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THE CHRONICLE

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Voting machines delayed

Forsyth BOE begins early general election voting

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The absence of a State Board of Elections (BOE) is causing a delay in Forsyth County getting new voting machines that may affect next year's primary.

The Republican-led General Assembly passed legislation earlier this year to change election boards in North Carolina from having a majority that represents the governor's party, which would now be Democrat, to one evenly split between parties. Gov. Roy Cooper sued to stop this and it's still being considered in court. As North Carolina awaits a ruling, the State BOE's



Forsyth County Board of Elections (BOE) members Susan Campbell, Ken Raymond and Stuart Russell certify the results for Forsyth County voters in the High Point primary.

term expired and the board is now vacant. County BOEs have continued to operate with the Republican-majority boards they

already had.

Even with these complications, elections continue to be held with county BOEs and State

BOE staff continuing to do their normal functions. However, the lack of a State BOE has created problems for Forsyth and several

other counties that need to get new voting machines for next year.

"Without a state board to certify vendors and equipments, we don't have any options to replace that equipment," said Forsyth BOE Director Tim Tsujii.

State law requires counties to have paper-based voting systems by Jan. 1, 2018. Forsyth County planned to buy new touchscreen machines that would produce paper ballots, test them during this year's municipal elections and use them in next year's election. But with no certified machine they can purchase, that plan has been delayed. Tsujii said that the certifications on machines currently used in Forsyth's early voting runs out at the end of this year. He said there may be enough time to get the machines and test them

See Voting on A4



Traffic is flowing smoothly on Business 40 as seen from the Peters Creek Parkway bridge on Tuesday, but this is expected to change when construction starts next week.

Photo by Todd Luck

Expect construction delays on Peters Creek, Business 40

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Construction on the Peters Creek Parkway and Business 40 interchanges starts Monday, Oct. 23, and will result in several lane closures.

Motorists can expect:

*The inside lane going in both directions on Business 40 will be closed nightly from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. through early December.

*Eastbound Business 40 traffic will be detoured up the Peters Creek exit ramp and down the Business 40

on ramp from Peters Creek from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. starting Oct 25.

*The inside lane of Business 40 in both directions will close all day starting in early December for a maximum of 45 days.

*Peter's Creek will have one lane in each direction closed nightly from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. There will also be periodic daytime lane closures during non-peak hours (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)

*The Fourth Street Bridge also will be closed to traffic while it's being replaced during this time peri-

od and will re-open once complete.

*There will be no lane closures on Business 40 or Peters Creek from Nov. 21-26 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Excluding the 45 day closures, lanes may also not be closed during rain and adverse weather or if the construction doesn't warrant it that night.



POLITICS

Leaders decry GOP judicial redistricting legislation

BY CASH MICHAELS
FOR THE CHRONICLE

North Carolina Republicans say the state's judicial districts have not been fine-tuned in 60 years, and as a result, some districts have too many judges, while others have too few. It's time to correct that imbalance so that all North Carolinians are treated "fairly and equitably," Republicans say.

"This gets them back closer to similar size districts," says Rep. Donny Lambeth (R-Forsyth).

Indeed, there is general consensus that new district lines need to be redrawn, and the process of judges being elected or appointed deserves a long overdue look, with judicial input.

But what state House Republican lawmakers have done per judicial redistricting in their third Special Session of the year goes beyond any "fine tuning," Democrats, N.C. NAACP leadership and others insist. They see a plot by the GOP to systematically take over North Carolina's court system so that more Republican judges and prosecutors can be elected, and Republicans ultimately have a better chance of winning cases involving legislative policy disputes, like voting rights and redistricting.

"They're bullies ...," declared Bob Hall, executive director of the nonpartisan Democracy NC, a Durham-based issues-advocacy group that's been monitoring what GOP legislative leaders have been up to.

"They've gone after the executive branch, now they're going after the courts, very deliberately and systematically."

It has been a burr in the side of Republican legislative leaders that they've spent over \$10 million in litigation fees over the past decade, only to have their laws either overturned as being unconstitutional, or their power grabs struck down by both state and federal courts.

A scheme to maintain a Republican majority on the state Supreme Court failed miserably last year, resulting in the election of Democrat Judge Mike Morgan, an African-American, and with that, a Democratic majority. Republicans still hold the majority on the N.C. Court

See GOP on A4

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