

Danvers Registrar of Voters - Minutes

January 12, 2023

A meeting of the Registrar of Voters was held on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 3:30 P.M. in the Daniel J. Toomey Hearing Room, Town Hall, 1 Sylvan Street, Danvers. Present: Walter Tipert III, Mark Lentine, Marilyn Hazel, Catherine Ellsworth

Town Clerk Cathy Ellsworth presented an overview of the changes to Vote by Mail as it relates to local elections. Vote by Mail is allowed for local elections, unless the Select Board “opts out” each year. A recommendation by the Board of Registrars to the Select Board is not required. Prior to the local election of 2024, the State will be sending VBM card applications to all voters, if the voter selects “all elections” this would include the Annual Town Election for 2024. Based on historical data on VBM requests, it’s estimated that we would have approximately 6,000 voters request a VBM for the local election. These requests would dramatically increase costs associated with the local elections as the state will not reimburse for those mailing/ printing/ processing costs.

The Select Board has the ability to opt-out prior to each local election. The Town Clerk presented to the Select Board on December 20, 2022 that the town should either allow vote by mail or “opt out” but the decision should be maintained from year to year as changing position will impact the voter turnout from year to year at the local level elections. At the December 20, 2022 meeting, Registrar Walter Tipert was in attendance and addressed the Board suggesting the Board should pick a path and stick with it. Registrar Tipert indicated that we do not need both VBM AND In Person Early Voting for local elections as Absentee Voting is still available to those who are not able to make election day.

Although a recommendation by the Registrars is not required, a motion by Registrar Tipert and seconded by Registrar Lentine to recommend to the Select Board to “opt out” of vote by mail for the May 2, 2023 Annual Town Election was voted 3-1 (Hazel voting no).

A recommendation to the Select Board to conduct In Person Early Voting requires a recommendation by at least 50% of the Registrar of Voters. Provided that the Select Board “opts out” of VBM for the May 2, 2023 ATE, on a motion by Registrar Tipert and seconded by Registrar Hazel to recommend an In Person Early Voting day to be held on Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 10:00AM-4:00PM in the Toomey Room at Town Hall, 1 Sylvan Street was voted 4-0.

On a motion by Registrar Tipert and seconded by Registrar Hazel by and voted 4-0 to approve these minutes.

Meeting adjourned 4:10

Attest: Catherine S. Ellsworth, Town Clerk