

Elections Meeting Draws Raucous Crowd

Written by Steve Frank

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To say that the Watauga Board of Elections meeting was contentious would be, well, an understatement. First, so many green-clad residents came that the meeting, first scheduled for the Commissioners meeting room, then moved the conference table in the Board of Elections Office, had to be moved back to the commissioners room, which was then filled to capacity. And things quickly degenerated from there. Issues included changing duties of Elections Director Jane Hodges, a resolution to have only written comments before the Board of Elections, and changes of one-stop voting. Reactions led to newly-elected chairman Luke Eggers reading the riot act. A series of 2 to 1 votes passed all the contentious resolutions, including only written comments from the public, the more restrictive one-stop voting, combining three Boone precincts to one—votes that Board member Kathleen Campbell listed came after a number of potentially illegal actions taken by the two Republican members of the board, including “Illegal meetings, secret meetings, prior to this to put together all their materials. They refused to give me a copy—it’s totally corrupt.” She said the actions may bring legal challenges.