

MCDOWELL COUNTY

BOARD OF ELECTIONS



Board Members:
Barbara Hilty, Chair
Tracey Bolick, Member
Jimmie Hachadurian, Member
Kay House, Member
Della Watson, Member

McDowell County Board of Elections

Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2026

5:01 p.m. – 5:42 p.m. (Recess) 7:30 p.m. – 7:56 p.m.

Board Members Present: Chair Barbara Hilty, Member Tracey Bolick, Secretary Kay House, Member J.R. Hachadurian, Member Della Watson

JB

JRH

KH

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Elections Director Jane Propst, Deputy Director Baylie Davis

Guests in Attendance: Anna Caldwell, Susan Elliott, Suzanne Fisher, Elizabeth Gibbs

Meeting Opening

Chair Barbara Hilty called the meeting to order at **5:01 p.m.**

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the **March 2, 2026**, meeting were presented.

Motion: Hilty

Second: House

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous, 5–0

Action: Minutes approved as presented.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was presented to the Board.

Motion: Hilty

Second: House

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous, 5–0

Action: Agenda approved as presented.

Directors Report

- As of 4:00 p.m. there were a total of 2,121 election day voters.

Old Business

None

New Business

1. 2026 Primary Absentee Ballot Applications

Director Jane Propst presented 2 CIV (civilian) absentee ballot applications.

Motion: House

Second: Watson

Vote: Unanimous, 5-0

Discussion: None

Action: Absentee ballot applications accepted as presented. The ballots were tabulated.

General Discussion

1. Member Bolick reported receiving calls regarding electioneers at the Nebo #13 precinct who had been asked to move farther away and asked for Director Propst's perspective. Director Propst explained that the Board could not change the established buffer zone on Election Day and must enforce the current buffer zone. Propst noted that North Carolina law prohibits electioneering within the polling place and within the designated buffer zone (G.S. 163-166.4). Propst stated that the electioneers were standing on the sidewalk within the buffer zone, and were not within the designated campaign area.

Bolick asked what may have caused the issue and how it could be addressed in the future. Propst stated that candidates receive information about the buffer zones when filing and that the situation may have been a misunderstanding. She added that the Board could review the buffer zone for future elections if necessary.

The designated areas at the Nebo #13 precinct are as follows:

- **Buffer Zone:** 50 feet from the gym entrance to the end of the sidewalk.
- **Campaign Area:** 50 feet from the gym entrance, across from the sidewalk in the middle grassy area only.

2. Director Propst informed the Board that voting hours in Halifax County had been extended by one hour. As a result, no statewide primary election results will be released until 8:30 p.m.

Public Comments

None

Recess

Upon motion by Kay House, the board recessed at 5:29 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m. with all members present

Director Propst closed the polls on all tabulators used during the early voting period, as well absentee by mail at 7:30 p.m. The results were submitted to state at 7:30 p.m. and released at 8:30 p.m.

Next Meeting : The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 05, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

Adjournment

Motion: Waston

Second: Hilty

Meeting adjourned at **7:56 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Baylie Davis

Baylie Davis, Deputy Director

March 5, 2026