

BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

MEET: Time 6:00 5/4/2016

Where: Police Department, Community Room

Present: Elisabeth Mickenberg, Charles Cashatt, Alex Farrell, Lenore Broughton, Michelle Lefkowitz, Helen Rock, Katherine Miles

Absent: Janet Hicks

Also Present: Amy Bovee, City Councilor Adam Roof, Joe Speidel, Ward 3 Resident

Meeting called to order by Chair: Elisabeth @ 6:02 p.m.

Agenda: Motion made by Katherine Miles to accept Agenda as presented, seconded by Charles Cashatt. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Length: The Board agreed that the meeting would end at 7:00pm.

Minutes: Motion made by Michelle Lefkowitz to approve the minutes, seconded by Alex Farrell. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Adam Roof and Joe Speidel introduced themselves and agreed to hold their comments until the discussion on universal polling places.

Approval of Applications: Amy Bovee submitted: April: new voter registrations 217, purged 47, transferred out of town 143.

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

Clerk's Report: Amy Bovee informed the Board that there are two positions with terms expiring in June. One position is currently vacant due to Kathy Chasan's resignation, and the other is occupied by Michelle Lefkowitz. She stated they have already received one application, and encouraged Michelle to reapply before the deadline of Wednesday, May 5 at 4:30pm.

Member's Report: No update

Review Application Signing Schedule

The Board set their approval schedule for June and July:

June 3 – Martha, June 7 – Alex, June 10 – Michelle, June 14 – Janet, June 17 – Charles, June 21 – Helen, June 24 – Lis, June 28 – Katherine

July 1 - Martha, July 5 – Alex, July 8 – Michelle, July 12 – Janet, July 15 – Charles, July 19 – Lenore, July 22 – Katherine, July 26 – Helen, July 29 – Lis

New Business

a. Discussion of Universal Polling Places

City Councilor Adam Roof provided the Board with an update on his research regarding the Board's previous discussion of universal polling places. After discussions with the City Attorney's Office, they agreed that the Board could offer their opinion on the subject. He stated he has begun to do some research about other communities that have universal polling places. They have 32 universal polling places which serve an area with 780,000 residents and 350,000 registered voters. He will be asking them about the administrative and financial challenges of this arrangement, how they handle early voting and will provide an update to the Board about the information he receives. The Board requested that he also ask the commissioner how many ballots they handle at each poll and how participation has improved since implementing universal polling places.

Joe Speidel, Ward 3 Resident, spoke in favor of universal polling places and stated that he believed it would be helpful for people who work non-traditional schedules.

The Board discussed the idea of universal polling places and generally agreed that they like the idea, but have concerns about the cost of printing ballots, making the work more difficult for people working at the polls, concerns that turnout would not be even so that one poll may get many voters and other wards may get very few. They felt that electronic solutions may help to alleviate some of the issues, but having electronic voting or checklists could raise other potential problems. Board members agreed that they want to protect the integrity of the vote. The Board then brainstormed ideas of other actions that could improve voter turnout. Members believe that many voters forget or do not know about registration deadlines and early voting. They felt that having an advertising budget may help remind voters to register to vote and vote early or on Election Day. They thought the advertisements, lawn signs, bill stuffers, front porch forum posts, and robo calls could all be good methods of connecting with voters. They also felt that having increased transportation options could be a good way to help those who have a difficult time getting to the polls.

b. Review and Sign Committee's Annual Report to City Council

The Board reviewed the report to City Council and members signed off on it. They discussed improving their voter outreach activities in the next year by getting a schedule of when naturalization ceremonies will be taking place to help register New Americans.

Next Meeting: June 7, 2016 @ Police Department, Community Room, 6pm.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Amy Bovee

B.R.V. Staff