primary.

Director Brown: You are required to have 5 people there 1 Clerk and 4 Election workers. Remember they offer curbside voting at these locations, and it is always takes 2 people in order to provide curbside or assistance to a voter who may be inside.

Don Saturday: What it boils down to if we do decide St. Stephen, assuming we have selected Hanahan and here, the two are given to us with State reimbursement or State Party's.

Director Brown: State Party's.

Don Saturday: Would the county fund St. Stephan that's the question?

Director Brown: I will check with the finance department to determine whether or not we will be able to staff the 3rd location. Three locations would be the best for everyone in the County.

Don Saturday: When do you anticipate getting an answer on that?

Director Brown: I can propose that to them today, but we are closed tomorrow for a holiday, so I don't anticipate and answer before next week.

Don Saturday: Can we have a motion to entertain the St. Stephen assuming the county agrees to fund it without State Party help. That gives you enough time, is that right?

Director Brown: Yes

Don Saturday: If we vote on it to add St. Stephan in the January meeting.

Director Brown: I would need to start training my workers around the same time you have your next meeting. This is just a financial issue, it's strictly financial because the State will reimburse for two locations.

Don Saturday: So, what are you asking us to do? Let's make a motion to add St. Stephan as a 3rd early voting location provided that we get funding. Is that what to are asking us to do?

Director Brown: Yes

Darel Trout: So, moved.

Truman Metts: Mr. Chairman, Madam Director I think the situation we are facing that we go back to our County and ask for an amendment to our budget or with in discretion to our funds find enough to cover to satisfy the needs of our citizens.

Don Saturday: Easier said than done.

Truman Metts: I think we need to go on record as asking them and give them the requirements as to why we need it. It's not just something we reached up into thin air and pulled down, the situation we are facing.

Don Saturday: okay well I will entertain a motion to add St. Stephan.

Chris Davenport: Didn't we already have a motion so moved but hasn't had a second on it yet? There is a motion on the table for that what you just said.

Darel Trout: I already motioned for that what you just said pending that.

Don Saturday: Board Member Trout has made a motion to add St. Stephan as part of the three locations for early voting Presidential Primary's. Do I have a second on that?

Pam Lamb: I second.

Don Saturday: Board Member Lamb has seconded the motion any other discussions about that? Those in favor of that motion say aye.

Aye

Pam Lamb: Ms. Brown, you are probably going to get to that but what are the dates on the early voting for the Presidential Primary's?

Director Brown: Early Voting for the Democratic PPP begins on Monday January 22nd through Saturday January 27th we are closed on Sunday the 28th. The 29th of January through Friday February 2nd the hours each day are 8:30am until 6:00pm. Early voting for Republican PPP begins on Tuesday February the 20th through Thursday February the 22nd there is no early voting on Friday. I'm sorry let me back up a week. Monday February the 12th the Republican PPP early voting begins through Saturday February the 17th then the following week there is no early voting on that Monday the 19th because the 19th of February is Presidents Day. So, resume on the 20th through the 22nd 8:30am to 6:00pm each day. There is no early voting on Friday February the 23rd with Election being the 24th Saturday.

Pam Lamb: Thank You

Director Brown: That is posted online at scvotes.gov and it is also on the Berkeley County website under our department.

Chris Davenport: Just a point for clarification. The Democratic Primary runs from January the 22nd to February 2nd excluding the Sundays, but the election date is the 3rd? So, we have early voting on the Friday prior to the Election but in the Republican Primary it runs through the 22nd.

Director Brown: That is correct.

Chris Davenport: Is there is not early voting the Friday prior too?

Director Brown: That is what the Republican party set. Each party set their early voting dates and date of Election. Board Members along with your packet with your minutes and agenda you have a listing of poll workers that are approved board members that have worked before which is the largest list of names and the secondary list is new applicants that have already been through the process with the Human Resources Department. We will need to begin training these poll workers as soon as possible, after the first of the year.

Don Saturday: What is the date on the early training?

Director Brown: We want to try to do an early voter training on Tuesday January the 9th. Your next Board meeting will not be until 11th. So, we will need to look at the list of names to see if there are any names that you may want to strike or make sure that these individuals are working this election. So, we can send letters out to the workers for them to sign up for training.

Frances Taylor: I have a question. Are these proposed poll workers on this list that you have given us?

Director Brown: Yes, ma'am these are the people that are already approved as poll workers that have worked before.

Frances Taylor: On this list?

Director Brown: The largest list the secondary list that's only two sheets are new workers.

Frances Taylor: There are names on here that some of them I recognize on this list, that I know they're not poll workers. They have not been active poll workers for a while.

Director Brown: This is what was in the system poll workers with the Human Resources Department that they submit over to us.

Frances Taylor: It needs to be corrected.

Chris Davenport: I have a question. So, the second list is the new list is that correct?

Director Brown: Yes, it is.

Chris Davenport: Have all applicants been contacted to anybody who have applied you have given communication to them as well if they were accepted or not?

Director Brown: I do not do that job It is the job of the precinct coordinator once the application has been submitted. They have completed everything through Human Resources that's why their name is added to the secondary list.

Darel Trout: So, what is the process if someone has applied but they have never been contacted, what is the steps they should take to further the process?

Director Brown: Contact Laura Thomas the precinct coordinator.

Don Saturday: In reviewing the list are there any Board Members that wish to make any amendments or changes striking any of these workers.

Frances Taylor: A couple of names like I said I recognize, and they aren't workers they haven't worked in years.

Don Saturday: OK

Frances Taylor: And they don't intend to return.

Pam Lamb: It just looks like they haven't been scrubbed from the list.

Director Brown: These individuals are still active in the system that they can be a poll worker if they wish to do so because they have completed all paperwork prior.

Don Saturday: This doesn't necessarily mean you will pick all these works? Just that they are available based on qualifications is that what you are saying?

Director Brown: That is correct.

Don Saturday: You'll use select from this list and if you contact any of them and they tell you I'm not interested in working then you move on.

Director Brown: Yes sir, we will send letters out to them and if they state they do not wish to work the election, we will remove their name off this list.

Don Saturday: Are there any on the list Board Members would prefer not to?

Pam Lamb: If there were.

Don Saturday: If the question is yes, then I am going to suggest we do that in executive session but if there are no such talks here of striking any of them for any other reason other than they don't want to work.

Chris Davenport: Can I make a request that we get this list prior to right now so we have time to review this? This is a pretty extensive list. To go through every one of these names and to confirm they don't have any issues. If we got that as part of the docs.

Don Saturday: I do agree with that, we do need the list must sooner. Particularly not be in December. So that's a corrective action that we need to implement Director Brown because this is primary for the Presidential Primary.

Chris Davenport: Also, a list of new.

Director Brown: This would be for all workers basically in 2024 we currently have their information on file.

Don Saturday: It is a little short to review particularly by new members to review this list and make recommendations in time to begin training. We don't want to ask someone to come to training if we are going to strike them from the list. Now if we can get to the primary then we do have time until we get into the June Primary period to strike from the list is not true. It gives you adequate time.

Director Brown: Yes, this would be the same list with an addition of any new applicants.

Don Saturday: The fact that we are kind of short on time we will have to defer that decision and any others to be added prior to the June primary. We need to have sufficient time to review your list moving into the June Primary's. Everybody agrees with that. It is what it is for the Presidential but as I said you're probably not going to use all of them.

Director Brown: It will be a smaller pool of people that will be used for the Presidential Preference Primary just because the State normally in Presidential Preference Primary's the vote turn out is not a higher percentage as in the Statewide Primaries in June smaller percentage of voters in these elections.

Don Saturday: So, one thing Board Members as you are visiting your precincts in this period of time if you happen to encounter a worker or clerk you may believe may be lacking abilities, please make a note of their name so we can address it at an appropriate time. Does that sound like a reasonable plan here. I'd be hard pressed to look at these names and recall but you know them when you see them.

Pam Lamb: From these precincts of ten from visiting the precincts.

Don Saturday: Just keep that in mind. Just have your list ready and we'll talk about it at the right time.

Don Saturday: Ms. Brown do you have any other items?

Director Brown: This will end my directors report. Board Members do you have any additional questions?

Lee Dixon: I do have one additional question. The Phillips Simmons issue with the machine can you just define what the remedy was and how long did it take us to respond, replace the machine and confirm there were no voters delayed or denied any access to vote in a timely manner?

Director Brown: As soon as the poll clerk made the call to the office preparation was made and a new DS 200 was delivered promptly to that location. Just the time it took to get from our office here to the Phillips Simmons Elementary School. The process is if the DS 200 if it did not scan a ballot is to place it in the emergency provisional slot of the DS 200 that was there. That was done as following State procedure once the new machine was there in place it was opened, and the voting continued using the new DS 200. At the end of the night the poll clerk closed the machines down and tallied all votes that were cast the ones that were placed in the provisional slot first machine and read into the 2nd DS 200 counted for and they did a ballot reconciliation sheet there for they had two flash drives and two ballot bins to bring back to election central on election night and all ballots were counted for.

Lee Dixon: Understood thank you and just from a time frame standpoint, when that happens that is a far reach of the County Daniel Island and Phillip Simmons about as far away from here as you can get. Was it 45 minutes, was it an hour, was it 2 hours do we have a.

Director Brown: It is approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

Lee Dixon: It doesn't take us long to process a machine and get it ready then send it out?

Director Brown: No Sir.

Lee Dixon: Thank you for the information.

Don Saturday: And those cast Ballots are protected.

Chris Davenport: At no time was the polling location closed, it remained open through that process.

Director Brown: No closure at the voting location, voters came signed in the poll book, they were issued a ballot card and went to the ballot marking device, marked their ballot and deposited it into the DS 200.

Chris Davenport: Thank You

Don Saturday: Any other questions of the Director before we go on?

Darel Trout: I don't know if this is new or old business, we just talked about it. I am still unclear of what we are doing about the polling locations. Back to normal voting places. Expanding to new places that are bigger. Do we have to approve that, we going forward with that? I didn't quite understand how, I thought she asked if we had to approve these locations.

Pam Lamb: Start looking.

Darel Trout: Approved to start looking.

Don Saturday: Once we have identified locations to accept in precinct.

Darel Trout: Do we have to vote on it.

Director Brown: Approve it before it is submitted to the Delegation.

Darel Trout: Ok was just trying to speed up the process.

Dan Saturday: Search mode

Director Brown: If the Board is in agreement, I do have locations if I could work with the school district to get approval for the other locations and the Board all agrees with those locations. If you all agree with that then I can submit that to the Delegation for their approval because It cannot happen until after the Delegation approves moving a location.

Dan Saturday: Do you have any other search to do, or do you have what you believe you need?

Director Brown: The only other thing I was not aware of them building the road Ms. Lamb just said that could be a consideration but I must look at the numbers that are already voting at Hanahan Elementary before suggesting moving additional voters to that location in that space.

Pam Lamb: It is the smallest of the Hanahan precincts, I do believe. Just saying.

Don Saturday: If your search can be completed in a reasonable amount of time, I would prefer to approve the precincts at one time.

Darel Trout: I just didn't want to hinder it I say let's get on it if we need to get it.

Don Saturday: So, you need more search time? Or are you ready to recommend some for our approval?

Director Brown: Once I stated to the board, I am ready for with the exception of Hanahan Old Taranto fire station just because of the logistically I need to look at those numbers to make sure we're not

overcrowding another location. I would still like to ask the school district new school bills in these populated areas if we can use those schools as they become available.

Don Saturday: You don't have addresses or anything like that?

Director Brown: Not until after they are built but in the communities that are densely populated, we need additional locations. Take Cane Bay for example we use all of the schools at Cane Bay, and we are still overcrowded there. There is just more people living in that area then we have locations for them to vote.

Don Saturday: We will leave it up to you when you think the timing is correct as for approval.

Darel Trout: But for the ones you already have picked we can go ahead and approve right? Then let's do that.

Don Saturday: Give us locations on those you want a motion to approve today.

Pam Lamb: I thought she had to check into it.

Darel Trout: I thought she already had some?

Director Brown: I just have to verify with the school district. The school district is very accommodating. Just give me a little time to get with the school district. The other church has already given us approval that they are willing to accept us as a polling location and that is desperately needed in that area.

Don Saturday: So, January 11th we will have a fairly complete list that's ready at that time?

Director Brown: Yes.

Darel Trout: okay

Don Saturday: So please put that on the January agenda to approve those new precincts. Any other items or questions for the Director?

- New Business

Okay we have no old business on the agenda, but we do have a couple of items under new business but one of the items Board Meeting scheduled 2024 we are not actually doing that until our January meeting, our regular board meetings, is that not correct, Director Brown?

Director Brown: That is correct.

Don Saturday: So, we can strike that from the new business today? That will be taken up at our January 11th meeting.

Lee Dixon: I have a question, so will there be a list provided to us or will we just discuss it in the meeting January 11th for the upcoming Board Meetings?

Don Saturday: Do you have a recommendation of dates? We talked during the Board of Canvassers that we will probably separate the Board of Canvassers Meeting that we already have scheduled out from board meetings. I like the fact that were scheduling meetings at 6pm, so I am sure the Director will have some recommendation of months.

Director Brown: Yes, certainly.

Don Saturday: It would be good to have meetings typically that's when things are happening prior to elections we always have to talk about those issues and after elections. There is always a time to meet as a board to talk about things that went wrong and things that went right. So, I'm assuming, Director Brown, you will give us some reasonable dates to set meetings for 2024 at our January meeting. Any other Board Member that believes board meetings are necessary you have a right to speak up and recommend.

Lee Dixon: That would be my recommendation that we meet on a more regular schedule consider a monthly basis. Most Counties in the State do that, large counties and we are certainly one that is growing. If we created a consistent, we meet whether it is monthly or every 6 weeks whatever that is. We should consider that as a proposal.

Don Saturday: Okay we will take that up in January and you can offer a motion at that time, we can do that. Any other discussion regarding schedule?

Don Saturday: The Chairman is going to address a letter at this time by Ms. Heather Hickman, once again there are essentially two issues that are brought up in her email/letter that was sent to the Board Members. She copied the new Board Members who were not present during this time, but the rest of us were. So, I have some thoughts I'm going to talk about today and I'm not going to discourage any other Board Member from saying anything after I complete what I want to say. You are certainly welcome to do that, but Ms. Hickman I believe you are here is that correct? In reading this I noticed no less than 5 occasions you used the term lie or lied. My characterization of a lie by my estimation is a malicious intent to deceive. I think in these applications or examples that you've used I think that's a word that is really stronger than necessary. I do take exception to your words, to the word lie in these cases. You say for example the Directors length of service why she was appointed in your estimation it appeared she did not meet qualifications.

Heather Hickman made an inaudible comment to which Don Saturday replied.

Don Saturday: This is not a discussion; this is simply me responding to your letter.

Heather Hickman makes another inaudible comment.

Don Saturday: I will allow you to make points if you'd like but this is not a back-and-forth moment. You made your statements, and I am replying. In respect to Director Brown's qualifications when we ask for resumes to be sent in and applications to be sent in for our director these went to the HR Department, and they were all vetted. The HR department determined to qualify based on the job description and were sent to us for our review and acceptance or appointment of the Director that we wanted. Her use of the title Deputy Director was an issue you found fault with. The Board Members that were present the time Adam Hammonds was here as our director. As I recall, I believe she was given the title because it was informal as his Deputy Director. Now there is no such title or position in this County Government I don't believe there is any department that has a characterization or title as Deputy Director even at the supervisor's position. There was anything in the job description to call her a Deputy Director, however Director Hammonds did refer to her in that way. She was given an increase in pay to reward her for good service in the fact she was his right-hand person in helping him in many aspects of running the office. So, if she characterized herself in her resume as Deputy Director, I can certainly understand that. Let me say that the Board Members who appointed her as director were fully aware of the years of service, she provided this office. In their estimation and it wasn't because she was a Deputy Director there was a number of things, knowledge of the election processes they felt since she met the qualifications of length of service and education that she was entitled to be appointed as Director. Majority of Board members went along with that and therefore she was appointed, and I consider that a closed matter at this point. She is our director we have new Board Members coming on we have a process of evaluating our director for job performance

she has gone through job performance evaluation she will continue to go through job performance evaluations if we find by this board that if she doesn't meet our standards of what a director should be then we will make the necessary change at that time. But at this point in time Director Brown is our director. Rose Brown is our director, so as I have said I consider it to be a closed matter in that respect. In regard to using inmates there was a director Brown that laterally decided to do that prior directors of this office have used inmates' other offices around the State have utilize the same thing the labor is free these are low risk inmates, because budgets are generally very tight in our election office we find and use free labor whenever we can the primary purpose was their muscles moving heavy equipment moving boxes of ballots the fact that they were photographed with ballots in front of them this was during the audit process these votes were already cast and certified so there was no opportunity during the audit if I'm not mistaken to change any outcome of any election at that point. Certainly, we can account that are ballots matched, but whether or not they were counting ballots I think that is a mischaracterization of what they were actually doing although the photograph that Ms. Hickman pointed out they do have ballots in front of them but were they counting they certainly could have but we know what they were doing. At any rate I consider that a closed matter because it is part of the corrective action and that the recommendation of our local Legislative Delegation Members that we discontinue to use inmates for any reason in our office. Which causes another problem we got to find people to do the heavy work there's girls in our office and one guy it's hard to ask them to pick up these totes of ballots and the machines that have to be moved around in addition to their other responsibilities they just don't sit there on their thumbs and do nothing. We have to have labor so now we are trying to reach out to and create a job description to try to find somebody willing to work at the salary the County is offering, keep in mind inmates were free now we got to pay somebody. The salaries the County says they will pay these individuals it may be an attractive amount of money or people may say I have better things to do then do that job for that pay. So, we don't yet know how successful we are going to be getting the necessary labor we have. It is just an undue burden but hey I get it you don't want low risk inmates as low risk as they are involved in any way in our election offices then that's been determined we're not going to do it, so as I have said that is a closed matter as well. So, Ms. Hickman I don't think we need to address any more of your concerns. You are certainly entitled to reach out to your local delegation to suggest that some Board members be replaced, that's you right, but until then we service with pleasure and are appointed by the Governor. Only the Governor can remove us the delegation can recommend that we be removed but it takes the governor to do that. So, until the Governor removes me from this position, I am going to serve the people of Berkeley County in the best way I can. We are open and transparent in everything we do we have no hidden agenda, so I am comfortable in saying this is one of the best Boards I have worked with, and I been on the board since 2006 so that's about all I've got to say.

Don Saturday: Any other Board Members want to speak?

Frances Taylor: Mr. Chairman just one comment. Regarding the same letter where Ms. Hickman has stated most insulting to the citizens of Berkeley the residents of Berkeley County to have to look at the same Board Members. I see no reason why they should be insulted because we are here, and we are here to serve the citizens of Berkeley County to the best of our ability and that is what we have done, and we take pleasure an honor in serving our citizens. Thank you!

Don Saturday: any other comments? Okay let's move into public comments. Please keep your comments to within five minutes shorter if you can. It's been a long meeting day we have some that have doctors' appointments they need to get to, so is there anyone who wishes to step up and make a comment but please keep it brief. Yes, step up and state your name.

Ann Conder: first I would like to congratulate Mr. Davenport and Mr. Dixon for joining the Board and I look forward to you guys working in conjunction with the remainder of your fellow Board members in doing the right thing for our community. Thank You for taking on this responsibility because it is a huge one. I would like to ask a couple of questions since discussion of training came up. Prior to the last election I came to your board meeting, and I did have some concerns about training I was reassured by you Mr. Saturday and you Ms. Brown that the training would be adequate for the poll workers and the poll clerks because I had expressed a concern about some issues I encountered as a candidate representative during that years primary and that was back in 2022, Back in march of 2022 when we had the primary. At that time we had primary's that were being conducted for bother party's on the same day when I went to several different precincts representing my candidate that I was serving as a candidate representative the first precinct I went to and I asked how many democrats had voted and how many republicans had voted they couldn't figure out how to do it on the computer system so they called the home office. The home office advised them the right direction on how to find it on the computer system, so I got the numbers. The next precinct I went to, and I asked the same question they called the home office because they did not know how to do it, the home office said we can't give that information out. That is information that is duly, that is legally binding that can be provided by any candidate representative that comes into any precinct and asks. So, we have two separate precincts here that couldn't give the same responses. So, at that second precinct I couldn't determine where we were standing as far as republican and democratic votes. Okay, not only that I presented that issue to some of you board members that were serving at that time, and I was reassured that would be ok, that we are going to take care of that in the training. Then I cannot stress enough to you how important candidate representatives are during a general election when you have nine partisan candidates running. Candidate representatives are crucial for those candidates so last year when we had board members running for their seats, I was a candidate representative for about six of those board members. I would go and I would have different candidate representatives manning the polls, right there at the doors to several of the polling places. I kept getting phone calls all day long telling me that they were being one off they can only stand 500 feet away from the location of the front door. No that's not right legally they can stand right there at the door they can wear a small badge with the name of the candidate. I had to go to five different precincts and educate your poll clerks on the law. Yet two months before that election reassured by you Mr. Saturday and you Ms. Brown that they would be adequately trained. That we would not have these problems. So, what happened we had an audit and it reflected very poorly on the board and on your director. So, I am here to tell you when you have these meetings there is going to be several of us sitting out here watching you. You need to be very very careful and do your job and do it right because if you don't you are going to be called out. We are going to be writing the Governor, we're going to be writing your delegation asking to replace you.

Don Saturday: I think your time is up. I never look out into the audience to determine who is out there and whether or not is has any effect on my job and our performance but at any rate we thank you for you scrutiny, we welcome it. If we are doing something we can do better that we're not doing continue to bring it up to us. I don't have a problem with that.

Ann Conder: I did bring it up to you, I brought it up to you Mr. Saturday, I brought it up to you last year.

Don Saturday: Training is an important function of what we do.

Ann Conder: Well, you had multiple problems.

Don Saturday: And we may have problems in the 2024 election too.

Ann Conder: I hope not!

Don Saturday: It's not an appropriate time but we are going to make every effort to run a perfect election. Anyway, I think you have had your time, thank you. Is there anyone else?

Sherry Gross: I am a resident of Berkeley County and I just want to welcome the new board members. I would also like to thank the entire board and director for live streaming the meetings and moving them to the evening.

Don Saturday: Thank you. Any other comments?

Heather Hickman: I am a resident of Berkeley County yeah; I'm hold the poll workers handbook and ya'll know what it says. It says candidates and candidate representatives may be within 500 feet of the entrance to a polling place as long as it doesn't interfere with election process. I just want to clarify it is in writing in here. I know it is pivotal in the training. You train and it doesn't go perfectly. Thank ya'll for being here appreciate the live stream appreciate the option to have evening meetings. I know everyone is working diligently I am curious about no old business being listed. This is a list of the audit report from the findings, and I don't think we have a full update, but I may be wrong it may be on the website and I might have missed it. There were 29 finding of the office and 9 findings with the board I don't think they were all addressed. It was not I it was that very audit that the Legislative Delegation had called for that made the statement worker was paid when shouldn't have been. It was that statement that the director lied on her resume. That was not my words originally, I reiterated them. I don't appreciate being told that I am saying something maliciously, you don't know what is in my head and I don't know what's in their head. That's completely inappropriate in case you didn't hear that completely inappropriate. A lie is simply an incorrect statement of the truth it's inaccurate whether it's written or verbal. So, what I think you told us a minute ago was that she lied on her resume when she invented the title Deputy Director, I guess there's a pattern there. It doesn't look good; it is harmful to the appearance to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration. I've been in that office many times that office is very well run the people know their jobs. They work very hard, and I don't think we want anything casting a bad appearance on that board. That said, also understand the size of precincts and I see the effort you are going quote unquote locations. Many of our precincts have well exceeded the legally stipulated size I think that is under correction, I'm not sure, but hopefully that will help in the effort to help secure adequate polling places for the voters. I think everything else was covered, thank you for your time.

Don Saturday: Any other comments?

Yvonne Bradley: I am also a Berkeley County resident I live in Cross. One of the things I have found interesting is that training that is done depends on the receiver. If you as a trainer gives me the information and I sit there and I ingest it and I don't ask questions to clarify your understanding or my understanding then the rules do get blurred, the lines are smeared. In my conversations here with Mr. Davenport, not knowing who he was he mentioned and incident where he lost some ballots. Okay, so there is enough blame to go around, so if he is now one of the Board Members can admit he lost ballots then Ms. Brown using the term Deputy Director should not be a problem. You admitted she was given that title unceremoniously as prior director. That does happen. I have seen situations as a schoolteacher I can explain a problem on the board to my children, my class 5 of them get it 5 of them don't, but those 5 that get it take the time to share it with the other 5. So, it is a long process, I appreciate the fact that Celeste Davis and the other delegation gave us the information. I appreciate the fact the State Commission came and told us about it and you all as the Board have been going through corrective action. Okay, it takes time, it takes time to learn a new skill. If you were doing it wrong all your life and all of a sudden you are told it is time to start doing it right. So, this is the adjustment period I see. The new board members that came on they have to adjust to the others view. They don't know you that well, so it is a learning process so as I learn the rules the voter registration, the office, the commission I learn as well as everybody else. I don't

get it all the first time, but as I keep reading and I keep asking the questions as you all have been asking questions you asked about when we do this are we going put this motion in force. You are asking questions to check your understanding this is what we need to do. We all need to understand, we're not all on the same page, today but as we learn each other, learn how it works it's better. When we learn we all become a more cohesive group that's what I'm looking forward, looking forward to. This body of individuals Berkeley County Election Commission cause if not yes some of you are going to leave. Some of you may become disenfranchised and want to leave, but as long as you are there speak to the room don't become intimidated. Do what you are supposed to do stay on course, okay. Ms. Brown is doing a very excellent job. Every time we have questions, she answers them she comes out she's honest and says she doesn't know but she will get back to you. That's what we are supposed to do. If I don't know do you want me to tell you a lie? Then when the lie is checked, Ms. Hickman has a letter to write. Okay don't be fooled, don't be fooled. Do the right thing. Do the right thing. John Lewis said it is always the right time to do the right things. Be right Stay right!

Don Saturday: Thank You

Yvonne Bradley: Judge Judy says if you tell a lie you'll have to remember the lie. If you tell the truth the first time you won't have to remember the lie. Just remember, do the right thing. Thank you, sir.

Don Saturday: Thank you for your time.

Chris Davenport: Mr. Chairman since she mentioned my name, I just want clarification on that. I have lost votes the way I said it was a head count I have never lost votes.

*(inaudible comment from Yvonne Bradley in the audience)

Don Saturday: Yes, sir.

Ed Vice: I am from Berkeley County I just want to I guess commend the group that is here because the first time I started attending the meeting there was a lot of confusion, but I see straightening out moving in the right direction. So, I want to commend the Board for what I see happening and everyone coming out and voicing their opinions. The one thing I do want to say to the board anything that you can do to keep the St. Stephan's polling place I would like for you all to consider doing cause the way things are going right now we need to be increasing instead of decreasing. So, I am here to help do whatever I can with finding whatever we need to do funding wise talk to our legislatures about the budget, they may not understand what is going on but we need to be increasing not decreasing so whatever you all can do to keep the St. Stephan's polling place I would appreciate you all doing that. Like I said I am here plan to be here to help make Berkeley County better to help this group do all that they can do.

Don Saturday: Thank you very much!

Darel Trout: Can I add to that about St. Stephan's I to believe that is really important the other end if you'll get as many people as possible to contact the people to approve budgets the County finance that would probably help a lot. Thank You.

Don Saturday: Any other comments? Let me just apologize remiss for not announcing our new additions to the board and my apologizes to these two gentlemen Mr. Chris Davenport and Mr. Lee Dixon you may stand. Welcome to the board, again I do apologize for not recognizing you earlier, so thank you. Any more business before the board if not I will entertain a motion to adjourn. Ms. Taylor has made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Lamb has second that. Any discussion or objections? All those in favor say aye.

Aye

Meeting adjourned, Thank you very much!

Submitted by: Christine Swanson