

**JAMESTOWN ELECTIONS TRAINING AND ADVISORY AD HOC COMMITTEE
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Linda Jamison, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting of the Jamestown Elections Training and Advisory Ad hoc Committee to order at 10:04 a.m. in the Jamestown Town Hall small conference room at 93 Narragansett Avenue.

II. ROLL CALL

A scheduled meeting of the Jamestown Elections Training and Advisory Ad hoc Committee was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2024. Committee members present were as follows: Ms. Nancy Beye, Ms. Linda Jamison, Ms. Daphne Meredith, Ms. Marlene Murphy, and Mr. Kenneth Newman.

Also in attendance was Mr. Keith Ford, Deputy Town Clerk/Clerk to the Board of Canvassers.

III. MINUTES

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/ or Vote:

1.) Minutes of the: Elections Training and Advisory Ad hoc Committee meeting of April 3, 2024

Mr. Newman moved to waive the reading of the minutes. Ms. Murphy seconded the motion and the motion was approved as follows: Ms. Beye, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye; Ms. Meredith Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. The vote passed unanimously.

Ms. Jamison requested corrections or additions to the minutes. Ms. Meredith noted that in section VI, "New Business" Mr. Tim Riel's position at The Jamestown Press should read "editor." Ms. Murphy moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Newman seconded the motion and it was approved as follows: Ms. Beye, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye; Ms. Meredith Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. The vote passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS / OPEN FORUM

No public comment was given

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote: Training Program and Development

1.) Update on Jamestown voter brochure and dissemination

Mr. Newman noted that the Jamestown Voter Information 2024 brochure (the "Brochure") has been well received at the Secretary of State's office, prompting a suggestion by that office to use the Brochure as a template for other communities. Formal State approval is pending and we can expect a letter regarding the same. The State Board of Elections (the "BOE") is still reviewing the Brochure, and Mr. Ford will present it at the next meeting of the Town's Board of Canvassers (the "BOC") for their comment and approval. The Committee then extended its

discussion of statewide voter materials, concurring that the Supplement would also serve other communities and that it, too, should become a statewide initiative. (The Supplement is a multi-page voter information publication produced in the past by the Jamestown Press identifying candidates and their positions, and describing referendum issues). Mr. Ford informed the Committee that he was able to secure the attendance of Mr. Robert Berczuk, publisher of the Jamestown Press at the April 24, 2024 meeting. The Committee thanked both Mr. Ford and Mr. Newman for their efforts to further the Committee's goal of collaborating with local media for voter education purposes.

Ms. Goldstein entered the meeting at this point in the proceedings at 10:11 a.m.

B) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote: Advisory Role

1.) Continue to work on list of issues/problems and next steps

The Committee continued to generate the list of issues that have arisen locally and/ or in other communities of which we are aware, relating to elections and voting procedures. It is our understanding that this list will be shared with our local Board of Canvassers, the statewide Association of Boards of Canvassers, the State Board of Elections, and the Secretary of State. The following issues/problems/areas for improvement have been identified to date, with new items as of this meeting appearing ***bolded and in italics***:

- General election safety and orderly voting, including maintaining and managing appropriate voter conduct at the polls and when to require/request the presence of law enforcement;
- The voting process, including, for example, how to accommodate both poll checkers and First Amendment auditors in accordance with the law
- How to address voter concerns raised at the polls, such as implicit partisanship (example: the color of signage, the color of the "I Voted" stickers)
- How best to administer the process of voting when there are long lines
- The education of prospective candidates to insure access for all
- The need for voter education concerning the consistency of signatures to avoid invalidation of signatures
- Future voter education/outreach
- Education of poll workers re: legality of photos/videos in polling place
- Track status of pending "Disaffiliation" bill in State Legislature to address voter confusion/lack of clarity on the topic
- Collaboration with local press/news outlets to insure factual accuracy and timeliness of voter education and informational materials/articles
- Mail-in ballots, general issues, ***including voter confusion regarding the application for, and multistep processing of, these ballots, and the perceived unreliability of the U.S. postal service***
- Improve appearance of ballots, especially primary ballots, to reduce voter confusion
- How best to manage, and give voters notice of, changes in polling location
- Accountability and accessibility of State Board of Elections and its members
- Problems with State Board of Elections' required documentation, record-keeping, and follow-up; ***issues with the accessibility, response, clarity of published materials and "presence" of the BOE***; examples:

- “Affidavit of Ballot Box Inspection”--no signature line
- “Discrepancy Reports”--no follow-up:***ballots and training materials are often confusing, especially on line***
- ***Ballot tracking issues attributable to how ballot is voted and/or delivered***
- ***Inconsistent calendar items, for example: incorrect delegate deadlines in published materials***
- ***Raise the possibility of Ad hoc committees reviewing BOE published materials for clarity and consistency and to eliminate ambiguity***
- ***Ethical and legal issues arising from statutory ambiguity (example: what constitutes “running for office?”)***
- ***How can BOE be more present, especially in high-turnout elections?***
- ***Can materials comparable to the FEC’s materials for campaigns be generated at the state level?***

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/ or Vote:

1.) Develop a Committee checklist

To best follow through on proposed actions, the Committee agreed to create a list of action items, as appropriate, following each meeting’s discussion. Today’s list is as follows:

Collaboration with the Jamestown Press:

- The committee to generate a list of questions for Mr.Robert Berczuk, publisher of the Jamestown Press for discussion at the April 24, 2024 meeting.

General poll worker information:

- The Committee to generate a list of helpful tips for poll workers for use on election days

Outreach to BOE with a view to future collaboration/service:

The Committee determined that the best way to address concerns regarding the BOE is to open a conversation with one or more of its members, with a view to future collaboration. Ms. Meredith moved to authorize Ms. Linda Jamison, Chair, to seek a meeting with Mr. Randy Jackvony of the BOE for this purpose. Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion and the motion was approved as follows: Ms. Beye, Aye;Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms.Jamison, Aye; Ms. Meredith Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. The vote passed unanimously.

B) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/ or Vote:

1.) Mail ballot process

The Committee discussed the mail ballot process at great length, with clarification by Mr. Ford regarding the processes of both the application for a mail ballot, and the confirmation of signatures. The list of issues generated under Section V.B.1), above, was updated accordingly to reflect the discussion.

C) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote:

1.) Annual Financial Town Meeting

Ms. Jamison questioned whether the Brochure and/ or the QR code could be handed out at the Financial Town Meeting. Mr Ford volunteered to explore whether or not this is possible. Ms. Goldstein moved to seek permission from the town to publicize the Brochure and/or QR code

during town meetings. The motion was seconded by Mr. Newman. The motion was approved as follows: Ms. Beye, Aye; Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye; Ms. Meredith Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. The vote passed unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Newman made a motion to adjourn with a second by Ms. Goldstein. Vote: Ms. Beye, Aye; Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye; Ms. Meredith Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. The vote passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Meredith', written in a cursive style.

Daphne Meredith
Secretary

Cc: Town Council Members(5)
Roberta Fagan, Town Clerk