

Rhode Island Town and City Clerks' Association



MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING HELD

Thursday, June 22, 2023
Lincoln Country Club
31 Dexter Rock Road
Lincoln, RI 02865

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: President Jennifer M. West, CMC, called the meeting to order at 8:58 a.m.

Town Clerk Lillian Silva welcomed the Association and introduced Town Council Vice President Arthur Russo and Town Administrator Philip Gould. Both Mr. Russo and Mr. Gould recognized the important role clerks play in running municipal government.

Ms. West introduced the following:

Rob Rock, Deputy Secretary of State/Director of Administration: Mr. Rock noted: 1) The online mail ballot application portal, though some kinks need to be worked out, will provide for less paper ballots; 2) Now that the legislation session has ended, disaffiliation will be aligned with the registration deadline 30 days before the election and the Presidential Primary will be April 2, 2024; 3) Students will be able to work the polls once they have been vetted; 4) Voters will be able to track their application for mail ballots online and will be notified when their application is accepted by the Boards of Canvassers; 5) There will be an Election Day Scenario Roundtable held on August 17; and 6) The annual Cyber Summit will be held on September 29.

Nick Lima, Clerk, City of Cranston: Mr. Lima presented and the Association watched “No Time to Fail – Election Workers Are Ground Zero for Democracy,” a 90-minute documentary film about Rhode Island Clerks and Election Officials working the 2020 elections during the Pandemic. The film is being shown nationally and will be on PBS. It is hoped that the film will help voters understand and appreciate the administration side of elections. It is frustrating that voters accuse elections of being invalid. Education is the key.

1. NEW BUSINESS:

a. **Jacqueline Kelley, Associate Director of Health, Division of Policy, Information, and Communications, Department of Health:** The Association Members discussed, at length, with Ms. Kelley their numerous frustrations with the recently rolled out revised portal for birth

and marriage certificates. Ms. Kelley noted the issues, will discuss them with her colleagues, and report back to the Association.

2. OLD BUSINESS:

a. **Fundraising:** Sarah Rapose reported: 1) The candy sales have been successful and will continue; 2) There will be another Calendar Raffle coming up; and 3) If anyone has any ideas for a fundraiser, such as the recent “Funny for Funds” one, please contact Ms. Rapose.

b. **Roundtable:** The annual fee is \$3000.00. Discussion ensued.

MOTION made by Tracy Nelson to move ahead with Roundtable and approve the annual fee of \$3000.00; seconded by Nick Lima; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

3. SECRETARY’S REPORT - Erin Liese:

a. **Approval of April 20, 2023, Minutes**

MOTION made by Peggy Long to accept the April 20, 2023, Minutes as presented; seconded by Susan Flynn; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

4. TREASURER’S REPORT – Lynn Hawkins:

a. **Approval of Operating Account:**

MOTION made by Peggy Long to accept the Treasurer’s Report for the Operating Account as presented; seconded by Michelle Hardy; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Treasurer, Lynn Hawkins, noted that Amazon Smiles Funds and a fee for the recent Athenian session were erroneously deposited in the Operating Account. She will move them to the Conference Account.

b. **Approval of Conference Account:**

MOTION made by Carol Wordell to accept the Treasurer’s Report for the Conference Account as presented; seconded by Peggy Long; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. **Education – Mary LeBlanc:** Ms. LeBlanc reported that all the education instructors needed for NEMCI have been engaged.

- b. **Elections – Mike Narducci:** Mr. Narducci reviewed the new Election bills.
- c. **Legislation – Rick Goldstein:** Mr. Goldstein noted that the Legislative Session is over. The bills passed that the Clerks should be concerned with mainly center around Elections.
- d. **New England Institute – Sarah Rapose and Leigh Carney:** Ms. Rapose reported: There are many Rhode Island clerks attending NEMCI this year, which will be held in July.
- e. **Scholarship Committee – Michele Hardy:** Ms. Hardy was pleased to announce that all Rhode Island applicants attending NEMCI this year have been fully funded with scholarships.
- f. **Conference Committee (Annual Conference 2024) – Leigh Carney:** Ms. Carney reported that the Committee is preparing for the conference.
- g. **Fundraising – Sarah Rapose:** Regarding the November 2023 Conference being held in Connecticut, Rhode Island will be responsible for the Basket Room, which will help fund Rhode Island’s Conference in November 2024. Ms. Rapose asked every city and town to donate one.
- h. **Membership – Lynn Hawkins:** Ms. Hawkins reminded the members that the deadline for annual dues is June 30 and noted that she will be making name badges for the next meeting.
- i. **By-Laws – Leigh Carney:** Ms. Carney stated that the By-Laws Committee is working on suggesting a Clerk of the Year and Longevity Awards.
- j. **Technology – Roberta Fagan:** Ms. Fagan asked the members to send pictures that they think appropriate for the Association’s website.
- k. **Handbook Committee – Wendy J.W. Marshall:** Ms. Marshall reported that the Handbook will be done by the September meeting.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Former Pawtucket Registrar, Dawn McCormick, sadly passed away earlier this month
- b. Krista Tracy is the new Elections Administrator in Warwick
- c. There is an opening for Registrar/Board of Canvassers Clerk in Westerly
- d. Karen Montoya, Jamestown Deputy Clerk/Canvassing Clerk, is retiring June 30
- e. Keith Ford will be the new Jamestown Deputy Clerk/Canvassing Clerk
- f. Leigh Carney’s birthday is today. Happy Birthday, Leigh!

7. NEXT MEETINGS:

- a. The September meeting will be held in Cranston
- b. The January 2024 meeting will be held in Richmond

8. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION made by Nick Lima to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Melissa Cordeiro; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

The meeting adjourned at 1:08.

The Members enjoyed a delightful lunch provided by Michele Fried.

Following lunch, Erik P. Ulmen, PMP, Protective Security Advisor, Rhode Island, US Department of Homeland Security, Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency, presented a power point, “Active Shooter,” which discussed: the elements of active shooter incidents; response; planning; common behaviors, conditions, and situations associated with active shooter events; how to recognize potential workplace violence indicators; and provided information about best practices, communications protocols, and resources. Mr. Ulmen will be visiting each city and town in the coming months to review security.

Respectfully submitted,

**Lynn M. Hawkins, CMC, Treasurer
on behalf of
Erin F. Liese, CMC, Secretary**