

**JAMESTOWN ELECTIONS TRAINING AND ADVISORY AD HOC COMMITTEE
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 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 10:07 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 24, 2024. Committee members present were as follows: Ms. Laura Goldstein, Ms. Linda Jamison, Ms. Marlene Murphy, Mr. Kenneth Newman.

Also in attendance were Ms. Nancy Beye, Town Council Liaison and Mr. Keith Ford, Canvassing Clerk.

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 17, 2024

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

Ms. Jamison requested corrections or additions to the minutes. There being no corrections or additions, Mr. Newman moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion. The votes were as follows: Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS/OPEN FORUM

No Public comment was given.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

1) Update on Jamestown voter brochure and dissemination.

Ms. Goldstein presented her corrected “generic” brochure which included the changes suggested by the Board of Elections. The section on early voting polling places was questioned as some Cities/Towns use their Police Station, some their Town Hall, and some use local precincts. There are also various locations used for same-day voter registration. Mr. Newman will confirm with Rob Rock for accurate locations.

The current QR code on the brochure does not work and will be removed. Mr. Newman suggested we use the QR code that connects directly to the vote.ri.gov website where voters can find a list of frequently asked questions about days, times, voting locations.

Mr. Newman is now looking for money to produce the brochure. As noted in the minutes from the last meeting, the Jamestown Press is willing to absorb the cost of printing the brochure and inserting it in the Jamestown Press. Mr. Ford suggested applying for grants from the Rhode Island Foundation and the League of Women Voters. Ms. Murphy suggested perhaps a legislative grant would be available for the statewide printing of the brochure.

2) Update on brochure approval from Secretary of State, Board of Elections, and Jamestown Board of Canvassers.

Mr. Newman reported that the approval for the brochure by the Jamestown Board of Canvassers is on the agenda for their meeting on Monday, May 13, at 3 p.m. He invited us all to attend.

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

- 1) Continue to work on list of issues/problems and next steps for reporting information to the various entities.

Ms. Murphy began a discussion of the pay for poll workers. The current pay for a Clerk for an election day is \$150. That amount has not increased in the 20 years that she has been working as a clerk. Ms. Murphy said she continues to work the polls because she loves the job and the general consensus of the members was that most of our Jamestown poll workers continue to work because they enjoy it also. Members of the committee agreed that an increase in the pay might help those town that struggle to get poll workers.

Ms. Goldstein made a motion that we add increasing poll worker pay and shortening the early voting period to our list of problems/issues. Mr. Newman seconded the motion. Voting as follows: Ms. Murphy, Aye; Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Due to the size of the current list, I have included it as a separate page at the end of these notes.

- C) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote:
 - 1) Continue to work on recommendations/solutions for issues/problems.

Ms. Goldstein suggested that a list of “per diem” poll workers who are willing to travel outside of their hometown to work the polls could be compiled and made available to any city/town in need of poll workers. Ms. Jamison suggested that shortening the number of days of early voting to help with staffing/budget shortages should be considered.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote:
 - 1) Create working task list for committee members

Action Items:

General poll worker information

- Mr. Ford reported that several of the local boards of canvassers are working on preparing an Emergency Action Plan to help poll workers in the event of an emergency i.e. fire, loss of power, building evacuation.

Search for Grant Money for brochure dissemination

- Ms. Goldstein indicated to wish to work with someone on securing a grant. Mr. Ford suggested the Rhode Island Foundation and the Knight Foundation as possible sources.

Mr. Newman made a motion to establish a working action item list (a “to do” list for our committee) to seek and propose solutions to the items on our list of issues/problems. Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion. Voting as follows: Ms. Murphy, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Newman reminded us all of the Zoom meeting regarding the Open Meetings Laws in Rhode Island at 1 p.m. and then made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Goldstein seconded the motion. Voting as follows: Ms. Murphy, Aye; Ms. Goldstein, Aye; Mr. Newman, Aye; Ms. Jamison, Aye. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Marlene Murphy

For Daphne Meredith

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

**JAMESTOWN ELECTRICIANS TRAINING AND ADVISORY AD HOC COMMITTEE
LIST OF ELECTION ISSUES/PROBLEMS
ADENDUM TO MEETING MINUTES**

1. 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

2. The voting process, including, for example, how to accommodate both poll checkers and First Amendment auditors in accordance with the law.
3. Standardize/make uniform the voter registration process in all communities, including where and when voters can register.
4. 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).
5. How best to administer the process of voting when there are long lines.
6. The education of prospective candidates to insure access for all.
7. The need for voter education concerning the consistency of signatures to avoid invalidation of signatures.
8. Future voter education/outreach.
9. Education of poll workers regarding the legality of photos/videos in polling places.
10. Track status of pending “Disaffiliation” bill in State Legislature to address voter confusion/lack of clarity on the topic. Emphasize importance of uniform language regarding disaffiliation i.e. each community uses different language to inform voters of their status when they disaffiliate.
11. Collaboration with local press/news outlets to insure factual accuracy and timeliness of voter education and informational materials/articles.
12. General issues with mail-in ballots including voter confusion regarding the application for the ballot, the multi-step processing of these ballots, and the perceived unreliability of the US Postal Service.
13. Improve appearance of ballots, especially primary ballots, to reduce voter confusion.
14. How best to manage and give voters notice of changes in polling locations.
15. Accountability and accessibility of State Board of Elections and its members.
16. 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 such as incorrect delegate deadlines in published materials.
- Raise the possibility of Ad hoc committees reviewing BOE published materials for clarity and consistency.
- 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?
- Update poll worker materials to reflect actual issues that arise during the conduct of elections.
- Shorten the number of early voting days to help with staffing and budget issues for cities/town.
- Increase poll worker pay to attract more poll workers.