

## **MINUTES**

### **CITY OF WESTMINSTER Board of Elections September 24, 2019 at 2 pm**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Board members in attendance were Chair Wendy Raith, Susan Thomas, and Michael Towle. City staff present was City Clerk Shannon Visocsky.

#### **MINUTES**

Board member Towle moved to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2019 Board of Elections meeting. Chair member Raith seconded; and, the motion was approved unanimously.

#### **REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Board member Towle reported that he attended the American Political Science Association conference and would provide a report at the next Board of Elections meeting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **Candidate Packets**

Ms. Visocsky presented the current candidate packet, which included the Declaration of Intent and the Campaign Finance Forms. She requested the Board consider revising the form submission deadlines to earlier. Receiving the Declaration of Intent from interested candidates would then shift the overall timeline of the election. Ms. Visocsky explained that it would allow time for campaigning and for citizens to learn more about the candidates, as well as increased advertisement for the election.

The Board members unanimously agreed and directed Ms. Visocsky to have the revised candidate packets for its review by November, prior to the start of the next election year.

##### **§ 14.1. Declarations of Candidacy**

As reviewed during the Board of Elections meeting on August 27, 2019, Ms. Visocsky continued the Board's discussion regarding Declaration of Candidacy. The Board directed Ms. Visocsky to move forward in proposing an amendment to §14.1 to include the following:

- Open requests for a Declaration of Candidacy form and Candidate Packet to the second Tuesday in January of an election year;
- Set deadline to submit a Declaration of Intent to 4:30 p.m. six weeks prior to the date of the an election; and,
- Require the Declaration of Intent be received by the City Clerk and reviewed by the Board, who will certify that a candidate is qualified as stated in §3 of the City Charter.

Additionally, the Board suggested the language on the Declaration of Intent form be changed from "Judges of Election" to "Board of Elections".

### **§ 14-2.1. Campaign Finances**

Ms. Visocsky then reviewed discussion of the Board on August 27, 2019 regarding Campaign Finances. After review of the forms and due dates of the Campaign Finance Statements, the Board proposed the following:

- Require candidates to provide a Campaign Finance Statement with no minimum requirement and remove the requirement for a Declaration of Lack of Campaign Contributions and Expenditures form for those who do not exceed \$50;
- Require candidates to have each Campaign Finance Statement notarized; and,
- Require candidates to have a treasurer, and a separate bank account for activities related to elections that will be zeroed out within 30 days following the date of the election;

Tentatively, the Board suggested the following due dates for Campaign Finance Statements:

- First Statement is due April 15 of an election year, or the first business day thereafter if it falls on a weekend or holiday;
- Second Statement is due May 1 of an election year, or the first business day thereafter if it falls on a weekend or holiday; and,
- Third and Final Statement is due 30 days following the date of the election for all candidates (successful or unsuccessful).

The Board members directed Ms. Visocsky to follow up with members of the Maryland Municipal Clerks Association (MMCA) to gain additional insight on how other organizations handle Campaign Finance Statements their due dates. Ms. Visocsky will provide additional information at the next Board meeting.

The Board also discussed and reviewed changes to the Campaign Finance Statements forms. Ms. Visocsky will provide a copy of this for the next meeting based on suggestions and feedback provided.

Additionally, Board members discussed penalties for candidates who do not meet the deadlines. Based on its discussion, the Board directed Ms. Visocsky to follow up with the Clerks of the MMCA.

Finally, the Board consented to include review and discussion of the Absentee Ballots at its next meeting.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

Ms. Visocsky provided the Board members with Board/ Commission applications, in an effort to reach out to the City residents to seek additional Board members.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board of Elections meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Visocsky