



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 September 29, 2021

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm on September 29, 2021 in the 2nd floor conference room at 51 Inman Street. Present were Commissioner Larry Ward, Commissioner Victoria Harris, Commissioner Ethridge King and Commissioner Charles Marquardt. Also, present were Executive Director Tanya Ford-Crump, Assistant Director Lesley Waxman and Jeff Amero and Sean Sweeney from Geographic Information Systems "GIS".

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment.

Mr. Ian Nowland presented a concern he had regarding the postcard applications for requesting a ballot to vote by mail. He was concerned that including the ability to request a ballot to be forwarded to another address on the form could subvert the process potentially enabling someone to take a postcard and return it sending the voter's ballot(s) to another address. He recommended separating the application process and the forwarding process.

Staff and Commissioners discussed with Mr. Nowland the process to verify the identity voters who request ballots by mail noting that the same postcard was also used by the Commonwealth in 2020.

There being no additional public comment.

Motion: To close Public Comment.

Moved: Commissioner Ward

Seconded: Commissioner King

Motion passed 4 - 0

Motion: To suspend the rules to bring forward the presentation of GIS related to reprecincting.

Moved: Commissioner Ward

Seconded: Commissioner Marquardt

Motion passed 4 - 0

Jeff Amero started the presentation by highlighting that GIS had modified the 2 simulations from the September 22nd meeting using the objectives discussed with the Commissioners at that meeting as well as additional objectives submitted by the Commissioners to Ms. Waxman. For each simulation GIS has provided a map of possible precincts and a narrative of objectives able to be accomplished or not accomplished.

Sean Sweeney walked through the simulations.

Simulation 2A used Simulation 2 from September 22nd as its starting point with modifications as highlighted on the sheet provided with the map.

Simulation 2B used Simulation 2 from September 22nd as its starting point with modifications as highlighted on the sheet provided with the map.

The difference between 2A and 2B is in 2A Cambridge Parkway was able to be incorporated into 2-1 while Washington Elms and Newtowne Court were unable to both be in 2-1 whereas in 2B Cambridge Parkway could not be moved into 2-1, but Washington Elms and Newtowne Court were able to both be included in 2-1.

Simulation 3A used Simulation 3 from September 22nd as its starting point with modifications as highlighted on the sheet provided with the map.

Following the presentation, Commissioner Ward expressed his thanks along with that of the Commissioners and staff for all the work GIS has done in a short window.

Commissioner Marquardt commented that he preferred to keep Washington Elms and Newtowne Court in the same precinct as they have historically been in the same precinct and splitting them would split a community of interest and potentially lead to confusion as to where residents should vote.

Commissioner Harris indicated that she concurred that Newtowne Court and Washington Elms should be kept together. She also discussed the possibility of having Rindge Towers and Jackson Place in the same precinct. After discussion, it was determined that use of polling place locations could help with voter access to the polls.

Ms. Waxman asked if it would be possible to have the Census block at Quincy and Kirkland Streets included in 7-3 so that the polling location for 7-3 would be in 7-3. Mr. Sweeney referred to the Census block numbers and indicated that this could be done.

Commissioner Harris asked if it would be possible to make a similar change at the Peabody School such that it could be included in 10-1. Mr. Sweeney referred to the Census block and indicated that this could be done.

The Commissioners and staff discussed next steps which include providing a map to the public for their review and comment.

The Commissioners discussed the substantial changes resulting from simulation 3A and reached consensus that simulation 2B with changes for 7-3 and 10-1 noted above be posted for public review and feedback.

The Commissioners and staff discussed establishing a meeting for Wednesday, October 6th and a second meeting for Thursday, October 7th to allow for changes, if any, resulting from public comment to be incorporated into the map for approval. Ms. Ford-Crump indicated that she would submit a copy of 2B to the Secretary of the Commonwealth to let them know the direction the Commission is leaning.

Ms. Waxman indicated that she would post the map along with current map on the website for public access.

Commissioner Ward, as Chair, suspended the rules to allow Mr. Hawkinson to make a comment.

Mr. Hawkinson commented that having the Census Block Map available to the public would also be help.

Ms. Waxman indicated that she would also post the Census Block Map.

II: MINUTES

Motion: To approve the Minutes of September 22, 2021.

Moved: Commissioner Ward

Seconded: Commissioner King

Motion passes: 4 - 0

III: REPORTS

1. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Ford-Crump made the following report:

Municipal Election, November 2, 2021

- a. "In Favor" argument for the 3 ballot questions submitted by the City Council on September 20th. **(R2)**
- b. "In Opposition" argument for the 3 ballot questions submitted by Robert Winters on September 27th. **(R3)**
- c. Final draft of the ballot question mailing is at **(R4)** and will be printed and mailed shortly. Justine will coordinate sending the mailing to DHCF to ensure each resident is provided a copy.
- d. Drop Boxes – 1 box is currently open in front of 51 Inman Street. The remaining 5 have been installed and will be opened on October 5th. Drop boxes will be open 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. Commissioners discussed the drop box collection schedule.
- e. Early Voting by Mail Applications

Approximately 6,000 requests (postcards and other written requests) have been received. Ballots should mail starting next week.
- f. The City Solicitor confirmed that ballots collected from the drop boxes at 8:00 pm on Election Night can be counted at The Count on Wednesday and do not have to be counted Election Night.

Commissioner King asked if the high speed scanner would be available at the Senior Center to which the response was yes it will be.

2. Assistant Director's Report

Ms. Waxman made the following report:

- a. Draft Procedures for Mail-in Ballots Received Election Day **(R6)**
Ms. Waxman provided that draft and requested that the Commissioners review and send her any comments.
- b. Training/Manuals Update
 - i. Manuals going to printer 9/30.
 - ii. EV Training complete and submitted to Scytl.
 - iii. Inspector Training to Scytl 9/30.
 - iv. Warden and Clerk Training to Scytl 10/1.
- c. Submit EV Worker Lists
- d. Poll Pads on Election Day
Commissioners will deliver Poll Pads on Election Day and help set them up and provide a brief overview to Warden and Clerk on how to look up voters. There will be not internet connectivity for the Poll Pads. Commissioners and staff will pick up Poll Pads on Election Night when picking up memory cards.

3. Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Harris reported that:

- She attended a Cambridge Democrats City Committee meeting on September 22nd and reported:
 - There is interest in the reprecincting process
 - She will forward the Ms. Ford-Crump's press release highlighting the process, etc.
- She mentioned that Drawing Democracy had drawn their versions of State Representative and Senate districts and posted them on-line.

IV. ACTION AGENDA

Old Business

Polling Place Evacuation Procedures

Draft additions to the procedures were provided **(R-8)**. These are additions to the existing policy.

Public Outreach

Two draft PSA's were provided by Commissioner Harris **(R-7)**.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for October 6, 2021 at 5:30 pm via Zoom followed by a meeting scheduled for October 7, 2021 at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:54pm

Moved: Commissioner Ward

Seconded: Commissioner King

Motion passes: 4 - 0

A True Record

Attested by: _____


Charles Mardwardt, Secretary