

"Help" From Brother Drawing Scrutiny

Written by Steve Frank

Attention that started with the Watauga Board of Elections controversy over agendas and documents prepared before the first meeting of the new board last month has now gotten more scrutiny of the relationship of the board of elections chairman and the role possibly played by his brother —the attorney for the Watauga Board of Commissioners. The Winston-Salem Journal reported over the weekend that “digital thumbprints” discovered by the paper on resolutions approved in party line votes by the Watauga County Board of Elections show that the ‘author’ of those resolutions “is not the county elections director or board members, but came from Stacy Clyde Eggers IV,” with the computer on which the documents were written said to belong to the law firm of Eggers, Eggers, Eggers & Eggers, according to the Journal. Stacy Eggers IV, known as “Four,” is the brother of Luke Eggers, the elections board chairman who came under fire even before his election to the chairmanship was official. News reports indicated that Stacy Eggers IV had been the local Republican Party’s first choice for the opening on the Board of Elections, but Josh Howard, the Republican chairman of the N.C. State Board of Elections, told the paper, “I don’t think he can do both jobs because the county attorney often has to advise the county board of elections.” The Journal article goes on to say that Four Eggers revealed to them in an interview that he played a key role in crafting “what critics view as an effort to thwart students at Appalachian State University from voting, to muzzle public comments at elections board meetings by requiring that they be submitted in writing, and to neuter the ability of Jane Hodges, the elections director, to offer advice at public meetings.” The Paper went on to say that “actions taken by the board’s two GOP members, Luke Eggers and Bill Aceto, in the board’s public meetings are largely prepackaged by Four Eggers,” and that Four Eggers’ behind-the-scenes role “makes a sham of what should be an open and transparent democratic process at board meetings.” Stella Anderson, a Democrat and the former chairwoman of the elections board told the paper, “He can’t act as his brother or his friend or his adviser without simultaneously acknowledging that he’s always acting as county attorney.” While the Journal article contains lots of details of the digital fingerprints on the documents created for the first meeting of the new Board of Elections, Democratic board member Kathleen Campbell spoke prominently about the apparent improper meeting that led to the documents and to the agenda, neither made available to her prior to the meeting.