

MOVCAC – Wood County WV Board of Education Ignores Democratic Process

November 8, 2024

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If you thought that the Democrat Party circumventing the democratic process to install Kamala Harris as the Democrat nominee was a uniquely national shenanigan, you are going to love this story of the Wood County WV Board of Education (BOE) completely ignoring the will of the people.

Many may not remember or be aware, but Chad Conley ran in the primary earlier this year to fill the seat vacated by Debbie Hendershot’s resignation. The rule on the board is that no district can have more than two members at a time. When Ms. Hendershot resigned, the BOE received advice from the Wood County Prosecutor and County Clerk that they should fill the board seat from the same district where Ms. Hendershot was elected so they would not adversely affect the 2024 election. Instead, the BOE appointed Rick Olcott from district C. Since Chad Conley was from district C; and the board, after the appointment of Rick Olcott, now had two members from that district Chad could no longer win the seat in the 2024 primary.

Chad then ran in the 2024 general election to fill the unexpired term to which Mr. Olcott had been appointed. That campaign was unsuccessful as the preliminary election results below show (official once canvassing is completed sometime after November 10th):

Summary Results Report
General Election
November 5, 2024

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

Wood County, WV

NONPARTISAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Vote For 1

	TOTAL	VOTE %
RANDY MODESITT	11,175	36.07%
CHAD CONLEY	9,122	29.45%
RICK OLCOTT	8,543	27.58%
RYAN M. HENRY	2,050	6.62%
Write-In Totals	89	0.29%
Total Votes Cast	30,979	100.00%
Contest Totals	37,447	

Randy Modesitt won the election for the unexpired term to which Rich Olcott had been appointed. Chad Conley came in second and Rick Olcott third.

At the November 7th BOE meeting, it was announced that Sarah Townsend had resigned her position on the board. The agenda included an item addressing their plan to appoint Ms. Townsend’s replacement. Prior to the discussion beginning, Mr. Olcott excused himself due to a conflict of interest. Mr. Tice suggested that a public forum be opened by the administration so that interested parties could submit their resumes (less than three pages). The board would

then review those resumes and make a selection or interview the candidates if necessary. Their wish was to have both new members identified prior to BOE member training scheduled for the 18th of November.

The video below includes the entire discussion:

[November 7, 2024 Wood County BOE Sarah Townsend Replacement Discussion](#)

Prior to the discussion, the public comment section of the agenda included two speakers.

Angie Summers spoke briefly about her support for Chad Conley referring to the voice of the people heard in the election that had occurred two days earlier ending with "... cause they have asked for Chad Conley to be on this board as the second choice."

Chad Conley thanked Sarah Townsend for her service and wished her the best with her health issue. He also congratulated Randy Modesitt on his election win. Chad finished with a reminder to the board that out of the 30,447 votes cast in the BOE election on Tuesday, Mr. Olcott came in third place. He also noted that 22,436 voters, or 72% of those who cast votes in the BOE election, did not want Mr. Olcott on the board.

[November 7, 2024 Wood County BOE – Chad Conley Public Comment](#)

Is the Wood County BOE considering appointing Rick Olcott right back on the board after he lost the election?

Also in attendance was Steve Williever, a former science teacher and middle school administrator descended from ethnic German minorities from Ukraine and Russia. When I mentioned that this abrupt resignation right after the election and quick appointment being schedule reminded me of Soviet style politics, Mr. Williever quoted a line from the [Harvard Refugee Interview Project](#):

"It is all nominations, not elections. It is all the same everywhere. Fiction, not election. We follow like sheep."

He had recently shared the quote in conversations with others regarding the appointment of Kamala Harris to the nomination following no democratic process whatsoever.

"We just had an election two days ago," Mr. Williever said. "I might argue that the results essentially show Wood County voters giving a rank order of who they want representing them on the board. If an appointee is chosen who has just received fewer votes in an election than others applying, then it is nominations and not elections."

Lindsey Morehead, a homeschool parent, also attended the meeting in support of Chad. She became concerned after learning that Mr. Olcott had stated that the board needed to attack homeschoolers at one of the board meetings earlier this year. She voted for Chad due to his support of the homeschool process.

Mrs. Morehead stated, "I was actually shocked to learn that the board appoints members to open seats. Shouldn't there be an election rather than an appointment regardless of when the opening occurs? In the case of this resignation, an election just occurred and the people voted for Chad Conley as their second choice. Shouldn't the will of the people come before the opinion of board members?"

As I sat in the audience and listened to the board's discussion of the selection process, I was shocked that not one member of the board brought up the election that had occurred just two days earlier. Why would Ms. Townsend wait until two days after the election to resign? Why wasn't the board considering the will of The People just voiced two days earlier? Why would the board have previously appointed Mr. Olcott from Chad's district rendering his candidacy in the 2024 primary moot?

I am beginning to think this board will stop at nothing to ensure the will of The People is ignored.

As a reminder, the Declaration of Independence speaks specifically about the creation of government:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--**That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,...**"

[Declaration of Independence](#) – National Archives

The operative phrase is "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." That consent occurs via elections. An election just occurred and The People have spoken in regards to who they wish to represent them on the Board of Education. That is how the democratic process works.

The process discussed and agreed upon shows how the BOE cares nothing about the will of The People. Why should there be an application process? The election just took place and Chad Conley finished second. The People chose Chad Conley as their second choice. The Governed gave their Consent to Chad Conley. The just powers of the Board of Education lie with Randy Modesitt and Chad Conley. If two seats need to be filled, The People have spoken in regard to who they wish to fill those seats.

If Miss America has to step down, the crown goes to the runner up. If a gold medal winner is disqualified, the gold goes to whoever came in second place. It's not like the election was a year ago. The People spoke just two days ago. Does the board believe that their opinions take precedence over the will of The People?

The BOE has stated that the public forum for application for the newly vacated seat would be opened at noon on November 8th and would close at noon on November 14th. On the evening of November 14th, the BOE is expecting to meet to appoint their selection.

[Wood County BOE Board Seat Application](#)

The complete absence of any discussion by the board regarding the results of the election on Tuesday demonstrates their disdain for the voice of The People. How can those charged with teaching our children completely ignore the democratic process? How can they effectively administer our education process when they so arrogantly and openly defy the will of The People? The mere act of ignoring the election results shows that not one of them deserves the seat they currently occupy.

If, like me, you believe these acts disqualify the current board members from carrying on their duties, please give the board a call at (304)420-9663 and let them know their Soviet style of governance is not acceptable in our Constitutional Republic. If they refuse to follow the democratic process, they should resign their seats.

At the very least, a public meeting should be scheduled so that The People have a chance to be heard before this undemocratic process is completed.

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