

BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

MEET: Time 6:00 6/2/2020

Where: Remote and Virtual via Zoom

Present: Elisabeth Mickenberg, Michelle Lefkowitz, Larry Granillo, Jim Rader, Kate Baldwin, Lenore Broughton, Annie Schneider, Weiwei Wang, Martha Gile, Helen Rock, Youth Member Rebecca Cunningham

Absent: Charles Cashatt

Also Present: Amy Bovee, Assistant City Clerk

Meeting called to order by Chair Lis

Agenda: The agenda was accepted as presented.

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

Minutes: Jim Rader made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Helen Rock. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: None.

Approval of Applications: Amy Bovee submitted: March: new voter registrations 1314, purged 13, transferred out of town 432, April: new voter registrations 66, purged 37, transferred out of town 65, May: new voter registration 66, purged 22, transferred out of town 80.

Michelle Lefkowitz made a motion to accept the numbers, seconded by Martha Gile. Motion passed unanimously.

Clerk's Report/Prepare for August Election: Amy Bovee shared the current plans for the August and November Elections with the Board. She noted that this plan is not yet final, as discussions are still ongoing at the State level with the Secretary of State, Governor, and Legislature. The current proposed plan is that all registered voters would be sent a postcard suggesting that they request an absentee ballot for the August Primary. The postcard would have a removable, postage paid, absentee ballot request form that they could send in. It will also contain information for voters about how to request an absentee ballot online. In addition to encouraging people to vote absentee in August, the postcard will serve a secondary purpose of helping to clean up and update the voter checklist. Postcards will be forwarded if applicable, and forwarding addresses will be shared with the State and City. Additionally, we will have a list of voters whose postcards were undeliverable. This checklist cleanup will be helpful because in late-September, absentee ballots will automatically be mailed to all active voters. Those voters can choose to return their absentee ballots ahead of the election, or take it to the polls on Election Day. Kate Baldwin inquired about how postcards to students registered to vote in dorm rooms

would be handled given that they will be sent in the summer when students are not at school. Amy Bovee replied that she would research that issue and share information with the Board.

Amy Bovee shared that there will have to be polling places set up for both the August and November Elections, although the hope is that most folks will vote absentee and not come to the polls. Board members expressed concerns about the safety of working at the polls, especially if they fall into a high risk category. The Board discussed the potential of being able to work remotely and have voters interact with them remotely via zoom or other electronic means. Amy Bovee said that she would research the legality and logistics related to that.

Lenore Broughton expressed concerns related to the security of mailing out absentee ballot, particularly related to the practice of “ballot harvesting” where a campaign or organization picks up ballots from voters and returns them on the voter’s behalf. Amy Bovee noted that it is up to the voter to decide if they are comfortable with that. The Board suggested that outreach and education would be a great way to help voters make that decision.

Board members inquired if the city’s redesigned absentee ballot envelope would be used for these elections. Amy Bovee shared that the State will be handling the mailing and paying for the postage expenses related to absentee ballots this year, and so the City will have to use their envelopes. Board members discussed reaching out to the Secretary of State to ask them about the envelope design. Jim Rader agreed to contact Secretary of State Jim Condos to discuss the issue.

Given the many changes that Elections will be going through this year, the Board agreed to schedule additional meetings before the August State Primary Election. They agreed to meet on June 23, July 7, July 21, and August 4.

March Election Recap:

The Board discussed the issue that came up related to students who were misinformed that they could participate in the Presidential Primary in their home state and in the local election in Vermont. Amy Bovee shared that the Secretary of State’s Office had worked to have incorrect messaging removed from social media, and that she had worked with staff at the polls to make sure they were educating student voters before they decided whether they would be casting their ballots in Vermont or at home. She shared that they had follow up discussion with the Secretary of State’s Office about the need for outreach and education for student voters in the future.

Member's Reports:

None

Review/Re-do Application signing schedule

Amy Bovee shared that the City Clerk is also authorized to sign applications, and agreed to continue to handle that task until the building is open and Board members are able to come in again.

On a motion by Jim Rader, seconded by Martha Gile, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Amy Bovee, Assistant City Clerk