

## **Brunswick Board of Elections Observation Report**

**May 19, 2:00 p.m. – Bolivia, NC**

**Present:** All board members were present and Sara Knotts, Director and Melissa Monroe, Deputy Director were present. Observers from the League were Gail Bromley and Barbara Burrell

**Highlight:** The composition of the Brunswick Board will not change to reflect a 2 Democrats to 1 Republican membership at this time. The most recent bill passed would have made all county Boards of Elections to include equal members of Democrats and Republicans. This law was contested in the courts by the new state administration and a stay was granted. The appeal by the Republicans is to be heard by a three-judge panel on either May 31 or June 1 and until that case is decided, the board will stay as it is now composed both at the state and county levels. This has been a very confusing time following the latest actions.

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The other action of interest is advocacy by the Brunswick County Board of Election members with legislators on establishing super voting centers and the ability to vote out of precinct at those centers on Election Day. Our Board sees voting centers being mainly the same as Early voting sites, thus keeping the number of sites down but having voting centers with good access and well equipped with staff and machines to handle voting traffic. Brunswick County expects that continued population growth is only going to exacerbate an already growing problem of finding suitable sites for precinct voting. As it is, the county is likely to lose two main precinct sites critical to serving the county residents. Schools are NOT an option for Early Voting and do not make the best precinct sites.

The Board sees this as a gradual process. Stuart Smith, Chairman of the Board, is going to produce a plan outlining what they are proposing for legislative change. He will present this to other board members for their approval. Discussion arose about the need for some precincts in more remote areas to be available as well as Early Voting sites.

Gail Bromley commented that any initial concept include the requirement for counties to add to Early Voting sites for remote areas where getting to a super voting center would be a hindrance to voting. Our Board understands that they do not want to infringe on the voting of those who live in more remote areas of the county. However, other county boards might not see this as a need unless it is written to plan for that process..

We will advocate for no out-of-precinct restrictions on Election Day and monitor how the super center or continuation of Early Voting Centers proceeds.

Gail Bromley reporting