

**JAMESTOWN BOARD OF CANVASSERS MEETING MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025**  
**2:30 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

A meeting of the Board of Canvassers was called to order at 2:40 P.M. at 93 Narragansett Ave in the Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers. Board of Canvassers Members present were as follows: Mr. Kenneth Newman, and Mr. Hugh Murphy. Absent from the meeting was Ms. Katherine Wineberg and Ms. Jennifer Thran.

Also in attendance was Keith Ford, Deputy Town Clerk/Clerk to the Board of Canvassers. Ms. Laura Goldstein, Ms. Daphne Meredith and Ms. Nancy Beye from the Elections Training and Advisory Committee.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to move agenda item IV. New Business Section forward in the meeting to review and/or taken action on this item with a second from Mr. Newman. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; and Mr. Murphy, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action, and/or Vote: Status of Jamestown Elections Training and Advisory Committee.

1) Recommendation to Town Council: Full Committee, Ad Hoc or Dissolution.

Mr. Newman opened this agenda item commenting that he is the liaison to the committee. This committee has been noticed statewide, moving other cities and towns to move in the same direction. The Board of Elections and Secretary of States Office has taken notice to the work completed there, a

s well as a statewide working group of board of canvassers members. This committee was a six (6) month ad hoc committee which term ended in September and the ad hoc status was extended, however with all the ad hoc committees end at the start of a new council. The committee could request an extension of the ad hoc status for a set period. This would allow the committee to continue its work without the need for reorganization, keeping its temporary status in place. Another option would be to ask the Town Council to elevate the committee to a full, permanent standing committee. The third option is to dissolved the committee altogether. Mr. Newman thanked Ms. Beye as the liaison to the Town Council for her participation.

Mr. Newman opened the discussion to the floor and asked for recommendations from the committee members present. Ms. Meredith commented that they have unfinished business on the committee and to accomplish the charge of the committee her opinion is that they need reappointment by the Town Council for a period of six (6) months with the possibility to extend it longer and ask the Town Council for the committee to be reconstituted on an as needed basis nearer election cycles. Ms. Goldstein commented that the committee had created a presentation and report which has not had the opportunity to be been shown. She would like to keep the committee moving forward for another year to get their information out and track changes.

*Ms. Wineberg entered the meeting at 2:46 P.M.*

Mr. Newman commented that one thing that came up in the committee was the notion of a virtuous feedback loop. As the Board and poll workers deal with the problem in house then the Board of Elections responds. However, we never find out what caused the issue. For instance, with the Presidential Preference Primary receiving the incorrect ballots, we never found out how that happened or if another town received out ballots. *A Discussion ensued.* Ms. Goldstein commented that she would like to see the Board of Elections have more feedback and more training for poll workers with real world problems. In her opinion she would like to have a full standing committee. Ms. Beye inquired about what other communities have other committees similar to ours. Mr. Newman commented that there are a few Rhode Island committees in the process of being created as well as one that is a standing committee.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to recommend to the Town Council to have the Election Training and Advisory Committee to a full standing committee with a second by Ms. Wineberg. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

## II. MINUTES

- A) Approval of Minutes; Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote:
  - 1) Board of Canvassers meeting of December 18, 2024.

Mr. Newman opened the agenda item for the above minutes. Mr. Murphy made a motion to accept the meeting minutes presented with a second by Ms. Wineberg. 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. Newman opened this agenda item and turned it over to Mr. Murphy who had completed figures for the 2025-26 FY Budget. Mr. Murphy commented that he has completed an analysis for the poll workers and Board of Canvassers. Mr. Murphy put together a presentation that gives a background and reasons for an increase. Mr. Murphy made the presentation to the Board which was a PowerPoint that was included in the packet. Mr. Murphy requested that the Supervisors pay increased from \$125 for election day to \$225, which would be equal to \$15 an hour and Moderators and Clerks moved from \$150 for election day to \$240 which would be equal to \$16 an hour. Mr. Goldstein commented that she would also like to see a separate training compensation as required by law. Mr. Ford commented that it is included in the election day poll worker rate as of right now. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Ford also added an additional \$25 training fee into the calculations for those poll workers who take the training and are selected to work. *A Lengthy Discussion Ensued.* Mr. Murphy made a motion to approve the increase in poll worker pay within the budget and also as to be heard during a budget workshop with the Town Administration with a second by Ms. Wineberg. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

Mr. Murphy made the presentation to the Board which was a Power Point that included a description of the duties of the Board and was included in the packet. Mr. Murphy requested that the Board of Canvassers receive an increase in the stipend. Mr. Newman commented that with the upcoming change of election official certification program that has begun, each Board member will have additional duties including training to fill in for any poll worker position and complete the certification program. Mr. Murphy commented that pre COVID-19 the Board worked an average of 63 hours a year, post COVID-19 it is up to 96-100 hours a year not including training. *A Lengthy Discussion Ensued.* Mr. Murphy commented that the Chairperson of the Board receives a stipend of \$1,456 a year while the two full members receive \$1,260 and the alternates each receive \$630 a year. Mr. Murphy made a motion to increase the stipend of each Board member to \$2,000 a year with a total budget item increasing \$10,000 with a second by Ms. Wineberg. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously. Mr. Ford commented that the Town Administrator has requested a memorandum of justification any budget increase over 2.5%. Mr. Murphy commented that he will complete that form and submit it to Mr. Ford.

- A) Review, Discussion, and/or Action and/or Vote: Re-Districting Voting Districts into three (3) Districts.

Mr. Newman opened this agenda item of re-districting and commenting that this was Ms. Nelson-Lee's request. Right now, we have two (2) districts and right now climate change and sea level rise could cause issues with voters access to polling locations. Main areas of concern are Mackerel Cove and the Great Creek "Zeek's' Creek." The Board is not ready yet to consider redistricting. At this stage of this we do not were not able to come up with compelling evidence to entertain these issues. Mr. Newman would like to table this until more information is obtained. Ms. Wineberg made a motion to table the discussions to retrace our precincts with a second by Mr. Murphy. Mr. Goldstein inquired if there has been any discussions about leaving the districts the same as the expense to research this is high and move to pushing mail ballots to those who may be affected. Mr. Newman commented this needs to be discussed before going to re-districting, prior to the expense of re-districting finding alternatives to voting day. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously.

## V. Open Forum

Mr. Ford commented that Financial Town Meeting will be on Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Lawn Ave School. Also, upcoming meetings for the next few months will be on the third Wednesday of the month. They Board can decide if they would like to move the May meeting earlier in the month to be able to cover the Final Canvass.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Wineberg made a motion to adjourn with a second by Mr. Murphy. Vote: Mr. Newman, Aye; Mr. Murphy, Aye; and Ms. Wineberg, Aye. Vote Passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 3:49 P.M.

Attest:



Keith Ford  
Deputy Town Clerk/Clerk to the Board of Canvassers

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