



HOUSE BILL 1035: Various Local Election Changes III.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	June 23, 2026
Introduced by:	Rep. Humphrey	Prepared by:	Erika Churchill
Analysis of:	Fourth Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 1035 would do all of the following:*

- *Move municipal elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years for the following municipalities:*
 - *Every municipality in Catawba and McDowell Counties and the Towns of Belville, Bolivia, Pink Hill, and Snow Hill, effective with the 2028 election cycle.*
 - *The City of New Bern, effective with the 2030 election cycle.*
- *For the Town of Bolivia, extend the terms of office for the Town officers from two years to four years, effective with the 2028 election cycle.*
- *For the Town of Belville, extend the terms of office for the mayor from two years to four years, effective with the 2028 election cycle.*
- *For the City of New Bern, change the method of election from nonpartisan election and runoff to nonpartisan plurality, effective with the 2030 election cycle, and modify the process for filling vacancies on the Board of Aldermen.*
- *For the Town of Everetts, extend the terms of office for the Town officers from two years to four years, effective with the 2027 election cycle.*
- *For the Town of Columbus, extend the term of office for the mayor from two years to four years, and extend the term of office for the mayor currently serving by two years until the 2028 election.*
- *For the Town of Rural Hall, establish a petition process for qualified voters to appear on the ballot as an unaffiliated candidate for municipal office and modify how vacancies for municipal office are filled.*
- *For the Town of Conetoe, allow the mayor to vote on any matter before the Board of Commissioners.*
- *Modify the process for filling vacancies on the Iredell-Statesville Schools Board of Education.*

[As introduced, this bill was identical to S818, as introduced by Sen. Brinson, which is currently in Senate Elections.]

Kara McCraw
Director



Legislative Analysis
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CURRENT LAW, BILL ANALYSIS, AND EFFECTIVE DATE:

Parts I-IX – Municipal Elections:

G.S. 163-279 provides for odd-numbered year municipal elections statewide, creating a default rule for the time of municipal elections.

The following chart summarizes current municipal officers, terms of office, and method of election in the Town of Pink Hill, Town of Bolivia, Town of Belville, City of New Bern, Town of Everetts, Town of Snow Hill, Town of Columbus, Town of Rural Hall, and every municipality in Catawba County:

Unit of Government	Officers	Elected Term of Offices	Election of Current Members	Method of Election
Lenoir County				
Town of Pink Hill	Mayor Commissioners (3 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Commissioners:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023 <u>Commissioners:</u> One elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Brunswick County				
Town of Bolivia	Mayor Aldermen (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> two years <u>Aldermen:</u> two years	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Aldermen:</u> Four elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Town of Belville	Mayor Commissioners (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> two years <u>Commissioners:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Commissioners:</u> Two elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Craven County				
City of New Bern	Mayor Aldermen (6 members, representing wards)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Aldermen:</u> four years	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Six elected in 2025	Nonpartisan election and runoff
Martin County				
Town of Everetts	Mayor Commissioners (3 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> two years <u>Commissioners:</u> two years	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Commissioners:</u> Three elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Greene County				
Town of Snow Hill	Mayor Commissioners (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Commissioners:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Two elected in 2023; three elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality

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Polk County				
Town of Columbus	Mayor Council Members (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> two years <u>Council Members:</u> four or two years, depending on number of votes candidate received	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2024 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2024; one for a four-year term and two for a two-year term	Nonpartisan plurality
Forsyth County				
Town of Rural Hall	Mayor Council Members (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023 <u>Council Members:</u> Two elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Partisan
Catawba County				
Town of Brookford	Mayor Aldermen (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Aldermen:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Aldermen:</u> Two elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Town of Catawba	Mayor Council Members (4 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023 <u>Council Members:</u> Two elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
City of Claremont	Mayor Council Members (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
City of Conover	Mayor Council Members (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
City of Hickory	Mayor Aldermen (6 members, representing wards)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Aldermen:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Aldermen:</u> Three elected in 2023; three elected in 2025	Nonpartisan primary and election
Town of Long View	Mayor Aldermen (5 members, representing wards)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Aldermen:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Aldermen:</u> Three elected in 2023; two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality

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Town of Maiden	Mayor Council Members (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> two years <u>Council Members:</u> four or two years, depending on number of votes candidate received	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2025; two for four-year terms and one for a two-year term	Nonpartisan plurality
City of Newton	Mayor Council Members (6 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2023; three elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
McDowell County				
Marion	Mayor Council Members (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Two elected in 2023; Three elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality
Old Fort	Mayor Council Members (5 members)	<u>Mayor:</u> four years <u>Council Members:</u> four years, staggered	<u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2025 <u>Council Members:</u> Three elected in 2023; Two elected in 2025	Nonpartisan plurality

Parts I-IX would do all of the following:

- Change the time of the election from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years for the following municipalities:
 - The Town of Pink Hill, Town of Bolivia, Town of Belville, Town of Snow Hill, and every municipality in Catawba County. To implement this change, there would be no municipal elections for any of these municipalities in 2027, and the current terms of officers would be extended by one year. Elections would begin again in 2028, with the same staggering of terms, if officers serve staggered terms.
 - The City of New Bern. To implement this change, there would be no municipal election in 2029, and the current terms of officers would be extended by one year. Elections would begin again in 2030, with municipal officers elected to serve four-year terms.
- For the Town of Bolivia, extend the terms of office for the mayor and four aldermen from two years to four years, beginning with the 2028 election.
- For the Town of Belville, extend the terms of office for the mayor from two years to four years, beginning with the 2028 election.
- For the City of New Bern:
 - Change the method of election from the nonpartisan election and runoff method to the nonpartisan plurality method, beginning with the 2030 election.
 - Modify the process for filling vacancies on the Board of Aldermen to require the remaining members of the Board of Aldermen to appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy within

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90 days of the occurrence of the vacancy, with the appointee serving the remainder of the unexpired term. If the Board of Aldermen do not appoint a qualified person, the county board of elections would be required to set a special election within 180 days of the occurrence of the vacancy. The county board of elections would be required to set the filing period for no less than seven calendar days and publish notice of the special election no less than 30 days before the date of the special election.

- For the Town of Everetts, extend the terms of office for the mayor and three commissioners from two-year terms to four-year terms, beginning with the 2027 election.
- For the Town of Columbus, extend the terms of office for the mayor from two years to four years. To implement this change, the term of office for the mayor currently serving whose term is set to expire in 2026 would be extended by two years until 2028.
- For the Town of Rural Hall:
 - Establish a petition process for any qualified voter who is not affiliated with a party or who does not wish to be the party nominee of their political party to be able to have his or her name printed on the ballot as an unaffiliated candidate for municipal office in the respective municipality.

The petition requirements would be required to comply with Article 11 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes, except that the individual would be required to file a written petition with the chair or director of the county board of elections on or before 12:00 noon on the day of the primary election. The petition would be required to be signed by a number of qualified voters of the municipality equal to at least one and a half percent (1.5%) of the whole number of voters qualified to vote in the municipal election according to the voter registration records of the State Board of Elections as of January 1 of the year in which the general municipal election is held.

- Modify how vacancies in elective office would be filled. If the vacating official was elected as the nominee of a political party, then the Town Council must appoint the individual recommended by the county executive committee of the political party of the vacating official, provided that (1) the recommendation is made within 30 days of the occurrence of the vacancy and (2) the executive committee restricts voting to committee members who reside within the corporate limits of the Town of Rural Hall.

Part X – Town of Conetoe Mayor Voting Authority:

The Mayor of the Town of Conetoe currently does not vote on any question before the Town's Board of Commissioners unless there is a tie. Effective when it becomes law, **Part X** would allow the Mayor of Conetoe to vote on any question before the Board.

Part XI – Iredell-Statesville School Board of Education Vacancies:

The Iredell-Statesville School Board of Education (Board) consists of seven members, elected from single-member electoral districts. Each candidate for the Board must reside in the district in which he or she seeks to serve, and the seat is voted on by qualified voters of that electoral district. Board members are elected in even-numbered years on a partisan basis to serve staggered four-year terms.

In order to fill a vacancy, the remaining members of the Board must consult with the county executive committee of the relevant political party before filling the vacancy. The Board must appoint that executive committee's nominee if the recommendation is made within 30 days after the seat becomes vacant. G.S. 115C-37.1.

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Effective when it becomes law and applicable to vacancies existing on or after that date, **Part XI** would provide that if a vacancy is not filled in accordance with G.S. 115C-37.1 within 60 days of the occurrence of the vacancy, the superintendent of the Board would be required to immediately report the vacancy to the clerk of superior court of that county. The clerk of superior court would be required to fill the vacancy within 10 calendar days after receiving notification from the superintendent. The clerk of superior court would be required to appoint a voter registered with the same political party as the vacating member if the vacating member was elected as a nominee of a political party and a resident of the same electoral district of the vacating member.