

JAMESTOWN BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024
2:30 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

A meeting of the Board of Canvassers was called to order at 2:41 P.M. at 93 Narragansett Ave in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers. Board of Canvassers Members present were as follows: Mr. Kenneth Newman, Mr. Hugh Murphy, Ms. Katherine Wineberg and Ms. Jennifer Thran.

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

Mr. Ford acted as Chair for this meeting. Mr. Murphy made a motion to move agenda item IV. New Business section A and B forward in the meeting to review and/or taken action on these items with a second from Mr. Newman. Mr. Newman commented that it would be beneficial to elect a Chair prior to moving forward with items on the agenda. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action, and/or Vote: To Accept the Resignation of Ms. Carol Nelson-Lee, Full member.

Mr. Ford opened this agenda item with an acknowledgement to Ms. Nelson-Lee for her years of service on the Board of Canvassers, the Town of Jamestown, and the voters in Jamestown. Her commitment to uphold the highest standards have ensured that the electoral process in Jamestown remained transparent and trustworthy. Mr. Ford thanked Ms. Nelson-Lee for her service and dedication to our town and wished her the best in her future endeavors.

Ms. Wineberg made a motion to accept the resignation of Ms. Nelson-Lee with a second by Mr. Newman. Mr. Newman commented that Ms. Nelson-Lee has been diligent, careful and extraordinarily detailed on issues during her time on the Board. This was specifically noticeable in the Congressional District 1 election, the fraudulent signature issues and the General Election. He is grateful for her years of service and wished her the best in her current and future pursuits. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

B) Review, Discussion, and/or Action, and/or Vote: Organizational Meeting of the Board
1) Nomination and/or Vote for the Position of Chairperson

Mr. Ford opened the agenda item of nomination and/or vote for the position of Chairperson. Mr. Newman made a motion to nominate Mr. Murphy for the position with a second by Ms. Wineberg. Ms. Wineberg made a motion to nominate Mr. Newman for the position with a second by Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Newman commented that the position of Chairperson does not go by seniority, but rather by a nomination and vote of the voting members of the Board. Mr. Ford explained the process of how new members are elected. They can either have their names put forward from the respective Town Committee's or apply themselves to the Town Council. They must belong to a political party either Republican or Democrat. *A Discussion ensued.*

Mr. Ford called for a vote for the first nomination, the nomination of Mr. Murphy. Vote: Mr. Newman, Nay; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Nay. Vote Did Not Pass.

Mr. Ford called for a vote for the second nomination, the nomination of Mr. Newman. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Nay; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed.

Mr. Ford continued to facilitate the meeting; Mr. Newman will chair the future meetings.

II. MINUTES

A) Approval of Minutes; Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote:

1) Board of Canvassers meeting of November 26, 2024.

Mr. Ford opened the agenda item for the above minutes. Mr. Newman made a motion to accept the meeting minutes presented with a second by Mr. Murphy. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote: 2025-2026 Budget discussions.

1) Board of Canvassers Stipend Increase

2) Poll Worker Pay Increase.

Mr. Ford opened this agenda item with commenting that Mr. Murphy had completed his figures all the documents are in the packet with two addition sheets, one being what other local Board of Canvassers get for compensation and a survey done by the Nick Lima of Cranston in 2018. Mr. Murphy commented that his figures come from the increase in hours the Board has to meet, trainings and additional duties placed on them. *A lengthy discussion ensued.* Mr. Murphy commented that since approximately 1999 the Board has not seen an increase in the stipend, the Consumer Product Index has increased from 166.6 in 1999 to 304.7 in 2003 which is a 183% increase. With these numbers and the increased workload, he proposes an increase to \$9,600. Mr. Newman agreed that the Board has a higher workload; working early voting and processes with certifications and verifications. Also affected by the increase in workload are the poll workers themselves. There is also a certification process in the works with the Board of Elections and Secretary of State's Office that will be implemented shortly. Mr. Ford commented that there is also the option of proposing a set stipend for meetings/election day similar to North Kingstown, which is \$25 per meeting and \$300 for election day. Mr. Murphy will re-evaluate the figures and consult with Mr. Ford. *A discussion ensued.* Mr. Murphy commented that he will along with updating the budget create a presentation to present to the Town. Mr. Murphy will work with Ms. Goldstein regarding integrating her poll workers pay increase to have both in the same presentation. Mr. Ford commented that Ms. Goldstein's figures were based on minimum wage and are included in Mr. Murphy's figures already. Mr. Murphy made a motion to combine the two increases in the budget and to create a presentation with a second from Mr. Newman. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

V. Open Forum

Mr. Ford opened this agenda item with explaining to the Board and members of the public that this is the time informational only items can be brought to the Board. If the Board wishes they can add this to a future agenda for discussion. During Open Forum, the Board may hear but not discuss these items.

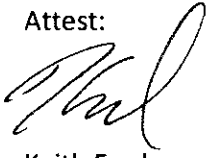
Mr. Ford commented that he currently has two desktops and two laptops that the office has been assigned. All of these devices do not have the ability to be upgraded to Windows 11 and will need to be replaced soon. He has applied for a grant to help offset the cost of these upgrades. This grant was approved same day and he was received approximately \$3,700 in funds for the replacement of one desktop, one laptop and necessary accessories. These items have already been ordered by the IT Department.

Mr. Newman commented that he has been focused on a number of issues that came up during the November General Election regarding signage. There has been any concerns and difficulties with regulations on signage to the point up to having a special meeting to address these issues with the Town Administrator. Signs issues included as to where they were placed, private property, public property, telephone poles and rights-of-way. Also, the town ordinance regulating signs have a duration but no means to determine how long the signs have been erected, when a complaint has been filed. Some of the signs that were placed throughout town it was unknown whether they were on Public, private or rights-of-way. This issue may come forth in future complaints to the Board of Elections, Ethics Commission or court. This issue may be brought back in front of the Board. Mr. Newman inquired about the truncating the duration of early voting. Mr. Ford commented that there has been talk about moving from 20 days and 14 days, but no exact language has been created. There may be a bill introduced after the legislative session opens. Ms. Wineberg inquired if there is any legislation on going to all mail ballots. Mr. Ford commented not that he is aware.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Murphy made a motion to adjourn with a second by Mr. Newman. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 3:38 P.M.

Attest:

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

Keith Ford

Deputy Town Clerk/Clerk to the Board of Canvassers

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