

# 2004 Election Bulletin

To: All Town Clerks and Representative District Clerks  
From: Kathy DeWolfe, Director of Elections  
Melanie Jacobs & David Crossman, Election Administrators  
Date: August 4, 2004

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU.** We sincerely appreciate the extra effort put forth by all Representative District Clerks in accepting petitions and faxing consent forms to our office quickly. We were able to post the list and have copy to the printers for the ballots in record time.

**Primary Ballots will arrive not later than Tuesday, August 17, 2004 (30 days prior to the election is a Sunday and Monday is a legal holiday):** Most clerks will receive ballots on or before Friday, August 13. Please open boxes and check the ballots as soon as possible. Notify us immediately if there are any errors on your ballots. Most towns will receive the entire shipment of ballots at once, but all towns will receive at least 10% of the ballots by August 17 with the remainder to follow shortly. Clerks using MACHINE BALLOTS NEED to do a test deck as soon as you receive your memory card from LHS, but at least 10 days prior to the election.

**Paper Ballot Town Clerks (and any machine towns who have notified Melanie Jacobs) will receive Tally and Summary sheets at the end of August.**

**ORV's (Official Return of Vote forms) will be sent to all Town Clerks at least one week prior to the Primary Election.** I have tried to improve the wording and instructions at the beginning and end of the forms. We have also added a place for you to enter the number of provisional ballots, if any, that you provided, and these must be returned in the envelope with the ORV's. We have also added spaces for you to enter the seal numbers for your ballot bags.

**Notice to Provisional Voter Cards : Ten (10) cards are enclosed for each town.** If you provide a provisional ballot to a voter at the Primary or General Election, you are required by law to give this card to the voter so the voter will be able to call you or our office to find out if his ballot was counted. As we discussed at our workshops and in Elections Perspectives, we hope that in most cases you will use the sworn affidavit, add the person to the checklist, and provide a regular ballot. However, in the unusual event that you provide a provisional ballot, you must give the voter a notice of this card.

**Sept. 3 to Sept. 17, 2004: Independent Candidates (for all offices except Justice of the Peace) must file petitions with the Secretary of State to be placed on the General Election Ballot.** The signatures of voters on these petitions MUST BE VERIFIED BY TOWN CLERKS. We are encouraging candidates to call ahead and confirm a good time with each clerk, but there still will be some candidates who come in unannounced. Please review the petition to verify signatures of voters on your checklist. (If the candidate has already had more than the required number of signatures verified, you can politely suggest that no more verifications are needed and that the candidate can file the petition with the Secretary of State.) **We have enclosed a copy of both the Petition and Consent of Candidate form for Independent Candidates.** You can make copies of these forms for candidates who wish to run as an Independent. Please feel free to refer other questions from Independent Candidates or Minor Parties to us.

**We will send forms and instructions to all Representative District Clerks for the Post-Primary canvassing committees in late August.**

**Please remind your party town chairs that Justice of the Peace Nominations and Petitions must be filed between Sept. 3 and Sept. 17, 2004:** JPs can be nominated by major or minor parties by party caucus or if not noticed in time, by party committee. We have already provided a full election bulletin with all the details. The political parties should have also mailed instructions to the town political party chairs.

JPs can also run as independent candidates by filing a petition and consent form. Independent petitions must contain the signatures of 30 legal voters of the town or 1% of the checklist whichever is less. We sent a mailing in July with the JP forms and more detailed instructions.

**Ballot Information for Justices of the Peace and Articles for special town meeting:**

**Paper ballot (hand count) towns:** The Town Clerk must make all arrangements to have the ballot for the election of Justices of the Peace available by October 4, 2004 (30 days before the general election). You will also need to do your own ballot for any special town meeting articles that you vote by Australian ballot. **We strongly suggest that you ask at least two folks**

**outside your office to proofread your ballot carefully before printing it.** It is easy to gloss over an error when those of us who are so familiar with the names and party designations proofread. Names must be listed in alphabetical order (by last name) and include party designation or independent. There is no need to use a professional printer. You can create your own ballot in Microsoft Word and update it every two years. Make copies for the ballots on the colored paper, NOT white paper. (There is a sample ballot in Elections Perspectives if you want some ideas, but your ballot does not have to look exactly like it – just clear to the voters.)

**Vote tabulating machine towns: If you want the Elections Division to include your JPs on the November General Election ballots,** the town clerk must submit the names and party designations of all JP candidates to our office on or before **5:00 p.m. Monday, September 20, 2004.** **If you also have any special meeting articles to go on the ballot,** please send us the articles in MS Word as an email attachment so we can have the printers cut and paste them onto the ballot. For JPs, type the list of names – first, middle initial or name if any, and last name – in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS in one field with the party designation in the next field in an Excel file or type in columns in Word and send it as an attachment to [mjacobs@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:mjacobs@sec.state.vt.us). We provide the JP names and Articles to the printers electronically to avoid proofreading errors. **Please proofread the information carefully before sending it to us. If there are errors in your information, we will charge your town for any reprinting of ballots that is necessary.**

**Voting Booths: PHOTO Enclosed. You have extra time to Order a booth. The state is paying for these booths—there is no cost to the town.**

The Office of the Secretary of State has found a portable voting booth system that folds down, is on casters for ease of moving to the polling location and can then be quickly set up to include 4 voting spaces with dividers coming out from a central post or leg. We are purchasing the booths with 2 voting "table" spaces set at a height for standing voters and 2 voting "table" spaces set at a height for persons in wheelchairs or seated in a regular chair (as an aid to the elderly). Each of these portable systems provides 4 "voting stations."

Some towns have already developed their own system of using tables with fold down U-shaped dividers to separate voters that are popular with voters and work very well. **If you already have something that is easy to handle, allows voters with disabilities to have privacy while seated or in a wheelchair, and you are happy with it, please do not request one of these voting booths.**

If you want to see a sample of the voting booth, we have one at our office in Montpelier.

If you have not ordered a booth, or if you have a good reason why you need more than one booth (4 voting stations), please email me, [kdewolfe@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:kdewolfe@sec.state.vt.us) or [mjacobs@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:mjacobs@sec.state.vt.us) BEFORE AUGUST 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Campaign Finance Reminders**

All candidates for the Vermont General Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) must file their Campaign Finance Disclosure Forms with the Office of the Secretary of State, and then also file a copy of the forms with their Representative or Senatorial District Clerk. This copy is for your files and for interested members of the public to view. You do not need to forward a copy to us. **However, if Senatorial or Representative Candidates personally bring the forms to your office, PLEASE remind them that they must file the forms with the Secretary of State.** The disclosure forms can be downloaded from our website at <http://www.sec.state.vt.us>.

The campaign finance **filing deadlines** for General Assembly candidates who have raised or spent \$500 are as follows: **August 5, 2004, August 25, 2004, September 27, 2004, October 25, 2004, and December 13, 2004**

The campaign finance filing deadlines for candidates for all **County Offices** (High Bailiff) who have raised or spent \$500 are:

1. 10 days before the Primary (Sept. 7)
2. 10 days before the General Election (Oct. 25)
3. Within 40 days after the General Election (Dec. 13)

**ELECTION SUPPLIES:** If you have not yet ordered the supplies you will need for the September Primary and the November General Election – or if you anticipate needing additional supplies, now is the time. Please fax your orders (a copy of the order form can be found in Appendix D of Election Perspectives) to 828-5171 or email your order to [dcrossman@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:dcrossman@sec.state.vt.us).