

**BOARD OF CANVASSERS  
JAMESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND  
September 15, 2023**

An advertised meeting of the Board of Canvassers was called to order at 9:40 PM by Carol Nelson-Lee at 93 Narragansett Ave. The following member(s) was present.

Ken Newman - Member

Absent:                   Hugh Murphy – Member  
                              Kitty Wineberg - Alternate

Also present was:       Rob Rock, Department of State – Deputy Secretary of State  
                              Keith Ford, Deputy Town Clerk / Clerk to the Board of Canvassers  
                              Roberta Fagan, Town Clerk

**NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened with the request of a motion to move agenda item 'E' to the front. Mr. Newman made the motion to move the agenda item up to the top with a second by Ms. Nelson-Lee. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. Vote Passed Unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the discussion of the correspondence received from Mr. Rock and the concepts of additions and changes to trainings and nomination papers. Mr. Rock commented that the Secretary of State's Office (SOS) has been working on a training and certification program for Local Election Officials. Mr. Rock presented the draft document to the Board and advised that this draft was given to the Board of Elections yesterday for review. They have identified a number of training modules that they think will be really helpful for the local Boards to make them Certified Election Officials. A discussion ensued regarding the training and certifications. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented on the Boards interest in timelines for nominations papers and changing those. Mr. Rock commented that this is something their legislative committee is working on now for the next legislation session. Such as moving the Primary back a week, allowing for more time to review and adjudicate issues the Board of Elections may have. They have also added legislation to allow for unaffiliated voters in primaries to automatically stay unaffiliated. A discussion ensued. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented that candidates may need more information on running for office. Mr. Rock advised that the SOS currently gives out information and has seminars to all candidates with regards to the requirement of getting on the ballot and has a frequently asked question regarding that. They do not explain how to run a campaign as that would be a fine line as they cannot give advice on how to run a campaign. A discussion ensued. Mr. Newman commented that many of the issues candidates of this elections had not had a full grasp of what was needed for the nomination papers and where they were to be returned to. In addition, were the impediments some candidates faced of harassment and no process within the Board of Elections to address these issues and the recourse to them. Mr. Rock commented that the biggest thing for 2024 election is voter education, securing voting by mail and early voting as well as getting voters/candidates knowledgeable on the process. Ms. Nelson-Lee moved the discussion to what is required of the Board to create a subcommittee. Mr. Ford commented that the SOS

advised him that the Board could do an ad hoc committee with one Board member and two to five committee members. This committee would have to have a charge and be approved by the Town Council, the Town Clerks Office would have to advertise and the Town Council interview candidates, then ultimately appoint members to the committees. The committee will also have to abide by the Open Meetings Act (OMA) by having agendas, meeting minutes and be open to the public. Mr. Ford commented it will take over a month to get full approval and membership. Ms. Fagan commented they will advertise for the membership twice. With all considered it could be on the agenda for the end of October or beginning of November. Ms. Nelson-Lee made the motion that the Board requests of the Town Council to advertise for letters of interest for the soon to be created committee and that Mr. Ford will create a charge for the committee, motion seconded by Mr. Newman. Vote, Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; and Mr. Newman, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the discussion with Roberta Fagan, Town Clerk, regarding OMA and Roberts Rules. Ms. Fagan commented that every year the Attorney General's Office (AG) has a seminar which covers a lot of case law that have gone in front of the AG for OMA violations and other topics. Ms. Fagan covered when OMA applies and what is needed notification wise. Ms. Fagan commented that one topic they were interested in was if a member could vote for meeting minutes even though they may not have been at the meeting. This is okay to do as the member, who may have been absent, is making the motion or second you are voting on the veracity of the secretary, the actions of your colleagues and the correctness of the meeting minutes. Ms. Fagan also discussed members being in person attendance, and for the ability for a public body may livestream and may offer remote participation. But this is not mandatory. The Town does offer livestream as requested but they do not allow for remote participation. Ms. Fagan brought up the discussion of wording on agenda's when voting and making an action must have certain wording to make sure that the Board is in compliance with OMA. No vote was taken at this time.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the discussion of minutes from September 1, 2023. Mr. Newman made a motion to accept the minutes with a second by Ms. Nelson-Lee/ Vote, Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; and Mr. Newman, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the discussion of the review of Congressional District 1 Primary (CD1) on September 5, 2023. Mr. Ford commented we had 581 early voters, 519 Primary day voters and 56 mail ballots received which is almost 25% of the registered voters and the largest turnout in the state. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented it was an uneventful day, which she is pleased with. Mr. Newman commented that it did go very well. The physical setup was great, the police presence was nice every two hours. A discussion ensued. No vote was taken at this time.

Ms. Nelson-Lee moved to the next agenda item which was the review, discussion and/or action and/or vote on updates to the CD1 Special Election. Mr. Ford gave a synopsis of the upcoming CD1 Special Election on November 7, 2023. The deadline to register to vote is Sunday, October 8, 2023 the Town Hall will be open from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The Final Canvass and regular mail in ballot applications deadline are both October 17, 2023. Early Voting and Emergency Mail Ballots start on October 18, 2023. Deadline to certify mail ballots is on October 30, 2023. The Special Election is on November 7, 2023. There is a poll worker training session; Supervisors on October 17, 2023 via Zoom; Moderators on October 24, 2023 at 5:00 PM; and Clerks on October 24, 2023 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Nelson-Lee requested Mr. Ford contact Anne Deffley regarding the catering. No vote was taken at this time.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the next agenda item which is the review, discussion and/or action and/or vote on changing the polling location from the Lawn Ave School to the Recreation Center for the November 7, 2023 CD1 Special Election. The school department requested that we host the election at the Recreation Center as their school schedule has been set prior to the Special Election being schedule. With that the school will be in session as to not cause a conflict the Board will vote to move locations. A discussion ensued. Mr. Newman made a motion to move the polling place to the recreation center with a second by Ms. Nelson-Lee. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; and Mr. Newman, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

Mr. Newman made a motion to adjourn with a second by Ms. Nelson-Lee. Voted: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; and Mr. Newman, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 10:43 AM.

Attest:



Keith Ford  
Clerk to the Board of Canvassers

Cc: Town Council Members (5)  
Board of Canvassers (4)  
Roberta Fagan, Town Clerk