

**BOARD OF CANVASSERS  
JAMESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND  
February 8, 2024**

An advertised meeting of the Board of Canvassers was called to order at 9:38 AM by Carol Nelson- Lee at 93 Narragansett Ave. The following member(s) was present.

Ken Newman – Member  
Kitty Wineberg – Alternate Member  
Jennifer Thran – Alternate Member

Absent:                   Hugh Murphy – Member

Also present was:     Keith Ford, Deputy Town Clerk / Clerk to the Board of Canvassers

**NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened with the approval of minutes from January 19, 2024. All members reviewed the minutes. Ms. Thran made a motion to approve the January 19, 2024 with a second by Mr. Newman. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; and Ms. Thran, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee then opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote on the Certification of Nomination Papers for Delegate Candidates. Mr. Newman commented that due to him being a Candidate for Delegate himself he will be recusing himself from this process. He submitted a Statement of Conflict-of-Interest form to Mr. Ford and left the room while the Delegate Nomination Papers were reviewed, discussed and voted on. Ms. Wineberg became a voting member with Mr. Newman’s recusal. All members reviewed each nomination paper. Ms. Thran made a motion to certify the nomination papers with a second by Ms. Wineberg. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Ms. Thran, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed Unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee called for a 5-minute recess at 10:27AM to collect Mr. Newman. The meeting will reconvene at 10:32AM

Ms. Nelson-Lee then opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote on the updates concerning the Presidential Preference Primary (PPP) and Early Voting. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented that there is a Board of Elections Seminar that will be held on Friday, February 16 at 9:00AM on zoom, that will be valuable to attend. Mr. Ford commented that the scheduling for the Early Voting will be out shortly as its almost complete, he shared a preliminary schedule with the Board. No Action/Vote Taken.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote on the 2024-2025 Budget. Mr. Newman made a motion to move this agenda item to the end of the meeting with a second by Ms. Thran. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; and Ms. Thran, Aye. Vote Passed Unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote on the updates on the Elections Training and Advisory Committee progress. Mr. Ford commented that on Monday, February 5, 2024 the Town Council appointed Kenneth Newman, Laura Goldstein, Daphne Meredith, Linda Jamison, and Marlene Murphy. Mr. Ford commented it is bi-partisan as Mr. Newman is a democrat and Ms. Jamison is a Republican. The other 3 members are all unaffiliated. The committee is now able to schedule a meeting as long as they follow Open Meetings Act requirements with regards to agendas and minutes; and the committee can elect a chair. Mr. Newman commented that all the individuals are interested and experienced in terms of elections. These members have all worked in elections and are dedicated to the issues that this committee will be looking at. This committee will discuss and vote on recommendation that will go to the larger Board of Canvassers statewide committee which will include legislative changes and election regulations. No Action/Vote Taken.

Ms. Nelson-Lee then opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote concerning the use of the library as a possible polling location as the library has not opened yet, construction is still underway. This will be revisited once the building is open. No Action/Vote Taken

Ms. Nelson-Lee then opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote concerning climate change and the affects it has on Jamestown Voters. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented in the four-week period from mid-December to mid-January three large storms struck and the island was cut into thirds. Beavertail Road flooded over at Mackerel Cove and was closed for around 4 hours. There was massive traffic backups and North Road was closed by police at Zeek's Creek as well as part of Conanicus Ave being closed. This brings up how can people vote if a storm struck on election day. Ms. Nelson-Lee asked for a motion to change to have three voting districts. We currently have two districts split right down the center of Jamestown following North Road. Mr. Newman made a motion to look at having three voting districts with a second by Ms. Thran. A discussion ensued. Mr. Newman commented that he sees an increase of storms and washouts on Beavertail Road and constituents with concerns about safety issues as well as voting. Ms. Nelson-Lee clarified that the three districts would be Beavertail, North End (anything north of Zeek's Creek), and the Town area. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented that in the works is a bridge on North Rd near Zeek's Creek but nothing for Mackerel Cove area. Ms. Thran commented that there are other projects included in the State's bridge plan for North Road, including East Shore Rd and Conanicus Avenue. She also mentioned that we have mail ballots and other ways to vote. Ms. Nelson-Lee commented that one potential polling locations is the Beavertail Museum. She also mentioned that if the town were to build a police/fire substation on Beavertail that could be a polling location. She also mentioned that the next step should be reaching out the Board of Elections (BoE). She asked Mr. Ford what it would entail to start looking into the re-districting. Mr. Ford advised this will be an in-depth project. There is no way to run a report in CVRS for certain areas so one must take the walking list, decide what streets are in what district then counting each voter to determine a total for the BoE. This will take many man hours and as the clerk he would not have the bandwidth to do such as he has other duties in the Town Clerk's Office. He did comment he could print out the walking list and provide the Board with any other items needed for this project to the Board and they could proceed. Ms. Nelson-Lee that the Board does not do clerical work and we could look into adding to the 2024-2025 Budget to hire someone to do that work. Ms. Nelson-Lee called for a vote on the motion on the floor by Mr. Newman to look into having three voting districts. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; and Ms. Thran, Nay. Vote Passed.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote concerning the statewide Board of Canvassers ad hoc committee. Mr. Newman commented he has no further comment to make as he

touched on this topic when he spoke on the Elections Training and Advisory Committee. He did comment that he is gratified that this ad hoc committee is formed and going to provide input to the state. No Action/Vote Taken.

Ms. Nelson-Lee opened the review, discussion, and/or action and/or vote concerning the 2024-2025 Budget. Mr. Ford provided the budget form as well as a breakout of the budget by line item to each Board member. A Discussion ensued. Ms. Nelson-Lee asked for a motion to accept the budget with the exception of adding more money to 70102 Salary, Clerical to cover re-districting. Mr. Ford commented that funding would have to be at least \$14 an hour for a paid employee or we could look into an intern through the Rhode Island State Government Internship Program. However, this program is through colleges and we may have to pay a stipend over the summer. But they are currently budgeting for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. A discussion ensued. Mr. Newman made a motion to table the 2024-2025 Budget until the next meeting and have Mr. Ford research interns with a second from Ms. Thran. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; and Ms. Thran, Aye. Vote Passed Unanimously.

Ms. Nelson-Lee commented that she would like to make note that the next meeting will be held March 11, 2024 at 9:30am and asked if anyone has anything they would like to be placed on the agenda. And commented that she would like the 2024-2025 Budget, updates to the PPP, updates to the Elections Training and Advisory Committee, as well as Climate Change (Redistricting). Mr. Ford commented that he will be speaking on the library as a potential polling place.

Ms. Thran made a motion to adjourn with a second by Mr. Newman. Vote: Ms. Nelson-Lee, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; and Ms. Thran, Aye. Vote Passed Unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 11:13 AM.

Attest:

Keith Ford  
Clerk to the Board of Canvassers

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