

## BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

MEET: February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6:00pm

**Where:** Police Station Community Room (1 North Ave) and remotely via Zoom

**Present:** Alison Harte, Grace Grundhauser, Karen Rowell, Mike McGarghan, Alex Demoly, Annie Schneider, Lesley Gendron, Lauren Ebersol, Colleen Montgomery, Jeanne Keller, and Youth Member Will Cunningham

**Absent:** Olga Bravo, Michelle Lefkowitz

**Also Present:** Sarah Montgomery, Assistant City Clerk

**Meeting called to order by Chair Grace Grundhauser at 6:05pm**

**Agenda:** Karen Rowell made a motion to accept. Seconded by Alison Harte. Passed unanimously.

**Meeting Length:** The meeting was set to end at 7:00pm.

**Previous Meeting Minutes:** Jeanne Keller made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Seconded by Colleen Montgomery. Passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:** No members of the public were present.

**Clerk's Report** Sarah Montgomery reported that there are currently a total of 28,903 voters on the checklist. Out of those voters, 3,971 are challenged. In January, there were 114 new voter registrations, 101 voters were transferred to other Vermont towns, and 110 voters were removed from the checklist. For the upcoming Annual City Election (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025), ballots have been finalized and the sample ballots are now available online. The ballots will be mailed to all active registered voters by Wednesday, 2/12. The ballot contains only local questions and candidates, so both citizen voters and legal resident voters are eligible to vote the full ballot.

Jeanne Keller asked how many legal resident voters are registered. Sarah Montgomery answered 120.

Sarah Montgomery reported that testing has started for the new election management system. She said it seems very intuitive and it should be an easy switch for system users. The new system is set to be launched in April.

### **Election Prep**

Grace Grundhauser shared that there are just enough board members available to provide coverage for the upcoming election. She reported that unfortunately none of the BRV alums are available to help (except for Larry for a two hour shift). She shared the schedule: Ward 1: Colleen; Ward 2: Lauren; Ward 3: Michelle; Ward 4: Jeanne; Ward 5: Annie; Ward 6: Alison; Ward 7: Karen; Ward 8: Grace

Sarah Montgomery noted that the ward 6 polling location will be moving from the Edmunds Middle School Gym to the Edmunds Elementary School Gym, so the main entrance will be off of Main Street. This shift is to increase accessibility.

Mike McGarghan asked if ward 4 will still be at Elk's Lodge. Sarah Montgomery answered yes.

Grace Grundhauser asked if ward 2 would still be at the ONE Community Center. Sarah Montgomery answered yes, for one more election.

Mike McGarghan asked if there would be hot spots or Wi-Fi for each location. Sarah Montgomery answered that all locations should be using Wi-Fi now, and that the login information will be on a sheet in the materials binder.

Grace Grundhauser asked members to each reach out to a handful of volunteers listed on the Google spreadsheet to recruit for the upcoming election. Members can go into the spreadsheet and make note of who they plan to reach out to. Mike McGarghan said that he worked with a few volunteers in ward 7 that expressed interest in helping again. Alison Harte asked about how much volunteer support will be needed. Grace Grundhauser answered that per previous board discussion one support person at any given time in each ward will be sufficient. Grace asked members to try to get responses by the middle of the next week at the latest and she will send out a schedule with all volunteers then.

Grace Grundhauser said that she will plan to do the usual election prep training on Thursday, 1/27, from 5pm - 7pm. The board discussed where the location for the training should be and decided to default to City Hall if the space is available on that date.

Jeanne Keller expressed interest in what members need to know about setting up in the morning at the polling places. Karen Rowell noted that she usually needs to ask for an extension cord. Mike McGarghan, who usually works ward 4 (where Jeanne will be working), said that he also usually needs an extension cord for set up. He recommended making initial contact with the ward clerk and inspectors as well. He noted that, in November, the placement of the checklist tables were close to the BRV table, which made traffic flow difficult. This would be helpful to communicate with the ward clerk. Grace Grundhauser said that the polling place is set up the night before. Mike McGarghan said if Jeanne wanted to be proactive she could reach out to the ward clerk in advance.

Grace Grundhauser shared reminders from the Election Day guide about setting up. She said to arrive at least 15 minutes early (which sometimes doesn't feel early enough) to set out supplies, get the laptop started and logged in, and try to connect with the ward clerk. She noted that connecting with the ward clerk is dependent on their availability.

Mike McGarghan suggested adding file organizers to the supplies so all the paperwork can be organized on the table. Karen Rowell may have some she can donate. If not, Sarah Montgomery will look into providing some.

Alison asked if the most recent Election Day guide was updated in August of 2024. Grace Grundhauser confirmed.

Grace Grundhauser reminded member to check in with ward clerks about the supplemental checklist and the legal resident checklist. Alison Harte asked if the BRV members have copies of both. Sarah Montgomery said that they are given a copy of the legal resident checklist, but not the supplemental checklist.

Mike McGarghan asked if a copy of the legal resident checklist could be sent out. Sarah Montgomery said she could share the public version of the checklist, which does not have any confidential information.

Grace Grundhauser shared other things that are helpful to check in with the ward clerk about, including same day voter registration (administered by the ward clerk or their designee) and the checklist flag cards. She mentioned that something that may vary ward by ward is how challenge responses are handled. Some ward clerks will choose to send all challenged voters to the BRV. Other ward clerks prefer to handle challenged voters, who do NOT have address changes, right at the checklist tables. Sarah Montgomery shared that either way is fine, depending on the preference of the ward clerk, but that any challenged voters who also need to edit their address should be sent to the BRV member.

Grace Grundhauser mentioned checking with the ward clerk about available translated materials and interpreter services. She noted that the phone interpreter services are fairly new. Sarah Montgomery said that she doesn't believe it has been used at a polling place, but it has been used at the Clerk's office. She explained that to use this service, dial the phone number listed on the instruction sheet and enter the listed code. This will connect you with the interpreter service. They can also help identify the language if needed and connect you with an interpreter. It then becomes a 3 way call (using speakerphone) with the election worker/ BRV member, the resident, and the interpreter.

Jeanne Keller said that the most important thing for the training is the scenarios and how to use forms correctly.

Grace Grundhauser asked if the board wants to put any announcements out on Front Porch Forum prior to the election. The board agreed to put out information including, where to vote, how to register to vote, and who is eligible to vote.

Lesley Gendron shared some updates she made to the flowchart showing Election Day processes with voters. She added visual cues such as screenshots and adjusted some of the content. The board gave positive feedback. Lesley said she would add a few items and then share it with the board.

Will Cunningham asked what to do if a mistake is made? Sarah Montgomery answered that if a mistake is made with determining a voter's ward/ district, the best thing that can be done is correct that in the registration moving forward, and document the situation. Grace Grundhauser said she has often wondered if the board needs a memo form to document these types of situations. She noted that if there is a scenario where the BRV is denying a voter registration application, the board should be giving them a written denial decision, so the voter can take that to the judge if they choose to appeal the decision. The majority of members said that they tend to just make extensive notes on the existing

forms. Grace will share a memo template document with the board to see if it is something that would be useful.

**New Business**

No new business.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Mike McGarghan, seconded by Jeanne Keller, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: Sarah Montgomery, Assistant City Clerk