

## Voting for Municipal Elections Starts Today

Written by Steve Frank  
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The fall municipal elections are a month from tomorrow, but you could actually vote starting today. Absentee voting by mail begins today, so if you're not planning to be in the area November 5th—or for any of the early voting dates—you can begin voting today. This election is for municipal office in the towns of the High Country, with many eyes on the Town of Boone race for Mayor, with current Mayor Loretta Clawson stepping down at the end of her term. Seeking that seat are: current council member Andy Ball, Bradford (Brad) Harmon, John Mena—both with businesses downtown—and write-in candidate and ASU student Jenny Church. Seeking seats to the Boone Town Council are current councilman Rennie Brantz and newcomers Frank (Quint) David, Matthew C. Long, James Milner, Jennifer L. Pena, and Mark Templeton. We all can hopefully see all of these candidates eye-to-eye in a forum sponsored by the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce next Tuesday, October 8th, at 5:30 at the Boone Council Chamber. Those attending will have the opportunity to submit questions. The Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce sponsors a candidate forum from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 22, at the Blowing Rock School Auditorium. On the ballot there are Blowing Rock Mayor J.B. Lawrence, seeking reelection and facing Dan Phillips. Blowing Rock Town Council has 3 seats available and six candidates, David Barker, Laurin Carter, Tommy Klutz Jr., Doug Matheson, Ray Pickett, and Sue Sweeting. Likewise, Beech Mountain Town Council has 3 seats available with five candidates, Cindy Keller, E. (Rick) Miller, Paul Piquet, Edward (Eddie) Plante, and Barry Schorr seeking the seats.

Only three candidates are seeking the three seats on the Seven Devils Town Council, Kay Ehlinger, David Ehmig, and David Hooper.

Early voting for four municipal elections in Watauga County will take place at the Watauga County Commissioners Board Room, located at 814 W. King St. in Boone. Hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the weekdays of Oct. 17 and 18, Oct. 21-25 and Oct. 28 to Nov. 1. Early voting is also available from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Saturday before Election Day, Nov. 2. Any voter registered in one of the municipalities may request an absentee ballot to return by mail. Call the Board of Elections at (828) 265-8061 or write to Watauga County Board of Elections, P.O. Box 528, Boone, NC 28607. Staff will begin to mail absentee ballots today, and ballots must be returned by 5 p.m. Nov. 4th.