

**CITY OF NORTHAMPTON
MASSACHUSETTS**

Northampton Board of Registrars

Meeting Minutes

On-line Zoom Teleconference Meeting

Meeting Date: 01/12/2021

Meeting Time: 5:30 pm

1. *Announcement that meeting is held via Zoom & audio and video recorded-* Clerk Powers announced that the Jan 12, 2021 meeting of the Board of Registrars was being held via Zoom teleconference and that the meeting was video and audio recorded.
2. *Public Comment:* None.
3. Review Meeting minutes of previous meetings: The Board reviewed meeting minutes from the previous meetings: October 27, 2020, November 13, 2020, and December 8, 2020. Registrar Tarantino noted that the spelling of his name was incorrect in the body of the minutes for all meetings presented; Registrar Kay moved to correct the spelling; Registrar Polachek seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4 Yes, 0 No.
4. *2021 Election Calendar:* Clerk Powers reviewed the basic election timeline with the Board of Registrars. Nomination papers would be made available Friday, April 2nd, and based on Clerk Powers' review of review of the 2021 holiday calendar, she proposed that September 28th, 2021 would be the better of two dates allowed by the city's charter to hold a preliminary election. This date was suggested by city solicitor, Alan Seewald who reviewed the possible dates allowed by Charter and shared that the high holidays of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, were the two holidays that the previous Charter Commission chose to avoid. Since the two allowable dates specified by charter both fall on Jewish holidays, his preference was to avoid an election on September 21, 2021. The date for the November election will be November 2, 2021.
5. *Orders before City Council regarding Charter Changes in Local Election Process-* There are four Orders before the City Council as follows:

20.183 An Order Amending the Charter to Mail Ballots for Municipal Elections to All Registered Voters

20.184 An Order Amending the Charter to Allow Resident Non-Citizens to Vote in Municipal Elections

20.185 An Order Amending the Charter to Make Clarifications and Correct Deficiencies in the Prior Language

20.186 An Order Amending the Charter to Allow Residents 16 Years of Age or Older to Vote in Municipal Elections

20.183-There are two options outlined in this order. The first option allows for a municipal ballot to be mailed to every registered voter in the city. The second option allows that every registered voter receive an application for an early vote ballot. If the first option is not passed, it would be hoped that the second open would be accepted by state legislators.

20.184-This Order allows every resident of the city, whether a citizen or noncitizen, who is not otherwise disqualified from voting under state law, to be qualified for voting in a regular city election or a preliminary election for ward councilor or ward school committee member. The Board discussed this order with concern about how to manage this on Election Day. The City Clerk will need to develop election operating procedures in accordance with this change; also, it is unclear how many city residents will need to be tracked outside of VRIS.

20.185-This order makes clarifications and correct deficiencies in prior charter language. It also deletes the position of City Clerk as an elected position.

20.186-This order provides for residents 16 and over to be allowed to vote.

6. *Center for Tech & Civic Life COVID-19 Grant Status* - Clerk Powers reports that \$2,750.13 of the \$15,960 grant received was spent to cover various expenses for the November 2020 election. The monies spent were used for Vote-by-mail/Absentee voting equipment or supplies, signage at the Early Voting polling location, and an on-line recruiting and scheduling tool for election workers. There remains a balance of the grant money in the amount of \$13,209.87. Clerk Powers has asked the Center for Tech & Civic Life for a six-month extension to exhaust the funds for 2021 elections.
7. *Review of Statistics*: Not Reviewed.
8. *Status of Annual Street List*: Clerk Powers announced that the updates in VRIS continue based on the resident information that was received from Landlords. She expects that this work will be completed by January 21st. After this date, the information will be forwarded to the printer for processing of the 2021 Street Listing.
9. *Future Business and Meeting Dates*: The next meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2021. It will take place at 5:30 pm and will be held via Zoom teleconference.
10. *Adjourn*: At 6:30 pm Registrar Polachek excused himself from the meeting because he had another meeting that he needed to attend. At 6:35 Registrar Tarantino moved to adjourn the meeting; Registrar Kay seconded the motion. The motion was approved 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Registrar Polachek)

Prepared by P. Powers / contact ppowers@northamptonma.gov 413.587.1223