

North Augusta



South Carolina's Riverfront

MUNICIPAL ELECTION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2024

Ben Watson, Chairperson
Alpha Dunbar, Commissioner

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Municipal Election Commission meeting of November 21, 2024, having been duly publicized, was called to order by Chairperson Ben Watson at 10:06am in the Conference Room on the third floor of the Municipal Center.

Per Section 30-4-80(e) notice of the meeting was posted on the outside doors of the Municipal Center, the main bulletin board of the Municipal Center located on the first floor, and the City of North Augusta website.

Present were Chairperson Ben Watson and Commissioner Alpha Dunbar. Also in attendance was Kevin Whatley, GIS Analyst; Dana Burden, Aiken County Registration & Elections Director; Anthony Hicks, Election Technician; Michelle Harper-Meriwether, Office Manager; and Jamie Paul, City Clerk.

Items on the agenda were discussed out of order, but for the purpose of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.

ITEM 3. Approval of Minutes

a. October 30, 2024 meeting

It was moved by Chairman Watson, seconded by Commissioner Dunbar, to untable the October 30, 2024 meeting minutes. Unanimously Approved.

It was moved by Commissioner Dunbar, seconded by Chairman Watson, to approve the October 30, 2024 minutes as submitted. Unanimously Approved.

b. November 13, 2024 meeting

The minutes of the Municipal Election Commission of November 13, 2024, were approved as submitted by general consent.

ITEM 4. Discussion with Aiken County Registration & Elections Director on Election Process, Responsibilities, and Ballot Layout for Spring 2025 Election

Discussion ensued relative to the filing dates, polling locations, early voting, absentee voting, candidate filing costs, and wording on the ballot.

Further discussion ensued relating to Precinct 54 and use of Second Providence Baptist Church to replace the North Augusta Middle School which was used in prior general elections, however, was not able to use in the 2023 General Election. It was clarified that delegation approval will be needed to replace the polling location. In addition, it was noted that Aiken County Registration & Elections will reach out to the Polling Locations to confirm upcoming election dates. Also, Clerk Paul will provide the contact information to Director Burden for Second Providence Baptist Church.

Discussion on early voting locations was discussed at length and noted that potentially have a voting location at the Community Center. Director Burden stated she would look into and Clerk Paul would see if the Community Center would be available if utilized.

Commissioners, City Clerk, and Aiken County Registration and Elections Representatives reviewed of the Draft public notice of deadlines in detail confirmed dates/times on the notice.

ITEM 5. Update of Tabulating Votes on Election Night

Commissioners and GIS Analyst Whaley discussed the layout of the tabulation votes on election night at the Community Center. Additional discussion ensued relating to the precincts being listed as well as the candidates. It was determined to just use the candidates on the ballot by seat and no precincts listed on the screen due.

ITEM 6. Review General Election Timeline

Commissioners and City Clerk discussed the General Election timeline in detail. (See Attachment #6)

Clerk Paul clarified that the timeline is a reference tool and is updated as needed with the Commission.

It was noted that the posting of precinct signs will not be needed and to remove those actions.

ITEM 7. Review of Publication for 2025 General Election & Special Election - Deadlines

Item was discussed under Item 4. (See Attachment #7)

ITEM 8. Commission Assignments and Next Steps

a. Polling Locations - Update

Item was discussed under Item 4. (See Attachment #8)

ITEM 9. Next meeting date

Next meeting date is tentatively scheduled for January 14, 2025 at 10:00am

ITEM 10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the commission adjourned the meeting at 11:50am.

Approved this 23rd day of
January, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Paul
Jamie Paul, City Clerk

TIMELINE - GENERAL ELECTION - APRIL 29, 2025

60 Days Prior to Primary Election - December 13, 2024, Friday (ORD = Dec. 16, 2024) - Partisan candidates filing by primary or convention method of nomination - certified to MEC by Political Parties - Official Date determined by Municipal Ordinance
(Lost Tuesday in April)

90 Days January 29, 2025, Wednesday

75 Days February 13, 2025, Thursday - Filing by Petition deadline to MEC (ORD - Feb. 12, 2025)

60 Days February 28, 2025, Friday

45 Days March 15, 2025, Saturday - Allows for oversea military Absentee ballots (Friday, March 14, 2025)

30 Days March 30, 2025, Sunday - Absentee Ballots available (Monday, April 1, 2025)

20 Days April 9, 2025, Wednesday - Candidates to File Campaign Disclosure form deadline

DATE	ACTION
Wed., Oct. 30, 2024	MEC Meeting - Oath of Office for new Commissioners; Elect Chairperson, Review New Laws, Update Ordinance to Partner w/ Aiken Co. for a portion of Election, Update Local Election Ordinance, Review Election Calendar
Mon., Nov. 4, 2024	Ordinance to Partner w/Aiken Co. for a portion of Election & Ordinance establishing Election dates, 1st readings
Wed. Nov. 13, 2024	MEC Meeting - Election Timeline and Finalize Election Public Notice - Deadlines
Mon., Nov. 18, 2024	Ordinance to Partner w/Aiken Co. for a portion of Election & Ordinance establishing Election dates, 2nd readings
Tues., Nov. 18, 2024	Mail copy of Ordinances to Republican Party and Democratic Party- the next day after meeting
Thurs., Nov. 21, 2024	MEC Meeting - Election Timeline; Finalize Election Filing Deadline notice; Review Election Public Notice - Polling Locations
Mon., Nov. 25, 2024	Send Notice of Filing Deadlines to Augusta Chronicle
Tues., Dec. 3, 2024	Publish Notice - Filing Deadlines - Not mandatory - Notices for Elections fall on the authority charged by law with conducting and election and must publish 2 notices.... S.C. Code Section 7-13-35 (Political Parties must publish notices for Primary Election or Convention)
Mon., Dec. 16, 2024 - Entry commences at 9am	Entry into Party Primaries/Conventions - Monday after the 60 days prior to Primary Election (60 days = Friday)
Mon., Dec. 23, 2024 - Entry ends at 12:00 NOON	Close of entry into Party Primaries/Conventions (1 week for filing) (at least 45 days prior to Primary to allow for overseas military absentee ballots)
Wed., Jan. 18, 2025	MEC Meeting-Election Timeline; Finalize Election Public Notice - Polling Locations, etc.
Wed., Jan. 31, 2025	MEC Meeting-Election Timeline; Finalize Election Public Notice; Review Election App with K. Whaley
Thurs., Jan. 23, 2025	Send 1st Publication of the Notice of Election Dates - Polling Locations to Augusta Chronicle to publish on Jan. 29 (4 days prior to Publication Date) - 90 days prior to Election - preferred
Wed., Jan. 29, 2025	1st Notice of Election Dates - Polling Locations in Augusta Chronicle (4 days prior to Publication Date) - 90 days prior to Election - preferred
Tues., Feb. 11, 2025	Primary Election Date (Tuesday date)
Tues., Feb. 11, 2025	Party Convention deadline
Thurs., Feb. 6, 2025	Send 2nd Publication of the Notice of Election Dates - Polling Locations to Augusta Chronicle to publish on Feb. 12, exactly 2 weeks after 1st Publication
Wed., Feb. 12, 2025	2nd Notice of Election Dates - Polling Locations in Augusta Chronicle, exactly 2 weeks after 1st Publication
Wed., Feb. 12, 2025	Deadline for Nominating P etition to City Clerk - Noon (75 days or more before Election)
Tues., Feb. 25, 2025	Primary Election Run-Off; if needed (2 weeks after Primary/ 3 days before MEC Certification)
Fri., Feb. 28, 2025	Deadline for Party Certification to MEC - Noon (no later than 60 days prior to Election)
Fri. Feb. 28, 2025	MEC Meeting- Review Candidates/Sign Letter to Council @1:00pm (meet earlier if certification is received sooner)
Mon., Mar. 3, 2025	Deadline for MEC Certification to Council (Letter signed by MEC) - will deliver to City Clerk by Friday, 2/28
Wed., Mar. 5, 2025	MEC Meeting-Election Timeline; Finalize Election Public Notice with Polling Locations, Registration deadlines and Early Voting dates; Review Election App with K. Whaley
Tues. Mar. 11, 2025 - Social Media Posting ONLY	Election Public Notice - Polling Locations - Post on Social Media ONLY
Wed., Apr. 9, 2025	Absolute date for candidates to file Campaign Disclosure form pre-election (20 days prior to Election) or State will disqualify candidates. (This is the candidates' responsibility.)
M-Fri, Apr. 14-18, 2025	Early Voting; 8:30 am-5:00 pm; Aiken & Edgefield County Municipal Buildings
Thurs., April 17, 2025	Send Extra Publication of the Notice of Election Dates - Polling Locations to Augusta Chronicle
Tues., Apr. 22, 2025 - POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA TOO	Public Extra Election Notice - week prior to Election (Chronicle); Post on website & Social Media. ALSO - Contact Judge Murphy about swearing in candidates on May 5, 2025
Wed., Apr. 23, 2025	MEC Meeting-Distribute Precinct Signs
Mon., Apr. 28, 2025	Post Precinct Signs; Post Election App on Social Media; "Deliver "Public Safety Pick-up Cards" to PS
Tues., Apr. 29, 2025	General Election & Special Election (with a run-off, if necessary, on May 13, 2025)
Thurs., May 1, 2025	MEC Hearing on contested ballots (11:00 am)
Fri., May 2, 2025	Official Results delivered to City Clerk (Letter signed by MEC)
Mon., May 5, 2025	Certification of Official Results at City Council Meeting; Council Acceptance by Motion; Swearing in of Candidates; Elect Mayor Pro Tempore (when applicable)
Mon., May 5, 2025	Email "Successful Candidates" form to State Ethics Commission (no later than 5 days after election)



**Dates for Municipal Party Primaries, Conventions,
Partisan General Election and Special Election,
Times for Filing of Nominating Petitions, Certification of Candidates by Parties,
and Certification of Candidates by Municipal Election Commission**

Beginning date for filing statements of intention of candidacy with political parties for nominations by convention or primary:	9:00 a.m., December 16, 2024
Closing date for filing statements of intention of candidacy with political parties for nominations by convention or primary:	12:00 Noon, December 23, 2024
Party Conventions, if party nomination by convention:	Held No later than February 11, 2025
Party nomination by primary:	February 11, 2025
Primary runoffs, if necessary:	February 25, 2025
Closing date for petition candidates to file petitions with the City Clerk:	12:00 Noon, February 12, 2025
Last date for the Municipal Election Commission to validate petitions of petition candidates:	February 28, 2025
Closing date for parties to file certification of party nominees with Municipal Election Commission:	12:00 Noon, February 28, 2025
Election Day:	April 29, 2025

Notice to candidates and political organizations: state statutes regulating campaign practices apply to municipal elections, and failure to file Statements of Economic Interest at the time of filing for nomination and of filing for election will result in disqualification. For more information, contact the City Clerk's Office at 803-441-4202.

Entries shall be made to the chairperson of the respective parties.

Filing Deadlines approved by the City of North Augusta City Council on November 18, 2024.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Municipal Election Commission of the City of North Augusta announces the Municipal General and Special Election for the City of North Augusta will be **Tuesday, April 29, 2025**, for the election of the Mayor, three City Council members, and an unexpired term for one City Councilmember.

The polls will open at **7:00 AM** on Election Day and close at **7:00 PM**.

Precincts involved in this Municipal Election and polling locations are as follows:

<u>Precinct</u>	<u>Polling Location</u>
Fox Creek 58 Fox Creek 73 North Augusta 68 North Augusta Creek 85 Merriwether 1	Grace Fellowship Church 507 W. Five Notch Road, North Augusta 29860
North Augusta 26 North Augusta 80	Fairview Presbyterian Church - USE CAROLINA AVENUE ENTRANCE 1101 Carolina Avenue, North Augusta 29841
Carolina Heights 10 North Augusta 25	North Augusta Community Center 495 Brookside Drive, North Augusta 29841
Belvedere 9 Belvedere 44 Belvedere 62 Belvedere 74	Belvedere First Baptist Church 421 Edgefield Road, North Augusta 29841
Ascauga Lake 84 Misty Lakes 45	Crown Kingdom Cultural Center 720 Edgefield Road, North Augusta 29841
North Augusta 27	North Augusta High School 2000 Knobcone Avenue, North Augusta 29841
North Augusta 28 North Augusta 29 North Augusta 55 North Augusta 67	Riverview Park Activity Center 100 Riverview Park Drive, North Augusta 29841
North Augusta 54	Second Providence Baptist Church 1202 Old Edgefield Road, North Augusta 29841
Early Voting - Aiken County	Aiken County Registration & Elections Commission, 1930 University Parkway, Suite 1200, Aiken, SC 29801 April 14 – April 25, 2025 803-642-2028 Monday – Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Early Voting - Edgefield County	Edgefield County Voter Registration & Elections 210 Penn Street, Suite 1, Edgefield, SC 29824 April 14 – April 25, 2025 803-637-4072 Monday – Friday - 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

As allowed by State law, please note some precinct polling locations have been combined with other polling locations.

Persons desiring to vote in the upcoming general election may register in person by 5:00 PM Friday, March 28, 2025; by online registration, fax, or email by Sunday, March 30, 2025 by Midnight. All mail in forms must be post marked by Monday, March 31, 2025. To register, contact the Aiken County Registration & Elections Commission in Aiken if you live in Aiken County; call 803-642-2028. If you live within the City limits of North Augusta in Edgefield County, contact the Edgefield County Voter Registration in Edgefield; call 803-637-4072.

On Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 11:00 AM, at the City of North Augusta Municipal Center, the Municipal Election Commission will hold a hearing to determine the validity of ballots challenged in this election.

Ben Watson, Chairperson
Alphia Dunbar
Municipal Election Commission