Belmont Board of Registrars of Voters
Minutes of Public Meeting
held February 3, 2020 4:30 PM
Town Clerk's Office Conference Room

Members attending: Bob McGaw, Stanley Dzierzski, Steve Shestakofsky, Ellen O'Brien Cushman
Meeting convened at 4:32pm

Chair McGaw and members of the Board welcomed its new appointee representing the Democratic party, Steve Shestakofsky. Steve expressed enthusiasm for his appointment and looks forward to a very exciting 2020.

Ellen explained the preparations for the upcoming election year. In calendar 2020, the Town will hold four election, three State elections and one Town Election. The State elections will require Early Voting in Person.

- Preparations for the 2020 Elections and Early Voting Periods:
    o Presidential Primary   March 3rd
        ▪ Early Voting   February 24th – 28th
    o Town Election   April 7th
    o State Primary   September 1s
    o General Election   November 3rd   (Presidential and State)
        ▪ Early Voting   October 19th - 30th

- Belmont's Early Voting In Person hours as posted by the Town Clerk and advertised the week prior to the March 3rd Presidential Primary Election:
    o Monday 8am – 7pm; Tuesday & Wednesday 8am – 4pm; Thursday 8am-7pm; Friday 8am-Noon.Four parties: Democratic, Green Rainbow, Libertarian, Republican.
    o The Early Voting In Person hours for the November Presidential/State election will be expanded to two weeks prior to the election. Hours to be determined but likely will again be mandated by the State Legislature.
- Further Ellen explained that she will again employ the Central Tabulation Facility at Town Hall to absorb a large number of early voting ballots. The Central Tabulation Facility (CTF) offloads the tabulation of Early Voting Ballots only from the precincts to a central counting facility. There is a tremendous coordination effort and legal posting requirements that she will be undertaking however Belmont has been successful with Central Tabulation in 2016.
- We are extremely fortunate to have so many wonderful, qualified and interested election workers and are currently working on the deployment schedule. The worker schedules we employ on Election Days: 6am – 1pm and 1pm – close. Workers are one Warden, one Clerk, four Election Workers totaling six people per precinct as required by MGL and Election Regulations. In addition, each polling place will have one Police Officer totaling seven officers.(Beech Street hosts two precincts)
- A brief discussion of the process used to qualify absentee Belmont voters who are members of the active military or US Citizens living abroad (UOCAVA voters) to ensure that they have opportunity to cast their ballots and have the votes counted. Belmont typically manages and communicates with approximately 250 such voters, a large number compared to many communities our size. Meg Piccione in the Town Clerk's

office manages all absentee voting for Belmont, including the UOCAVA to ensure we comply with the Federal deadlines, processes and reporting requirements.

- A brief discussion was held about the responsibilities of the members of the Registrars on and before Election Day for the Primary and about the counting of the UOCAVA ballots on Election night.

- Ellen reviewed her plans to use the local media, Belmont Light bill insert and the Town website to encourage residents
    - to register to vote,
    - to vote, and
    - to verify before election day that they continue to be registered voters of Belmont or know where they are actually registered.
- Bob McGaw inquired what procedures will be employed for Belmont voters who arrive at the polls to vote only to learn that they are no longer registered voters of Belmont. We deploy a tablet at each of the precincts that has a quick link to the State's database system www.wheredoivotema.com; and www.trackmyballotma.com to inform voters about checking their own absentee ballot status. We do this on busy elections while voters are in line so they don't need to wait in a line and then learn they aren't at the correct voting place.
- A brief discussion of a new virus that's running rampant in China was held. Ellen indicated that we have purchased large-size Purell Hand sanitizer bottles for each of the polling places in hopes of preventing spread. We will continue to monitor the situation and impact on elections.
- Ellen also reviewed the State laws regarding electioneering around the polling place on Election Days and Belmont's prohibition of same during Early Voting and Absentee In person voting at Town Hall. She's communicated it to those taking out nomination papers for the Town Election and will continue to do so.
- Town Election – nomination papers are due February 18, and require 25 certified signatures for Town Meeting and 50 certified signatures for Town-wide office. Ellen or Meg will be at Belmont High School to run a voter registration session – these have dropped of considerably due to pre-registrations when getting a Driving learner's permit or license at 16 or 17 and the success of the online voter registration portal.
- General Discussion of security preparedness for elections. Ellen informed the Board that she is a member of EI-ISAC the Election Infrastructure –Information Security and Cybersecurity group in Department of Homeland Security and is working with Chief MacIsaac and IT Director Dave Petto to ensure Belmont is on guard physically and electronically.
- Status/calendar Approved capital project to replace existing vote tabulators. Although we have an approved project to purchase new tabulators, we have not yet done so – with all the talk about cybersecurity and federal requirements, we are waiting until this settles to move ahead with the purchase.
- Lastly, Ellen alerted the Board to the new Automatic Voter Registration Law that is taking a lot of time and resources, postage, printing, etc. Every person who is a US Citizen who goes to the Registry of Motor Vehicles to get a license or register a vehicle will automatically be registered to vote, even if they were previously registered. This is creating a lot of duplicates that must be managed in the voting list and requires mailing notifications to voters who are on alert for voter fraud because they receive a letter telling them someone registered to vote; it was the voter in the end.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen O'Brien Cushman
Town Clerk