

**TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN**

**Board of Registrars**

**MEETING MINUTES OF**

**July 7, 2014**

**MEETING HELD IN THE MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM  
VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER  
2 MAYFLOWER STREET**

**Members Present:** Doug Johnstone, Olive Ahmuty, Dick Caouette.

**Members Absent:** Marianne Clements (excused).

**Others Present:** none

Doug Johnstone called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Minutes of the May 6, 2014 Board of Registrars meeting were reviewed.

***Dick Caouette moved to approve the meeting minutes of May 6, 2014, Olive Ahmuty seconded and it was so voted 3-0-0.***

Doug Johnstone reviewed the process for voter registration challenges, highlighting the following sections from the Residence for Voting Purposes, produced by the Elections Division in 1997 and created as a guide for registrars:

- Residence is defined as the “center of social, civil and domestic life” for the individual;
- There is no satisfactory brief definition of ‘residence’. The concept of ‘residence’ is dependent upon facts of each particular case.
- To prove that they are residents for the purposes of voter registration the citizens need only swear to the fact by signing an affidavit of registration. Officials may ask no further questions at the time of registration.
- The challenger bears the burden to prove that the voter is not properly registered.

As such, the role of the Board of Registrars is to simply review and weigh the evidence in order to make a determination. Today’s meeting is to review the complaint, the process in which to determine the merit of the complaint, and decide if a hearing is required so that both the challenger and the voter can be heard. Johnstone reminded the registrars that their role is an important one and not to be taken lightly since voting is a civil right guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and we, as registrars, may be held individually liable if found that we stripped someone of their voting rights arbitrarily or without merit.

The initial complaint by Stephen McGovern, received on June 26, 2014 was reviewed. The issue focused on the voters Facebook page listing his residence as Lynn, Massachusetts. Additional information to the complaint was submitted by Stephen McGovern on July 3, 2014, containing a copy of the property record card from the Assessor’s Office for the voter’s address with a mailing address of Lynn, Massachusetts, along with property record information on several properties in Lynn, Massachusetts, an obituary for the voter’s father, who died in 2010, Lynn

voter activity and property records. Johnstone noted that the challenged voter, under no obligation to respond to the initial complaint, was forthcoming in providing evidence of his residence here in Provincetown at the time he received the initial complaint against him, which consisted of the following: a copy of his 2013 tax return with his Provincetown address, Massachusetts Driver's License and car registration with Provincetown address, a letter signed by the Parking Clerk and Parking Administrator stating that the voter qualified for a Resident Parking Sticker in accordance with Provincetown Parking Regulations, and a copy of a credit card bill with his Provincetown address.

It was unanimously voted to hold a hearing so that both parties could be heard on the issue before voting on the merits of the challenge presented. The time and date of the hearing to be determined once all of the Registrars could be consulted to insure that all Registrars could attend.

Doug Johnstone moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and it was so moved unanimously.