

## **BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS**

**January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at 6:00pm**

**Where:** Sharon Bushor Conference Room, City Hall and remotely via Zoom

**Present:** Lauren Ebersol, Alison Harte, Helen Rock, Grace Grundhauser, Annie Schneider, Michelle Lefkowitz, Karen Rowell, Alex Demoly, Lesley Betts, Thea Knight, and Youth Member Will Cunningham

**Absent:** Mike McGarghan, Olga Bravo

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

**Agenda:** Approved unanimously.

**Minutes:** Grace Grundhauser noted that two sets of minutes are being presented for approval – the minutes from the December meeting and the amended minutes from the November meeting. Helen Rock made a note that being asked to amend the minutes in such detail does not seem like a great use of the clerk's time and is beyond what it required by open meeting law.

Annie Schneider made a motion to adopt both previous meetings' minutes. Seconded by Alison Harte. Passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Romeo Von Herman, a member of the public, commented about his interest in the work of the board.

**Clerk's Report:** Sarah Montgomery reported that there are currently 31,304 registered voters in Burlington, 8,010 of which are challenged. In December, there were 176 new registrations, 93 voters were transferred out of town, and 37 voters were purged from the checklist. She reported on upcoming activity for the March 5, 2024 election and noted that Presidential Primary ballots will be available by January 20<sup>th</sup> and Annual City Election ballots will be available by February 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Approval of Voter Challenges:**

27 voters were on a list of voters proposed to be challenged. The reasons for challenging these voters included undeliverable mail as well as voters having sold their properties listed as their legal addresses in their voter registration.

Michelle Lefkowitz stated that she is still wondering why the new voter registration letters are being returned as undeliverable when the voter just registered at that address. Sarah Montgomery shared that she looked at the addresses of the batch of voters that was challenged last month, and there didn't seem to be anything visibly wrong with the addresses listed. The registrations did however mostly come from the DMV.

Helen Rock noted that voters are often confused when their voter information is updated along with their DMV registration.

Grace Grundhauser shared that the DMV is updating their software and that might be something that affects how DMV voter registration works.

Michelle Lefkowitz asked if it would be helpful to have clearer language on the DMV form to help voters. She will contact the SOS to get more information about the process.

Michelle Lefkowitz made the motion to accept the list of proposed voter challenges. Seconded by Karen Rowell. Passed unanimously.

### **Election Day Training:**

Grace Grundhauser presented the Election Day manual, which is still in draft format as the board continues to review and revise.

Grace Grundhauser noted that ward assignments for March will also need to be determined, either at this meeting or at the next one.

The board discussed pre-election training for volunteers. Grace Grundhauser mentioned doing it the Thursday before the election, but she and Annie Schneider will discuss further if that date works or if they should look at alternatives.

Typically, there is also a “floater” that rotates through wards and to give people breaks and restock forms if needed. That may not happen since the board is low on fully trained members who are available to work in March.

Alison Harte asked about the upcoming ward clerk training. Grace Grundhauser noted that the training is not designed for the BRV, but it may be helpful to make the connections with the election officials. Sarah Montgomery will follow up via email with the specific information about the trainings for anyone who is interested in joining.

Grace Grundhauser noted that members should try logging into their VEMS accounts a few weeks prior to the election. Laptops will be available to use on Election Day. VEMS will be up on the laptop already, but the URL to access it is also included on the guidelines if it is needed.

Helen Rock noted that the board has discussed wanting to be more consistent as a board, so it would be helpful if practices could be streamlined.

Annie Schneider noted that we should never be asking voters for IDs – that is against the law.

Burlington Interactive Map: this will always be open on board members computers. If you search an address, it will show which ward it is located at, and where the voter’s polling place is.

Helen Rock asked if it could be better defined in the manual what the supplemental checklist is. Sarah Montgomery explained that it is the voters that are registered between Saturday and Monday.

Only board members have login access to VEMS. Helpers can assist with map lookup and other duties under supervision. New board members are in the process of being set up with VEMS accounts.

Shifts start at 6:45am. This gives time to get situated before voters arrive.

Same day voter registration should be done by the presiding officer at the polling place, or their designee. There should be a separate table set up for this. It is a good idea to be familiar with the registration forms, but it is not something the board member should be handling. Sarah Montgomery noted that the reason this is separated from the BRV duties is because the BRV has the authority to

determine final eligibility of voter registration if there is a dispute about a potential voter's qualifications to vote.

Card "flags" system: If checklist workers see a flag on the checklist, they give the voter the corresponding card to give to the BRV member, so the BRV member can know what issue they are addressing.

Challenged voters: challenged voters need to submit an affirmation of residence/ domicile before they can receive a ballot. If a voter does not need to change their address, the checklist workers should handle this. If an address needs to be revised, then the voter will be sent to BRV. The board discussed when the BRV to Ward Clerk form is also needed.

**New Business:** No new business.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Lauren Ebersol, seconded by Michelle Lefkowitz, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: Sarah Montgomery, Assistant City Clerk