

MINUTES

Special Board of Registrars' Meeting

August 23, 2016

10:00 a.m.

City Hall – Room 208

Present: Patricia Lucier and Susan Waye. Also present City Clerk Patricia Piecuch, Kim Kleiner and Gwen Mikailov, Co-Chairs League of Women Voters NH – Greater Nashua

1. In the absence of the Chairman, City Clerk P. Piecuch called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and asked for election of a Chairman Pro-Tem. S. Waye motioned to elect P. Lucier as the Chairman Pro-Tem. Seconded by P. Lucier. Motion passed.
2. Discussion on communication from Kim Kleiner and Gwen Mikailov, Co-Chairs of the League of Women Voters NH – Greater Nashua. P. Lucier motion to accept, place on file and to discuss the communication. Seconded by S. Waye. Motion passed.

Ms. Mikailov introduced herself and gave her background and why she joined the League as well as some background on the League. The League's initiatives, what they would like to do over the next few years, would be to facilitate voter registration for people. They feel their hands are tied and are working under constraints for groups looking for people to do voter registration. They would like to build a good rapport with the Board. She further stated the League was non-partisan and it was about education.

Ms. Kleiner introduced herself and spoke about two events done last year, the meet and greet with the Aldermen as well as the Mayoral debates. They were looking to do more events like this, as voter education is so important.

Ms. Lucier stated it was wonderful what the League was doing, but they were Registrars, and they register voters. Educating the voters is important, but we register and approve the voters. They were not the only organization that wants to register voters and if they do it for one then they would have to do it for all. It would set a precedent. The City Clerk's Office is opened Monday through Friday, so if someone wanted to register to vote they could come down between the hours of 8 – 5. Ms. Lucier stated the other problem, after working in the office for 35 years, is how the information comes back. It has to be reviewed and then entered into the statewide database and during certain times, the checklist is closed 10 days before an election.

Ms. Waye stated they have had volunteers work as registrars at elections and explained the process. Then what happens when it comes back and it is incomplete. Letters have to be sent in order to complete the registration and there is a lot more work.

Ms. Mikailov stated she worked in Ward 1 and did have to come back in to sign paperwork. By doing the drives it would help to alleviate spreading voter registration out over the course of the year.

Ms. Kleiner stated she had a discussion with the Mayor and Nashua is very diverse. These individuals feel uncomfortable coming into the office. It would be easier, so it would help alleviate the day of election, if they could go out into their communities to register. Some issues seen are with those who speak Spanish or Portuguese.

Ms. Mikailov stated that with students at Nashua High School South, many do not drive, so if it was advertised with the teachers, then more would come out. It was a good outreach.

Ms. Lucier stated they had done the high schools and very few students came out to register to vote. The most she thought came out was 10 and that was after being there for over two hours.

Ms. Mikailov stated that she knew that Katherine Johnson, Advisor to the John Locke Society at Nashua High School South was looking to promote a event. Have people who are experienced and willing to learn to do what they need to do to make it happen and more people will come out.

Ms. Waye stated that if it was done for the high schools then it would have to be done for all organizations. If we do for those that do not speak English, then do you have someone who speaks the language and can answer their questions when trying to register them to vote? It sounds easy, but there is a lot involved especially when you are trying to prepare for an election and are trying to do absentees and print a checklist. What happens if something is missing and they cannot be added to the checklist?

Ms. Mikailov stated she understands the points discussed and could help fill in for other voter drives. It would be a moot point if there was online voter registration as there was legislation introduced last year.

Ms. Lucier stated in reference to the schools, the students take buses to the schools or to work, then they could take a bus to city hall,

Ms. Kleiner stated she understood the points and they were valid, but it is all about education. Maybe they could look at setting a date to go to the high schools.

Ms. Lucier stated it was too late for the Primary and that she would like to see volunteers from the League to work at the polls for November.

Discussion then centered around public housing, handicap accessibility and absentee ballots as well as transportation to the polls. It was mentioned that the city buses do stop at some of the elderly and other public housing as well as there will be rides to the polls offered in November.

Ms. Lucier stated she didn't have the time personally and didn't want to give in and allow every organization to register voters. At this time she wasn't willing to abdicate these

duties. She further stated that the League is a great organization and they provide great education, but at this point they couldn't do it.

Ms. Mikailov stated she understood, so was it the Board's intention not to deputize member of the League to go out and register voters.

Ms. Lucier stated she wouldn't have a problem with the education, but for Ms. Piecuch and her staff to have to deal with the clean-up of the voter registration, it is not at a good time, not for this election. At this time she would have to vote against it, but in the future maybe they should organize something for education on how one registers to vote and what needs to be done.

Ms. Wayne stated that whoever went out to register would have to be trained by Ms. Piecuch and at this time, with her not fully staffed, she wouldn't have the time.

Ms. Mikailov stated she had learned about it and has already worked as a registrar.

Ms. Piecuch explained then explained the voter registration laws, how they would have to be trained and appointed by the Board. They would not be just allowed to go out to register someone to vote since they had training. The Board had to appoint members in order to register to vote and those that are registrars would be representing the City Clerk's Office in an official capacity. They would not be out of the League, but appointments made working in conjunction with the City Clerk's Office.

Ms. Mikailov asked about referring voter registration to an outside agency, to have one outside agency to defer to. Ms. Piecuch reiterated that the Board had to appoint a person to act as a registrar. Ms. Wayne stated that a person is appointed, not an organization, so it would have to be a person from League. Ms. Lucier stated they can only deputize an individual, not an organization.

Discussion then ensued about going out to the high schools and what dates would work for the Board should the schools contact them to set a time for registration.

Ms. Lucier motioned the Board does not appoint any deputy registrars to handle events, for a voter registration drive at this time, and further that the Board will review this policy in 2017. Seconded by Ms. Wayne. Motion passed.

Ms. Lucier suggested the League help and recruit registrars for the November election.

3. There being no further business to become before the Board, P. Lucier motioned to adjourn. Seconded by S. Wayne. Motion passed.