



BOARD for REGISTRATION of VOTERS

City of Burlington

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AGENDA
FOR MONTHLY MEETING OF
THE BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS
Tuesday, July 11th, 2023; 6 pm

In Person – Community Room at the Police Department
Or access the meeting remotely via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93518019094> Meeting ID: 935 1801 9094

One tap mobile: +13092053325,,93518019094# US +13126266799,,93518019094# US (Chicago)

1. Agenda
2. Set Meeting Length
3. Introductions
4. Board Chair and Vice Chair Appointments
5. Minutes
6. Public Comments
7. Clerk's Report
8. Approval of Applications
9. Application Signing Schedule
10. Board Vacancies
11. Biennial Checklist Review
12. New Business

*****Board Members: Please let Tenzin or Grace know if you will not be attending the meeting*****

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BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

MEET: Time 6:00p 07/11/2023

Where: Community Room at the Police Department and remotely via Zoom

Present: Grace Grundhauser, Annie Schneider, Alison Harte, Lauren Ebersol, Mike McGarghan, Karen Rowell, Thea Knight, Helen Rock, Lesley Gendron.

Absent: Michelle Lefkowitz

Also Present: Sarah Montgomery (Assistant City Clerk), Tenzin Chokden (Associate City Clerk)

Meeting called to order by Chair Grace Grundhauser at 6:08pm

Grace Grundhauser asked: what's the quorum for BRV board?

Sarah Montgomery confirmed that the quorum for BRV is 3 members according to Vermont statute [17 V.S.A. § 2103 \(5\)](#).

Agenda: Thea Knight made the motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Alison Harte.

Approved unanimously.

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

Introductions:

Lesley Gendron grew up in Colorado and has been living in Burlington for 10 years and was inspired by Grace Grundhauser to join the board. She has volunteered in three elections previously.

The rest of the board introduced themselves.

Board Chair and Vice Chair Appointments:

Mike McGarghan made the motion to nominate and accept Grace Grundhauser as the board chair for period of one year. The motion was seconded by Alison Harte.

Approved unanimously.

Due to the current vice chair, Michelle Lefkowitz, being absent, Mike McGarghan made the motion to table nomination for the vice chair until next meeting. Seconded by Annie Schneider.

Approved unanimously.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

Helen Rock made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by Thea Knight. The minutes were passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

No members from the public attended.

Clerk's Report:

Sarah Montgomery reported that there are currently 30,963 registered voters and 8,284 of those are challenged.

The vetoed legal resident voting was overridden during the veto override session. The legal resident voting is in effect as of now and legal residents who are not citizens can now register to vote in city elections, school elections, and can run for office. The information has not been widely publicized and outreach has not yet begun because the clerk's office is still working on some legal questions and having the voter registration application and some other materials translated.

Annie Schneider asked if there is separate registration form.

Sarah Montgomery replied yes, because the Vermont registration form is asking if a voter is a U.S citizen.

Alison Harte asked how does the board do outreach on this.

Annie Schneider replied in the past the board has used Front Porch Forum, and in person and online voter registration drives.

Mike McGarghan asked if the CEDO office will help out in outreach because they were involved in putting out information for voters to pass this questions on the last election ballot.

Sarah Montgomery replied that they will assist us in using their avenues to reach out to the populations and funding to towards this outreach but not necessarily in staffing.

Grace Grundhauser suggested inviting CEDO's contact person to future meeting for discussion on this topic.

Helen Rock made the motion to add a discussion on this topic to a future meeting agenda. Seconded by Annie Schneider. The motion was approved unanimously.

Grace Grundhauser asked if we have information on new wards with redistricting.

Sarah Montgomery replied redistricting goes into effect next March election in 2024 and current wards will stay the same for now.

Approval of Applications: Sarah Montgomery reported:

June – New Registrations: 208; Transferred out of Town: 144; Purged: 180; Challenged: 93.

Alison Harte made a motion to accept the numbers as presented, seconded by Lauren Ebersol. The motion passed unanimously.

Application Signing Schedule: Application signing schedule for July was set at the June meeting.

Board Vacancies:

Sarah Montgomery reported there is one vacancy left on the board and the due date for the application is August 9th. The new member will be appointed on August 14th during the City Council meeting. Elisabeth Mickenberg's resignation will need to be accepted by city council, only then the position will be open for anyone to apply. The term is for only the remaining period, which is until 06/2025.

Biennial Checklist Review Discussion:

Biennial Checklist review needs to be done during the summer of odd years, after the annual city election, completed by 09/15 and reported to Secretary of State that we have reviewed the checklist by 9/20.

Sarah Montgomery went over the spreadsheet, the steps on how she narrowed it down to final number, which is 114 voters for the board to review. She also added another filter which was to remove recent registrations from consideration to challenge.

1. Review death notices, and purge those voters from the checklist.
2. Generate full checklist of active voters.
3. Using voter participation records, filter out voters who have voted in the past four years.
4. Using the city's property database, filter out voters who own the property where they are registered to vote.
5. Using the city's dog registration database, filter out voters who have registered dogs at the address where they are registered to vote.
6. Using the DMV database, filter out voters who have VT ID's that list the address where they are registered to vote.
7. Filter out voters who have registered to vote in the past four years.

Mike McGarghan asked why the number on the spreadsheet data is different from the number presented in this meeting during the clerk's report.

Sarah Montgomery replied that's because the data on the spreadsheet was pulled about four weeks ago, and deletions and additions to the checklist have occurred since then.

Helen Rock asked if the board is challenging the voters who are left on the list or removing them from the checklist. Grace Grundhauser explained that anyone who is left on the list will be reviewed by the board and the board will consider challenging them. Those who are filtered out of the list are voters the board has affirmatively identified as being eligible to remain on the checklist.

Mike McGarghan questioned whether someone is allowed to be registered to vote at an address, in the circumstance where the person is not allowed to reside at the address due to a legal issue.

Helen Rock confirmed that person would be allowed to be registered because this scenario has come up before and the board reviewed that the person is eligible to be registered.

Grace Grundhauser asked if anyone had questions on Sarah Montgomery's presentation on narrowing down the checklist to challenge the voters who are left on the last step of process.

Lesley Grendon asked if the 114 voters left on the spreadsheet are the voters that board would be considering issuing challenge letters to.

Grace Grundhauser replied yes.

Mike McGarghan asked if 8,284 have received challenge letter and how many have responded.

Sarah Montgomery responded that the voters who are currently challenged on our checklist have been sent challenge letters, but they have not responded to the notice. Voters who have been challenged and have responded to the letter are either removed from the checklist or made active again, depending on their response.

Mike McGarghan argued why we don't purge these voters who haven't responded in four years instead of keeping them on checklist. Grace Grundhauser explained that the statute does not allow discretion on when remove anyone from the checklist and that the board has to follow the process written in the statute to purge someone from the checklist.

Mike McGarghan commented that the board seems to have a pattern to do everything they can to avoid removing people from the checklist, even when it looks like they should be challenged.

Helen Rock noted that there is regular action taken on the checklist. Monthly, there are people that are transferred off of the list and that are purged from the list. Due diligence on the accuracy of the checklist is being done and the board is following processes set up by Vermont state statute.

Mike McGarghan noted that he knows there are people who question how accurately the checklist is being maintained and based on current processes he is having difficulty feeling confident about answering those questions.

Grace Grundhauser noted the time and suggested that it was time to vote on the biennial checklist review.

Mike McGarghan made a motion to not vote today, and to table the vote until the August meeting so there is more time for discussion. Seconded by Karen Rowell.

In Favor: 2
Opposed: 6
Abstained: 1

The motion failed.

Alison Harte made the motion to accept sending challenge letters to the 114 voters on the list. Lesley Gendron seconded.

In Favor: 7
Opposed: 1

Abstained: 1

New Business

On a motion by Thea Knight, seconded Annie Schneider, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: Tenzin Chokden, Associate City Clerk