

**CAMBRIDGE ELECTION COMMISSION  
WARDEN/CLERK DE-BRIEFS  
12/9/2020 AND 12/12/2020**

**Summary Report**

The report is divided into theme/process sections.

**Early Voting**

- Early voting went smoothly.
- Voters appeared eager to vote ahead of election day and in safe circumstances.
- More clarity needed regarding ballot styles for early, election day, and mail-in ballots.
- Color-coded, laminated information for same day registration procedures would be helpful.
- Have “same-day” registration materials in one envelope/binder similar to provisional ballot system.

**Training**

- On-line training was very helpful in reinforcing information and procedures.
- Tests were a useful tool for retaining information.
- In-person training could still be valuable – perhaps could use sessions to focus on particular areas, might be helpful for staff new to the position.
  - In-person training also an opportunity to connect with fellow wardens and clerks.
- On-line was very convenient – didn’t have to re-arrange schedule to attend in-person session.
- Ability to set your own pace with training, and also easy to come back to if you can’t complete it in one sitting.
- Training very user-friendly.
- Better demonstration on both the materials that are placed in each of the envelopes, as well as the flow of the process at the end of the day would be helpful – especially for people new to the position of warden or clerk. Would avoid having to break seals and then re-seal items.
- A clearer outline of procedures in case emergency occurs at precinct, e.g. evacuation protocols, would be helpful. Possibly also have a demonstration of what it would look like.

**Before Opening of the Polls**

- DPW did a great job with set-ups and breaking down precincts at the end of the day.
- Officers overall got materials to precincts in a timely fashion so workers able to prepare adequately.

**During Election Day**

- Check-out table not needed or missed. Eliminating checkout table made things run more smoothly, and also eased the demands on the precinct spaces.
- Yellow cards very helpful.
- Have a “VIP” code (voting in person) code developed for forms.
- Need more pages for clerk sheets.
- Voting on election days went smoothly with school not being in session.
  - An improvement to have bigger spaces in schools for precincts to conduct elections.
  - Possibility to have election day be a remote-learning or professional day in the future?
- Ability to accept mail ballots on Election Day at precinct?
- Appeared to be miscommunication among voters about mail-in ballots and being able to vote with, and/or cast at, precinct.
- Need clarity/additional emphasis as to when to set up second scanner.
- Scanners stopped working at several of the precincts – would be helpful to have clear protocols re use of scanners especially when malfunctions occur.
- Often challenging to cycle people through meal breaks and complete work in a reasonable timeframe.



### **During Election Day***(continued)*

- Automark not used very much during the day.
  - System tricky to set-up.
  - Braille pad and headphones able to be used by voter at precinct.
- Having two ballot boxes was very helpful.

### **Processing of Mail-in Ballots at Precincts**

- Pre-sorting of ballots to be processed eased workload significantly, able to process in reasonable timeframe.
- Processing of early/mail-in ballots went well, but important to start early since flow of voters is constant during the day.
- Earlier delivery of mail-in and early voted ballots would be helpful.
- Could ballots to be processed at precinct be delivered by police officer along with other materials?
- Could ballots be delivered at a certain time so staff could plan accordingly?
- Checking off people who voted early or by mail complicated because lists formatted differently.
  - “R” and “N” lists not sorted the same way as check-in lists – would be helpful to be consistent.
- Was easier to work with voters in November who had requested a mail-in ballot because didn’t need to phone office, however, there was a lot of running back and forth to the EV/AV processing table because that’s where lists were.
- Might be helpful to have some auditory cue on scanner as well to have indication that ballot processed successfully.

### **After Closing the Polls**

- Lots of blank write-ins –perhaps have public education campaign letting voters know they can just leave the race blank and not vote.
- Officer at precinct didn’t know about possible length of day – CPD may need to review expectations about hours for officers.
- Uncertainty re leaving results tapes on wall – if/when they should be taken down.

### **COVID Procedures**

- COVID protocols successful.
- PPE – very grateful for materials for workers. Plexiglass worked well.
- Ventilation could be challenging (cold in November to have doors open).

### **Miscellaneous/Other**

- Have mail-in/early and absentee voting categories merged into one.
- Good to have an increase in the municipal election turnout similar to what was experienced this year.
- With longer ballots for municipal elections, will it be more complicated for early voting and mail-in systems?
- If mail-in ballots used for municipal elections there may be more mistakes and therefore more hand-counting of votes.
- Good to have transparency with mail-in system on-line.

In attendance: Michael Arnott, Sarah Bell, Loretta Betts, Sherrie Cox, Yvonne Gittens, Tara Greco, Kathy Hess, Ian Lai, Joanne Dermody Mullan, Teane Scott, Barbara Vincent, and Eileen Woodford. Many thanks to them for their input on how to improve operations.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

RULES OF THE BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

RULES OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Rule 1. All individuals shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any regular meeting of the Board of Election Commissioners in regard to any matter considered thereat. Opportunities for individuals to be heard at all regular meetings of the Board of Election Commissioners shall be provided directly after the meeting is called to order, unless a majority of the Board votes to hear public comment at another point in the meeting. Each speaker shall limit his or her comments to no more than three minutes, unless the Chair sets a shorter time limit per person at the Chair's discretion.

RULES OF COURTESY

Rule 2. No one shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or refuse to obey the orders of the Chair.

Rule 3. All persons shall refrain from private conversation which interferes with the proper conduct of the meeting.

Rule 4. The following types of behavior will not be tolerated: threats, uttering fight words, matters which fall outside of the Board of Election Commissioner's scope and which are unrelated to items before the Board of Election Commissioners for discussion, adjudicated slander, speech invasive of the personal privacy of individuals, unreasonably loud or repetitive speech, and/or speech so disruptive of the proceedings that the meeting is substantially interrupted.

Rule 5. In accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §20(f), any person engaging in behavior that disrupts the proceedings such that the meeting is substantially interrupted will be warned once by the Chair that if his or her disruptive behavior continues he or she will be requested to withdraw from the meeting, and if the behavior continues, the speaker will be asked to withdraw from the meeting. If the speaker does not withdraw from the meeting as requested by the Chair, the Chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.

Rule 6. Every person addressing the Board of Election Commissioners shall state the person's name and address in an audible tone of voice for the record. All remarks shall be addressed to the Board of Election Commissioners as a body through the Chair, and not to any individual member thereof.

Rule 7. All individuals with cell phones, pagers, or other devices emitting audible signals shall either set the device to a non-audible signal mode or turn off the device.

Rule 8. All rules of decorum and conduct for comment shall be applicable to all individuals attending the meeting.

Adopted by the Cambridge Board of Election Commissioners on \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

3



# City of Cambridge

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FIRST IN COUNCIL  
February 8, 2021

MAYOR SIDDIQUI  
VICE MAYOR MALLON  
COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN  
COUNCILLOR SOBRINHO-WHEELER

- WHEREAS: The Cambridge Election Commission provides voters with an “I voted” sticker after their ballots are cast during election season; and
- WHEREAS: These stickers are an important symbol for Cambridge voters, and indicate to others that they’ve participated in their civic duty, and are worn by residents with pride; and
- WHEREAS: Cities around the country, such as San Francisco and Chicago, have designed stickers in a variety of languages, many of which reflect the demographics of their constituencies; and
- WHEREAS: In Cambridge, the design of our voting stickers only displays the phrase, “I voted,” in English; and
- WHEREAS: Our residents speak several languages, including Spanish, Amharic, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Portuguese, among others; and
- WHEREAS: In the fall, we conducted widespread voter engagement and outreach strategies to increase voter turnout, especially in neighborhoods of color and multi-language family households; and
- WHEREAS: One of the ways to continue increasing voter turnout and excitement, is to provide “I voted” stickers that reflect the culture, languages and people of Cambridge; and
- WHEREAS: Engaging Cambridge Rindge and Latin School students in designing a new sticker that reflects the soul of Cambridge is a great way to civically engage our young scholars, and to provide residents with a sticker to wear with pride after voting in local, state and federal elections; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager confer with the Executive Director of the Election Commission on the feasibility of new stickers for future elections; and be it further ordered
- ORDERED: That the City Manager coordinate with the Executive Director of the Election Commission, the Board of Election Commissioners, Cambridge Public Schools, and Mayor’s office to develop a design contest in partnership with CRLS students.

4

In City Council February 8, 2021.  
Order Adopted by a yea and nay vote:-  
Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.  
Attest:- Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony I. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "A".

Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk