

**A RESOLUTION TO PRELIMINARILY RECOMMEND TO THE STOKES COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THE ADOPTION AND ACQUISITION OF VOTING  
EQUIPMENT**

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Commissioners, with the approval of the Stokes County Board of Elections, may adopt and acquire only a voting system of a type, make, and model certified by the State Board of Elections for use in some or all voting places in the county at some or all elections in accordance with G.S. 163-165.8;

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections must recommend the adoption and acquisition of any voting system by the Stokes County Board of Commissioners after completing the requirements in G.S. 163-165.9(a);

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections must recommend to the Stokes County Board of Commissioners which type of voting system should be acquired by the county, pursuant to G.S. 163-165.9(a)(1);

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections has witnessed a demonstration, in the county or at a site designated by the State Board of Elections, of the type of voting system being recommended, and has also witnessed a demonstration of at least one other type of voting system certified by the State Board of Elections as required by G.S. 163-165.9(a)(2);

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections has directed staff to test, during a simulated election, the proposed voting system, as required by G.S. 163-165.9(a)(3);

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections will seek approval from the State Board of Elections prior to replacing any voting system, pursuant to G.S. 163-165.9(b)(3);

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections would use HAVA (Help America Vote Act) grant funds to cover part of the purchase of new voting equipment, and would request additional funding from the Stokes County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Stokes County Board of Elections plans to make a final recommendation to the Stokes County Board of Commissioners on the adoption and acquisition of a voting system at a Stokes County Board of Elections meeting, after the recommended voting system has been determined to meet the requirements for voting in Stokes County.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Stokes County Board of Elections hereby preliminarily recommends that the Stokes County Board of Commissioners adopt and acquire the following certified voting equipment pursuant to G.S. 163-165.9(a)(1):

**Voting Type: ES&S EVS 5.2.4.0 Voting System/ExpressVote BMD**

**Vendor: Election Systems & Software (ES&S)**

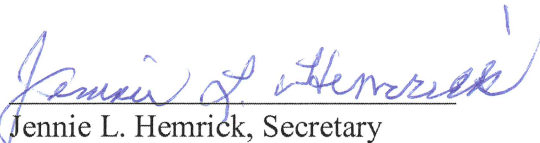
**Number of Units: 20**

**Cost Per Unit: \$3,325**

**Total Estimated Cost: \$65,847 (other expenses and trade-in allowance included; sales tax not included)**



Mike Pell, Chair



Jennie L. Hemrick, Secretary



Kimble McEachern, Member



David Burge, Member

April 6, 2021

Date

# STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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## Additional Information Regarding The Proposed Voting Equipment Purchase

During the 2019-20 fiscal year, new paper ballot optical scan voting tabulators (called DS200s) were purchased by the county. At that time, the Stokes County Board of Elections determined that it would not request the purchase of new ADA-compliant voting machines, which are different than the optical scan machines. Instead, existing machines (called AutoMARKs) would continue to be used for accessibility purposes. This incremental approach was taken as a cost-saving measure.

Recently, each county elections office in North Carolina was awarded a HAVA (Help America Vote Act) grant by the NC State Board of Elections. The amount of the grant for Stokes County is \$51,277. Based on the receipt of this grant, the Stokes County Board of Elections considered the purchase of new, updated accessibility machines (called ExpressVotes) at this time. Board members voted to preliminarily recommend this purchase to the Stokes County Board of County Commissioners.

Voters using the ExpressVote ballot marking devices make their selections on a touchscreen (as they do on the AutoMARK). After selections are made, a paper record is printed of the voter's choices for verification before the voter inserts the paper into the same optical scan tabulator (DS200) used by other voters.

The approximate cost of these voting machines (and related expenses):

20 ExpressVotes – \$65,847.50

Computer to be hardened, upgraded software installed by vendor – \$1,650

Sales Tax – \$4,556

Total – \$72,053.50

While the estimated cost of the upgraded voting system exceeds the grant amount, there are additional factors to consider. Preventive maintenance must be done on the voting equipment each year. This current annual cost for the accessibility machines owned by the county is \$6,440. The annual preventive maintenance cost for the ExpressVotes would be \$2,400, for a yearly savings of \$4,040.

Also, for a limited time the equipment vendor (Election Systems & Software/ES&S) is offering a trade-in allowance for the AutoMARKs of \$9,200 (\$400 per machine).

The trade-in value is typically \$200 per machine. A representative of the vendor also indicated that the trade-in value will, as time passes, decrease overall.

The AutoMARKs were purchased by the county in 2006 and are approaching the end of their expected lifespan. ES&S will no longer manufacture the AutoMARK, making the purchase of spare parts and replacements more difficult with time. Moreover, there are no plans to update the equipment, although it will continue to be supported and serviced.

When applying the HAVA grant to the estimated total of the voting system purchase, the current cost to the county would be \$20,776.50. The Stokes County Board of Elections is presently researching the possibility of smaller purchases that can also be made with the HAVA grant.

Thank you for your consideration.