

BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

MEET: Time 6:00 2/1/2022

DRAFT

Where: VIRTUAL

Present: Elisabeth Mickenberg, Larry Granillo, Grace Grundhauser, Thea Knight, Annie Schneider, Helen Rock, Michelle Lefkowitz, Jim Rader, Mike McGarghan, Martha Gile, Kate Baldwin.

Absent: Charles Cashatt, Youth Member Rebecca Cunningham,

Also Present: Sarah Montgomery, Associate City Clerk; Jeff Comstock, Ward 7 Inspector of Elections

Meeting called to order by Chair Elisabeth Mickenberg

Agenda: The agenda was adopted unanimously as presented. Lis Mickenberg announced that Lenore Broughton has given her resignation from the board.

Meeting Length: The meeting length was set for 1 hour.

Minutes: Mike McGarghan noted that some discussion from the last meeting was not included in the minutes as presented. They will be amended and submitted for approval at the next meeting.

Public Comments: Jeff Comstock introduced himself and explained that, as a current inspector of elections in Ward 7, he was interested in learning more about the voter registration side.

Approval of Applications: Sarah Montgomery reported:

January - New Registrations 172, Transferred out of Town 109, Purged 42

Helen Rock made a motion to accept the numbers as presented, seconded by Grace Grundhauser. The motion passed unanimously.

Clerk's Report:

Sarah Montgomery reported that the voter challenges that were approved at last month's meeting were challenged in VEMS and those voters were mailed a letter and postcard. The voter can return the postcards to the clerk's office to indicate if they have changed their address within Burlington or are no longer residents of Burlington. Sarah reported that preparations for the March 1st election are well under way. Final ballots have been approved and are being printed and processed to be mailed to all of Burlington's active registered voters no later than February 9th. Ballots are also in the process of being translated into Burlington's top six non-English languages. A board member asked what the process for using translated ballots was and it was explained that voters can use the translated sample ballot as a reference and fill in the corresponding ovals on the official English ballot. Poll workers of two different parties can assist with this process. Annie Schneider explained that she was part of the group that initiated the process of having ballots translated, and there are technical reasons that the other languages cannot be translated onto the official ballots. Mike McGarghan asked why there is a need for

translated ballots if only citizens are allowed to vote and since new Americans must pass an English test for naturalization. Annie Schneider explained that, from her perspective as someone who teaches English, even if someone can read English well enough to pass the test, they may struggle with the complex legal language that appears on the ballots. Helen Rock added that the aim is to make voting accessible and this is just one of several ways the city works to do that.

Application Signing Schedule:

The Board set the following schedule for the months of February and March: February 3 – Martha, February 10 – Thea, February 17 – Kate, February 24 – Grace, March 3 – Jim, March 10 – Michelle, March 15 – Annie, March 24 – Larry, March 31 – Helen

Prepare for March Election

Board members were assigned the following wards for the Annual City Election. Ward 1 – Kate, Ward 2 – Larry, Ward 3 – Michelle, Ward 4 – Martha, Ward 5 – Annie, Ward 6 – Helen, Ward 7 – Grace, Ward 8 – Charles. Jim and Lis will be floaters to help give everyone breaks. Mike will not work at the polls for this election because he will not wear a mask. Thea will continue her training and will be in touch with Lis to determine her schedule.

To help everyone prepare for what the in person voter turnout might be, Sarah will send weekly updates about the number of absentee ballots that have been returned to the clerk's office. Several members have helpers lined up and others are still looking for some help. People will be in contact with Lis with names of their helpers. Lis will reach out to youth member Rebecca Cunningham to see if she is interested in helping out.

Grace Grundhauser presented a notice to share around the community in order to help alert voters that ballots will be arriving in the mail. The board reviewed it. Mike McGarghan expressed concern about voters who repeatedly return defective ballots and wondered what we could do to help ensure they understand how to properly cast their vote so it will be counted. Sarah Montgomery explained the new defective ballot process which allows the clerk's office to give voters a chance to correct their ballots before the election and also allows voters who have submitted a defective ballot to vote at their polling place on Election Day. Some minor language on the notice was edited. Grace will incorporate the edits and send out the final language to the group to share within the community in whatever ways people want to. Mike McGarghan will send it to North Ave News. Grace will also draft another post with further information about the election closer to Election Day.

Review Election Manual

Jim Radar suggested that board members use the March election to continue to add notes to the election manual as needed. Grace Grundhauser said she is open to receiving edits and feedback at any point.

On a motion by Jim Rader, seconded by Grace Grundhauser, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Sarah Montgomery, Associate City Clerk