

DENNIS WATER DISTRICT

Board of Water Commissioners

Minutes of Meeting held

July 14, 2016

A meeting, having been duly posted, was held this date at the Dennis Police Department, 685 Route 134, South Dennis and called to order by Paul F. Prue, Chairman at 5:00 PM. Water Commissioner Peter L. McDowell were present.

Attending: Superintendent David Larkowski, Treasurer Sheryl A McMahon, Town Clerk Theresa Bunce, Selectman Wayne Bergeron and Town Administrator Rick White.

Chairman Prue asked those in attendance to stand for a moment of silence in remembrance of Charles F. Crowell, Water Commissioner who passed away (June 19, 2016).

Consider Vote to Set Date for a Special District Election to fill Water Commissioner Vacancy.

Ms. McMahon stated that with the passing of Mr. Crowell it was the Board's responsibility to call for a Special District Meeting. As provided by a special act of the legislature, since 2010 the annual district election has been conducted by the Town of Dennis under the auspices of the Town Clerk.

She reported that historically, as the District Clerk she relied heavily on the Town Clerk to provide the essential elements of the election (i.e. voter lists). That's why it made sense in terms of voter convenience (only having to go to polls once instead of twice within two weeks), cost savings and potential to increase voter participation.

Ms. Bunce said that there have been many changes in the election laws. Over the past several weeks she has reviewed possible dates. Two dates being considered were October 4 and December 6. Ms. Bunce read her rationale for recommending the special district election be set for December 6. Primarily, nomination papers would have to be submitted by August 12 which is less than a month from this meeting. She also noted the September primary on September 8, a special town meeting in October and the general election on November 8. Also new this year for the general election is *early voting*. For the December 6 election, the last day to obtain nomination papers would be October 14 with a deadline for submission of October 18.

Mr. McDowell noted that the Town of Orleans has a similar situation with a selectman vacancy and their election is set for October 18. It was thought that Orleans probably called for the election prior to the passing of Mr. Crowell in June.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding having less polling places than the five precincts currently conducted for a Town election. Ms. Bunce said it may be a possibility. Prior to 2009 the District elections were not well attended. Chairman Prue thought that since the change voters are accustomed to voting in their regular precinct and said the special district should be consistent and have it in the five precincts.

A discussion about cost ensued. Ms. McMahon, while she did not have the analysis in-hand, she estimated the cost for one precinct at \$6,000 to \$7,000. She expressed her concern that moving the polling locations for some precincts cause confusion and may disenfranchise voters. There was also a

discussion on limiting hours. The polls cannot be open any later than noon. There was a discussion about deciding the polling locations later but, Mr. McDowell was insistent that it be decided at this meeting. Ms. Bunce estimated the cost of two polling locations at just under \$8,000.

Ms. Bunce recommended that for two polling places they be precincts 1, 2 and 5 at the Police Station and precincts 3 and 4 at West Dennis Graded School House. She expressed a concern about the West Dennis Graded School House having insufficient lighting at night time or the Dennis Public Library. Additional discussion ensued. It was suggested by Chairman Prue to have precincts 3, 4 & 5 at the Police Station and have precincts 1 & 2 at Carleton Hall.

On a motion made by Peter L McDowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***VOTED: to call for a Special District Election for Water Commissioner on December 6, 2016, from Noon until 7:00 PM and to set the polling locations for precincts 1 & 2 at Carleton Hall and precincts 3, 4 & 5 at the Dennis Police Station.***

Adjournment

On a motion made by Peter L. McDowell, and duly seconded, ***the Board VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:28 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl A McMahon, Clerk