

MINUTES
Wilson County Democratic Party Annual Convention
Wilson County Courthouse
April 15, 2023
Wilson, North Carolina

Chair Jim Hawley called the convention to order at 10:15, extended greetings to all those present, and thanked Wilson County Clerk Caroline Quinn for her efforts in making the court room available and inviting.

The chair called on Terry Shackelford, acting secretary, to read the NC Democratic Party's Statement of Inclusion.

The chair led the convention in the pledge to the American Flag, the pledge to the North Carolina Flag, and in the observance of a moment of silence in honor of the victims of gun violence.

Recorded greetings were delivered by NC Democratic Party Chair Anderson Clayton, Governor Roy Cooper, and Attorney General Josh Stein.

Chair Hawley called the precinct roll and found that all 16 organized precincts were represented. The presence of a quorum was declared.

The convention approved without objection the rules of the day, the agenda, and the minutes of the 2022 convention.

Chair Hawley recognized public officials present and each responded with brief remarks: Representative Linda Cooper-Suggs, Wilson County Board of Commissioners Chair Rob Boyette, Wilson County Commissioner JoAnne Daniels, Wilson County Board of Education Member Beverly Boyette, Wilson County Clerk of Court Caroline Quinn, Wilson County Board of Elections Chair Chip Futrell, Wilson City Councilman Derrick Creech, Wilson City Councilwoman Gillettia Morgan, and Wilson City Councilman Dr. Michael Bell.

The chair recognized Terry Shackelford who shared words of gratitude for the service of outgoing county party officers 2nd Vice Chair Ann Barnes, 1st Vice Chair George Revis, and Chair Jim Hawley.

Chair Hawley presented the slate of nominees for 2023-2025 Wilson County Democratic Party officers as submitted by the Nominating Committee. Opportunity

was given for nominations from the floor for each office in succession, starting with the office of county party chair.

There being no nominations from the floor for chair, Tom Sallenger moved that nominations be closed and that the committee nominee be elected by acclamation. Joyah Bulluck seconded the motion and Dante Pittman was elected to the office of Chair of the Wilson County Democratic Party. Mr. Pittman, absent from the convention by reason of service in the National Guard, addressed the convention via brief recorded remarks, emphasizing confident optimism and hard work in anticipation of the 2024 elections and asking for the support of Wilson County Democrats “to do the work that is necessary to make progress here at home and all across the state.”

There being no nominations from the floor for 1st vice chair, Councilman Michael Bell moved to close nominations and that the committee nominee be elected by acclamation. Ann Barnes seconded the motion and Joyah Bulluck was duly elected 1st Vice Chair. Ms. Bulluck shared brief remarks.

There being no nominations from the floor for 2nd vice chair, Ann Barnes moved that nominations be closed and the committee nominee be elected by acclamation. The motion duly seconded, Wayne Willingham was elected 2nd Vice Chair. Mr. Willingham shared brief remarks.

There being no nominations from the floor for 3rd vice chair, Lori Oxendine moved to close nominations and elect the committee nominee by acclamation. Councilman Michael Bell seconded the motion and Erin Lynch was elected 3rd Vice Chair. Ms. Lynch shared brief remarks.

There being no nominations from the floor for secretary, Mary Louise Gray moved to close nominations and elect the committee nominee by acclamation. Charles Cook seconded the motion and Terry Shackelford was elected Secretary. Mr. Shackelford shared brief remarks.

Chair Hawley reminded the convention that under current party governance procedures, the office of treasurer is filled by appointment of the county officers. The nominating committee recommended the re-appointment of Tom Sallenger and the appointment is made with gratitude for Mr. Sallenger’s continued service. Mr. Sallenger shared brief remarks.

Chair Hawley explained that the county party is represented on the State Executive Committee (SEC) by 4 representatives of which one is the county chair, two are to be

female, and two are to be male. Thus, the party chair occupies one of the male positions. The nominating committee submitted the names of Joyah Bulluck and Lucy Russell for the two female positions and Chris Hardee for the male position.

After presenting the slate of nominees, Chair Hawley called for nominations from the floor, whereupon Dr. Ronald Williams rose to nominate himself, thus placing before the body a choice between Dr. Williams and Chris Hardee. No other nominations were offered. Chair Hawley then declared a ten minute recess so that precincts could confer and determine vote counts on the pending question.

After the recess, the convention was called to order and votes were collected via roll call. (See Appendix A) Chris Hardee was elected.

There having been no other nominations for SEC members, Chair Hawley called for a motion to elect Lucy Russell and Joyah Bulluck. Mary Louise Gray moved to elect by acclamation, Nancy Hawley seconded, and the two nominees were elected.

The chair noted that the county may be represented by a slate of up to 73 delegates at the congressional district convention and placed before the body a resolution (See Appendix B) authorizing the board of officers to act on behalf of the convention to use a designated method for appointing the slate of delegates. Chris Hardee made a motion to adopt the resolution, Joyah Bulluck seconded, and the motion passed without objection. The chair called on delegates interested in serving as district convention delegates to indicate their interest by returning their delegate cards to a designated location.

Councilman Derrick Creech asked for the date and location of the district convention. 1st District Regional Director Chris Hardee noted that the date is May 20 and an announcement of the location is forthcoming.

Noting the hour and the remaining business, Chair Hawley asked the will of the body on the question of continuing with the order of the stated agenda or to re-order the agenda and proceed with the keynote speaker with the remaining business to follow. It was determined to proceed to the keynote speaker.

Chair Hawley introduced Senator Rachel Hunt of NC State Senate District 42 and candidate for Lt. Governor. Senator Hunt began by sharing fond memories and deep affection for Wilson County as her childhood home and paid tribute to her grandparents, James and Elsie Hunt, and her parents, Governor Jim and Carolyn Hunt. The senator went on to outline numerous aspects of the Republican Party agenda that

are detrimental to our state and called on Wilson Democrats to join her and all Democratic candidates in the fight to make North Carolina a place of progress for all.

The chair thanked Senator Hunt for her speech and her service and proceeded to place before the convention three resolutions presented by Ann Barnes.

Chair Hawley read a Resolution Honoring Governor James Baxger Hunt, Jr. (See Appendix C). Chris Hardee made a motion to adopt. The motion was duly seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

The chair read a Resolution in Support of Gun Safety Legislation (See Appendix D) Lori Oxendine moved to adopt. The motion was duly seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

The chair read a Resolution in Support of A Woman's Right To Choose (See Appendix E). Nancy Hawley moved to adopt. The motion was duly seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

The chair noted that the resolutions would be forwarded to the district convention for consideration.

Mary Mclees-Lane, chair of the Wilson County Democratic Party Headquarters Committee, was recognized to present a report (See Appendix F). Chair Hawley thanked the committee for their outstanding work.

The chair noted the major role that the Democratic Women of Wilson County plays in the work of the party and recognized DWWC President Jackie Williams for a report. Ms. Williams briefly commented on the scope of the auxiliary's work and encouraged all Democratic women to consider joining the effort.

Chris Hardee, Regional Director for Representative Don Davis, was recognized. Hardee brought greetings from Rep. Davis and noted legislative efforts in which the congressman is currently involved. Hardee stated that he was pleased to be in Wilson and stressed his availability to assist the party and the citizens.

The chair recognized Lucy Russell, SEC member, who pledged to work to represent the county faithfully.

Chair Hawley made positive comments regarding his tenure, noting that he had had the privilege to work with many wonderful people and expressed gratitude for

everyone's support. He expressed a particular pleasure in having had the opportunity to see the headquarters ready to launch before he leaves office.

The chair called for any remaining business.

Devonta Ferguson rose to ask support for his candidacy for city council in district 4.

Lenwood Ward rose to express his hope that a strategy to engage younger voters would be central to the party's plans in the days ahead.

Terry Shackelford spoke to the meeting at the headquarters on April 22 at 10:30 AM to discuss the formation of an LGBTQ and Allied Democrats chapter in Wilson County.

There being no further business, the chair called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Randolph Sessoms and by a unanimous vote the 2023 Wilson County Democratic Party Annual Convention was adjourned.

Appendix A - SEC Vote Count

<u>Count</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Votes Allocated</u>	<u>Delegates Elected</u>	<u>Convention Votes</u>	<u>Vote 1 Williams</u>	<u>Vote 2 Hardee</u>
1	Black Creek	6	6	6	1	5
2	Gardners	9	6	6		6
3	Oldfields	9	7	7		7
4	Spring Hill	5	8	5		5
5	Taylors	26	14	14		14
6	Toisnot	14	13	13		13
7	Wilson B	6	5	5		5
8	Wilson C	10	9	9		9
9	Wilson D	6	7	6		6
10	Wilson E	7	5	5	2	3
11	Wilson J	18	5	5	3	2
12	Wilson K	6	5	5	5	
13	Wilson M	19	15	15	3	7
14	Wilson N	15	6	6		6
15	Wilson P	6	5	5	5	
16	Wilson R	9	5	5		5
		171	121	117	19	93

Appendix B -

RESOLUTION ON ELECTION OF DISTRICT CONVENTION DELEGATES

WHEREAS, Democrats in Wilson County met on April 15, 2023, pursuant to guidance from the State Executive Council, and

WHEREAS, Democrats in Wilson County desire to have full representation at the upcoming Congressional Convention in May, respectively, be it

RESOLVED, the Board of the Wilson County Executive Committee is granted the authority to appoint delegates to the Congressional District Convention, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board shall use the following sources of information to make decisions about delegate appointments:

- List of delegates in attendance at the county convention
- Precinct officers
- County members of the State Executive Committee
- Individuals from Wilson County who have expressed an interest in serving district Convention delegate in advance of the County Convention
- List of County convention delegates not in attendance at the convention.

Appendix C -

RESOLUTION HONORING JAMES BAXTER HUNT JR

WHEREAS, James Baxter Hunt, Jr. exemplifies every day the values of faith, family, kindness, and service that were instilled by James Baxter Hunt, Sr. and Elsie Brame Hunt in their beloved Rock Ridge community;

WHEREAS, Jim Hunt was elected by the citizens of North Carolina as Lieutenant Governor in 1972 and then to a record four terms beginning in 1976 with the largest popular vote in the history of North Carolina followed by terms in 1980, 1992, and 1996, a feat no other citizen has achieved;

WHEREAS, Gov. Hunt is known as the “ Education Governor” as a result of his emphasis on innovation, increased funding, and higher standards which transformed public education in North Carolina and led to the creation of National Board Certification for teachers;

WHEREAS, Gov. Hunt’s vision led to the establishment of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics and the nationally renowned Centennial Campus at North Carolina State University;

WHEREAS, Gov. Hunt’s appointments to commissions and judgeships opened new pathways and opportunities for women and people of color to participate more fully in all aspects of state government and thereby rise to new levels of leadership in our state;

WHEREAS, Gov. Hunt’s vision and cooperation with local governments led to improved highway access to coastal and mountain regions and preserved both the environmental beauty and the history of these areas for future generations to enjoy;

WHEREAS, Gov. Hunt has been supported every step of the way by his resourceful and talented wife, Carolyn Leonard Hunt and his entire family;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Wilson County Democratic Party salutes our own Governor James Baxter Hunt, Jr., and expresses our admiration and deepest gratitude for the example he has set for all North Carolinians and for his lifetime of dedicated service to our state.

Appendix D -

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, The United States has more firearm-related deaths than any country in the industrialized world with 11,523 deaths so far in 2023, of whom 398 were teens and 71 were children;

WHEREAS, Gun violence is now the leading cause of death for American children and teens;

WHEREAS, According to the 2020 report of the NC Child Fatality Task Force, homicide is the leading cause of death for the 15-17 age group with firearms involved in 96% of the cases;

WHEREAS, Most firearm-related deaths involve handguns;

WHEREAS, Most responsible gun owners support red flag laws, background checks, and other common sense, protective measures;

WHEREAS, The NC legislature, dominated by a Republican supermajority, overruled the governor's veto of a bill which removed the requirement of a permit to purchase a pistol, thereby making handgun possession more easily accessible to all;

WHEREAS, 132 mass shootings have occurred in the US so far this year;

WHEREAS, AR-15 style rifles are usually the weapons used in mass shootings;

WHEREAS, The AR-15 is a weapon of war specifically designed to kill and maim as many people as possible with bullets that travel three times the speed of sound;

WHEREAS, The lawmakers who refuse to pass gun safety regulations never see the carnage and bloodshed that confront the first responders, police, and medical teams who arrive at the scene of these horrific events;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Wilson County Democratic Party requests that the NC General Assembly rise to the urgency of this moment and pass substantive, meaningful gun violence control legislation to protect all North Carolinians.

Appendix E -

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

WHEREAS, In the words of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "Abortion is central to a woman's life, to a woman's dignity. It's a decision she must make for herself. And when government controls that decision for her, she is being treated as less than a fully adult human responsible for her own choices";

WHEREAS, Legal abortion is a safe medical procedure available to women in most countries of the developed world;

WHEREAS, The U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson's Women's Health Organization* decision took away the right to choose which had been considered "settled law" for 50 years;

WHEREAS, American women and girls currently have fewer rights concerning reproductive decisions than their mothers and grandmothers were guaranteed;

WHEREAS, The drug Mifepristone is an FDA-approved component of a medication abortion protocol and is proven safer than penicillin, Viagra, or Tylenol;

WHEREAS, Mifepristone is also part of the physicians' standard of care for treating the one million women who suffer miscarriage every year;

WHEREAS, A federal judge in Texas with no training in medicine or science, ruled to suspend the FDA's longtime approval of Mifepristone, thereby making this drug unavailable to women in all 50 states;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Wilson County Democratic Party strongly affirms the inherent right of every woman to possess unfettered autonomy over her own body and to make her own healthcare decisions.

Appendix F -

Headquarters Committee Meeting

April 14, 2023

The headquarters committee met the night of March 29 th in our new headquarters. The agenda was a very full one.

One of the items of business had to do with honoring some of our long time elected officials in the new headquarters. The committee sent recommendations to the WCDP and DWWC exec for discussion and final decision making. We hope to have the acknowledgements in place by the grand opening.

Another item was to begin thinking about a grand opening of our headquarters. It was decided that event should be a Thursday evening in July at 6 PM, date TBD. More discussion will occur and recommendations will be sent to WCDP and DWWC.

Several different ideas were discussed for the continued fund raising for headquarters. One is for when people are Spring Cleaning to donate unwanted items to headquarters for a yard sale, with all proceeds to go to our headquarters fund. The committee members are still calling people to request financial contributions.

The committee is also contacting elected officials asking them to provide mementoes from their candidacy or time in office to be displayed at headquarters.

The committee also choose the blue paint color for the exterior of the building and that was approved by WCDP and the property manager.

March 31 st was our official moving day! Thank you to our painters, George Revis and Cynthia Mathis. Thank you to the movers, Terry Shackelford, Jim and Nancy Hawley, Melanie Mauze, Larry Krabill and Alan Lane. They moved items we had in storage, at Wellington and from the estate of Betty McCain. Thank you to the cleaners who were there ahead of the move to get the space ready: Rebecca Hunt-Hawley, Gloria Vazquez and Melanie Mauze. Since the 31 st , people have brought donations and work crews have been in to make various repairs. Some of that is still ongoing.

To date we have had a headquarters committee meeting, a DWWC Exec. Comm. mtg, a precinct meeting and a few small group meetings at headquarters. If you want to use the space, please contact Jim, Dante, Terry or I to get on the calendar.

As of early April, 92 individuals had contributed \$ \$17,255 for HQ. I will have updated figures by the DWWC meeting next Monday. We need to double or triple this amount by the end of 2023.

We have already paid a security deposit, one and a half month's rent, a full year of insurance and will soon have to pay for utilities, so we need to keep donations coming in. One person came in and wrote a check for one month's rent. We need more donations like that.

I am currently working out a rotation system for staffing the front desk at headquarters. We plan to have someone there Mondays and Thursdays from 3-6 PM and Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 AM – 2 PM. Please email me if you can help.

Also stop by with donations from the list of needed items, or to see the place if you haven't yet.

Mary McLees-Lane, Headquarters Committee Chair
Headquarters committee members Yvonne Battle, Dorothy Evans, Rebecca Hunt-Hawley,
Melanie Mauze, Gloria Vazquez, Jackie Williams
(assistance from Dorothy Jarman and Dalphine Perry as needed)