



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

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COMMISSIONERS

Ethridge A. King, Jr.
Larry W. Ward
Charles J. Marquardt
Victoria A. Harris

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tanya L. Ford-Crump

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lesley Waxman

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Minutes of July 15, 2020

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm on July 15, 2020 via Zoom.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ethridge King	Present
Commissioner Charles Marquardt	Present
Commissioner Larry Ward	Present
Commissioner Victoria Harris	Present

Also present was Executive Director Tanya Ford-Crump. Assistant Director Lesley Waxman was absent due to illness.

I: MINUTES

Motion: To approve the Minutes of July 8, 2020

Moved: Commissioner King

Seconded: Commissioner Ward

Roll Call:

Commissioner King	Yea
Commissioner Marquardt	Yea
Commissioner Ward	Yea
Commissioner Harris	Yea

Passed 4-0

II: REPORTS

1. Executive Director's Report - R1 (Please see attachments)

State Primary, September 1, 2020

Ms. Ford Crump discussed with the commissioners the recently passed motion **(R2)** by the School Committee at their meeting on July 14 to allow the use of additional buildings as polling precincts. She has sent an email note to thank the Committee and School Administration; the commissioners will send a letter to them as well.

Ms. Ford-Crump then reviewed the issue of early processing of mail-in and early vote ballots. Ms. Crump stated that there were two options: processing ballots ahead of the elections, or purchasing 34 additional scanners to be used on election day to process ballots.

Commissioner King asked if we could process ballots before the elections and on the days themselves. Ms. Ford-Crump said that was not an option. She stated that the State would only pay for the leasing of the additional scanners if we used them only on election day. She also stated that whatever decision was made would be the process for both

elections. If the Commission decides to process ballots early, then a larger space would need to be identified, and additional personnel would need to be hired.

The group asked whether the Commission could approach Michelle Tassinari to ask whether she would consider allowing Cambridge to use the scanners before, as well as on the day of the election. Commissioner King stated that he would volunteer to contact her.

There has not been any updates regarding the certification of poll pads which could be used during the elections. Ms. Ford-Crump asked the Commission to consider purchasing additional units to have at all precincts.

Ms. Ford-Crump discussed the City's surveillance ordinance and its potential impact on use of certain equipment during the elections. She stated that she had received a written response from the Law Department which advised that the ballot tabulators and on-line training are exempt. The Law Department advised, however, that the City Council would have to approve use of the poll pads, since it would not be exempt under the ordinance.

Ms. Ford-Crump stated that she had informed the Law Department that the poll pads have been used in the past, and that the information is public record. The commissioners discussed contacting the City Manager to discuss operations for the upcoming elections. It could serve as an update to City administration on Commission needs, address concerns, and assist with getting systems in place given the tight timeframe before the primary.

The Department of Public Works has notified Ms. Ford-Crump that it no longer recommends storing the automark machines at the Corporal Burns facility.

There was a brief discussion regarding the test deck; it was decided that it was not necessary to schedule at this time.

2. Assistant Director's Report

No report was given due to Ms. Waxman absence.

3. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Marquardt stated that 202 Hampshire Street is not a valid address. He also reported that he had attended a recent webinar that reviewed the Wisconsin primary elections. Two major areas that were highlighted in the presentation included: the importance of contingency planning with upcoming elections, and; the emphasis on election administrators meeting with their local postmasters to review procedures given the projected increase in mailed ballot applications and ballots in the upcoming election season.

Commissioner Ward stated that he also attended the same webinar as Commissioner Marquardt, and also attended the School Committee meeting held on July 14.

Commissioner Harris reported that she and Ms. Ford-Crump visited the National Guard Armory (Ward 9 Precinct 2) to review the use of their gym for the fall elections. They also visited Matignon High School to determine whether it would be a suitable location for Ward 11 Precinct 3, but it is not handicap accessible. Commissioner Harris will follow up with the International School of Boston to see if they would consider hosting the precinct. She also reported communicating with the Harvard Law School's project on elections regarding worker recruitment and voter registration.

Commissioner King stated that he attended the School Committee on July 14. He thanked the chair of their Buildings and Grounds subcommittee, School Committee members, Mayor Siddiqui, and School Committee member Fred Fantini. He is meeting with Sean Effel of CCTV on Thursday, July 16 to record a PSA on election worker recruitment. He added that Commissioner Ward will be helping with communication efforts around upcoming elections by utilizing his contact lists from the Cambridge Jazz Festival. Commissioner King also stated that he had contacted Darrin Korte of the Cambridge Community Center to see if the Center could be used as a polling location.

III: PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Mello of 324 Franklin Street stated that the transmission of the Commission meeting appeared to be working. He requested a copy of the agenda and minutes, which Ms. Ford-Crump said she would send to him.

Motion: To close public comment

Moved: Commissioner King

Seconded: Commissioner Ward

Roll Call:

Commissioner King	Yea
Commissioner Marquardt	Yea
Commissioner Ward	Yea
Commissioner Harris	Yea

Passed 4-0

IV: ACTION AGENDA

Old Business

Requested Polling Place Relocations due to COVID-19

Commissioner King stated that precincts located at Gund Hall (Ward 7 Precinct 3), 2 Mt. Auburn Street (Ward 4 Precinct 3) and Quincy Hall (Ward 8 Precinct 3) would need to be relocated. He proposed moving Putnam Gardens (Ward 4 Precinct 1) from the MLK School, its suggested location, to the Cambridge Community Center. He stated that the 3 precincts could then fit into the two spaces offered at the MLK School.

Commissioner Ward discussed the relocation of the Truman Apartments (Ward 1 Precinct 2) to the Kennedy School. He also inquired as to whether the Commission had heard from MIT regarding the use of their buildings for precincts. He will follow up with Ms. Waxman and with MIT.

The use of the cafeteria space at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School was discussed. The plan would be to put both Ward 6 Precincts 2 and 3 there.

Commissioner Marquardt stated that he and Ms. Ford-Crump would be visiting the Morse School on 7/16 to assess whether it could house a double precinct.

Ms. Ford-Crump reminded the commissioners that polling location changes would need to be approved by the end of July. Voters would need to be notified of changes 2-3 weeks in advance of the election, and the Secretary of State would need a report from Cambridge as to why the precincts are being moved. She stated that she has still not received an opinion from the Law Department as to whether the Commission or City Council would be approving these changes. The commissioners stated that they could follow up with Ms. Glowa of the Law Department on Ms. Ford-Crump's request.

Commissioner Harris asked about polling booths, and the number which would be at each precinct. There was discussion regarding the size of the booths and how many could be used. The newer booths could be used in pairs, with one booth being available for use given physical distancing guidelines. These newer booths would have to be set up against a wall since they cannot stand on their own. Commissioner Harris stated that she could research options for getting additional booths. Ms. Ford-Crump stated that the Commission would have to follow the City's bidding process in renting any additional equipment.

Commissioner Ward recommended that the commissioners assess each of the precinct sites in pairs prior to the elections.

Poll Worker Recruitment

Commissioner Ward stated that it may be difficult to get access to student records at the High School over the summer to recruit students to work at the polls. The group suggested that Commissioner Ward work with School administration to distribute information over School listservs about the opportunity to work at the polls, and have the students send in an application.

Commissioner King stated he would reach out to elected officials to see if they would be willing to assist with worker recruitment.

Regarding staffing at the polls, the Secretary of State will be sending out guidelines regarding this issue, physical distancing guidelines, and any additional procedures and tasks related to COVID – particularly as they concern the November 3rd election.

The commissioners and Ms. Ford-Crump discussed issues of safety at the polls with regard to workers, voters, observers and the media. It is not yet clear what will be required, or what will instead be recommended.

It was agreed that the Commission should encourage voters to vote by mail. This may incur additional costs, which were not factored into the current fiscal year budget, but which would need an appropriation request to the City Manager.

Poll Worker Training

Ms. Ford-Crump stated that the City's IT department asked Ms. Waxman and herself to attend a meeting with a representative from Scytl. No materials are yet developed from that meeting to present to the commissioners. The timeframe for developing a training for workers is very short at this point.

Ms. Ford-Crump recommended that the commissioners work with Karen Francis as to when workers should be sent paperwork. Commissioner Harris suggested that the paperwork materials could include a letter stating that on-line and in-person trainings would be offered, and that they worker should indicate which type they would be attending.

New Business

Next meeting will be held on July 22, at 5:30pm via Zoom

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:29 pm

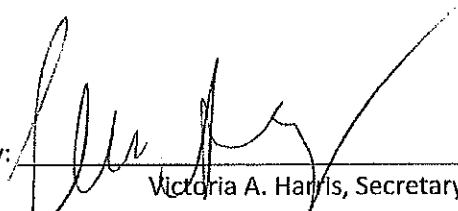
Moved: Commissioner King
Seconded: Commissioner Ward

Roll Call

Commissioner King	Yea
Commissioner Marquardt	Yea
Commissioner Ward	Yea
Commissioner Harris	Yea

Passed: 4—0

A True Record

Attested by: 
Victoria A. Harris, Secretary