

**October 16, 2019**

A Special Meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 4:30pm on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 in the Commissioners' Room, located on the lower level of the Courthouse, 106 East Broad Street, Elizabethtown, NC. The purpose of the Special Meeting was to enter Closed Session in Accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney-Client Privilege.

Members present were:

Charles R. Peterson, Chairman

David Gooden, Vice Chairman

Russell Priest

Ashley Trivette

Arthur Bullock

Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins

Michael Cogdell

Daniel Dowless

Ray Britt

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order at 4:30pm and provided an invocation. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ITEM 1. Closed Session**

- A. Upon a motion by Commissioner Britt, seconded by Commissioner Gooden, the Board unanimously entered Closed Session in Accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney-Client Privilege at 4:32pm.
- B. Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Britt, the Board exited Closed Session at 5:22pm.

Commissioner Gooden made a motion to not provide legal representation for the benefit of two (2) Board of Elections members, against whom complaints have been filed with the State Board of Elections. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dowless.

Chairman Peterson called for discussion of the motion prior to a vote. Board members discussed the motion, sharing concerns, opinions, and information.

Commissioner Munn-Goins expressed concern that some of the alleged conversations were held during Board of Elections meetings and the Board of Commissioners should strongly consider providing legal representation.

Commissioner Cogdell expressed concerns about this setting a precedent if the Board of Commissioners does not fund legal representation of the two appointed officials. He urged the Board to delay action now, and to consider action following the State Board of Elections' determination regarding the two complaints.

Commissioner Trivette conveyed her concern regarding a conversation, included in one of the complaints, which was recorded as having been held during a Board of Elections meeting. This would have been during the discharge of a Board member's job duties.

Following discussion, Chairman Peterson revisited the motion on the floor for consideration. Upon a vote of six (6) AYES (Gooden, Dowless, Priest, Trivette\*, Britt, Peterson) to three (3) NOES (Cogdell, Munn-Goins, Bullock), the motion passed to not fund a legal defense for two (2) Board of Elections members.

\*Pursuant to Rule 10, Paragraph I of the Board's Rules of Procedure, Commissioner Trivette is recorded as having voted in the affirmative because she did not vote, but was physically present.

**October 16, 2019**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gooden, seconded by Commissioner Britt, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28pm.

**ATTEST:**

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Maria C. Edwards, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board

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Charles R. Peterson, Chairman