

# Susan Campbell joins elections board

BY TODD LUCK  
THE CHRONICLE

The Forsyth County Board of Elections (BOE) swore in a new member, approved a budget and heard about a primary it may hold for six voters during its meeting on Thursday, April 27.

It began with Susan Campbell taking the oath of office to replace Fleming El-Amin, who is now a county commissioner. She was chosen by the Forsyth County Democratic Party to fill what is currently the only Democratic seat on the three-member board.

Campbell, a Florida native and former teacher, has served in various

capacities with the local Democratic Party for 17 years, including as party chair. Campbell has been a frequent attendee and speaker at BOE meetings.

"It's an honor to be sitting on this side of the table," said Campbell.

Charlie Wilson, who's also a regular attendee at BOE meetings, praised the appointment.

"I think I speak on behalf of so many people in the city and county that we're glad to see you sitting on that side of the table," said Wilson. "And we're glad because we know you're the personification of fairness, and we know that you have a dogged determination to seek rational solutions to



**Campbell**

serious issues and problems."

Her first vote was approving a 2017-2018 budget of nearly \$1.3 million, which is a 3.7 percent increase, to begin on July 1. This covers the municipal elections outside of Winston-Salem this year and a countywide primary in 2018. It also has money for a possible special primary and election this year for the state General Assembly and U.S. House

of Representatives because of redistricting.

The budget does not include the money to purchase new voting equipment, which is in a separate county fund. BOEs are required by the state to have a paper ballot-based voting system by Jan. 1, 2018. In Forsyth County, this will take the form of new touch screen voting machines that will produce paper ballots. BOE Director Tim Tsuji also made the board aware of a "unique situation" in the fall municipal elections. There are six registered High Point voters who reside in the part of the city that's in Forsyth County. None of the municipalities in Forsyth with elections this year

have primaries, but High Point does hold one for its municipal elections. Thus, the board may have to open one polling place for those six voters during the High Point primary in September.

The current BOE board will serve until this summer. Under current law, both parties will choose people to fill the seats, which can include reappointing current board members, for a new term that'll start in July. It will have two Democratic members, since the current governor is a Democrat. Campbell has said she definitely wants to continue serving on the board.

However, the General Assembly recently passed

a bill to move the new term for BOEs to June, and it would make BOEs evenly split between parties, which would give local BOEs four members. Gov. Roy Cooper immediately sued over the law after his veto was overridden, and a court has temporarily blocked it.

The N.C. Republican Party has listed Forsyth County BOE chair Ken Raymond as someone they want on the new, evenly split N.C. BOE. Raymond said he was honored by the nomination and believed if the new law did go into effect, it would create more bi-partisan boards. Cooper's lawyers argued that the evenly split boards would create gridlock.



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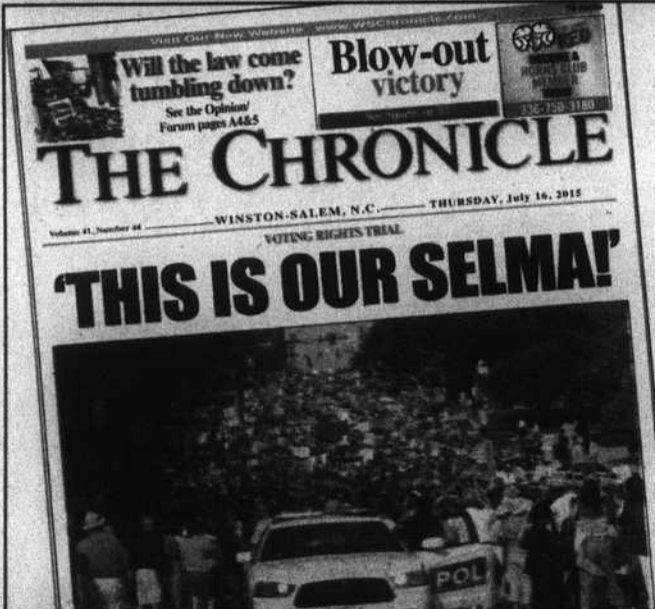
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