



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

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lesley Waxman

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Minutes of December 6, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM on December 6, 2023 by the Chair, Commissioner Harris. Present were the Chair, Commissioner Victoria Harris, Commissioner Charles Marquardt, Commissioner Ethridge King, Executive Director Tanya Ford, and Assistant Director Lesley Waxman.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Victoria Harris: Present
Commissioner Charles Marquardt: Present
Commissioner Ethridge King: Present

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Hawkinson made a public comment

Motion: Close Public Comment

Moved by Commissioner Harris

Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt

Roll Call:

Commissioner Victoria Harris: Yes
Commissioner Charles Marquardt: Yes
Commissioner Ethridge King: Yes

Passed 3-0

II: MINUTES

Motion: To approve the Minutes of December 6, 2023 with corrections.

Moved by Commissioner Harris

Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt

Roll Call:

Commissioner Victoria Harris: Yes
Commissioner Charles Marquardt: Yes
Commissioner Ethridge King: Yes

Passed 3—0

III: REPORTS

1. Executive Director's Report

- The Executive Director reported that the state officially declared September 3, 2024y, as the date for the State Primary.
- Following the Executive Director's report, the Board engaged in a concise dialogue regarding the potential overlap of the State Primary with the commencement of the school year. Consensus emerged within the Board, and it was collectively decided that the Commission should proactively initiate contact with the school administration at the earliest opportunity—to schedule a Professional Day on September 3, 2024 well in advance of the finalization of the Fall 2024 school calendar.

2. Assistant Director's Report

No report was given.

3. Commissioners Reports

Commissioner King reported that 70 Raymond Street #1 is not a valid address.

IV. ACTION AGENDA

Old Business

Municipal Election

- Commissioner Harris presented her notes from the election worker debrief sessions conducted on November 29, 30, and December 2.
- Commissioner Marquardt shared insights during the discussion, focusing on the significant impact of inactive voters on election day workflow and capacity.
- Commissioner Harris expressed her belief that specific precincts may experience a higher prevalence of inactive voters due to unreturned census forms. In seeking more information, she directed a query to the Executive Director and Assistant Director about the numbers of inactive voters by precinct. Assistant Director Waxman responded that the staff is currently compiling this data and will present the results to the Commissioners upon completion.
- Commissioner Marquardt, drawing a parallel with city communications about moving cars for leaf cleaning, suggested exploring the possibility of utilizing a similar platform to remind residents to complete their census forms.
- Commissioner Harris inquired about the timing of the 2024 census mailing in relation to the Presidential Primary.
- Executive Director Ford clarified that the goal is to send out the census forms before the Presidential Primary.
- Commissioner Marquardt questioned the necessity of the Affirmation of Current and Continuous Residence being in paper form, proposing the idea of an electronic format.

- Assistant Director Waxman indicated that it is permissible to use a single form or log where all inactive voters can sign, they'll just need to provide their name, date of birth, and address. However, she acknowledged potential privacy concerns could be raised by some voters.
- Commissioner Harris recommended that Commissioners review the presented notes from the debrief sessions and share their feedback at the next meeting.
- Commissioner Harris raised concerns about staffing needs for sub-precincts during the Presidential Primary, specifically inquiring about their independence from the main precinct in terms of ballot styles.
- Assistant Director Waxman clarified that for the Presidential Primary, vote totals must be reported by Congressional Districts, necessitating separate counting of sub-precincts. However, the details regarding distinct or shared ballot styles for sub-precincts and main precincts remain unclear, as this would depend on the state's guidance whether or not to use different ballot styles for sub-precincts.

Poll Workers

- Executive Director Ford asked if the Commissioners were moving forward with online or in-person training. She also mentioned that we should also review the policy around lunch and dinner breaks in keeping with state labor laws.
- Presidential Primary Early in person voting schedule and locations:

Valente Library.....826 Cambridge Street
Main Library.....449 Broadway
Water Department.....250 Freshpond Parkway

- February 24 Saturday 9 AM to 3 PM
- February 25 Sunday 9 AM to 3 PM
- February 26 Monday 8:30 AM to 8 PM
- February 27 Tuesday 8:30 AM to 5 PM
- February 28 Wednesday 8:30 AM to 5 PM
- February 29 Thursday 8:30 AM to 5 PM
- March 1 Friday 8:30 AM to 12 Noon

Motion: To approve the early in person voting locations for the presidential primary.

Moved by Commissioner Harris

Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt

Roll Call:

Commissioner Victoria Harris: Yes
 Commissioner Charles Marquardt: Yes
 Commissioner Ethridge King: Yes

Passed 3-0

Poll Workers Continued

- The discussion came back to Poll Workers and training. Executive Director Ford said that the Commissioners have to follow up with the Poll Workers to ensure that they are completing their trainings.

- Commissioner Harris stated that all her workers completed their training. She further stated that we should adopt a combination of in-person and online training.
- Executive Director Ford stated a number of Poll workers did not complete their training.
- Commissioner Marquardt asked the Assistant Director about the VRIS system upgrade.
- Assistant Director Waxman reported that the system upgrade is scheduled to happen between the end of December through January.
- Commissioner Harris inquired about the dropbox log and specifically asked about the 51 Inman Log
- Commissioner Marquardt volunteered to come to the office to record the dropbox numbers
- Commissioner King asked the Executive Director if there are plans to preprocess Presidential Primary vote-by-mail ballots
- Executive Director Ford stated that at this juncture she wasn't sure if the staffing needs are sufficiently to conduct pre-processing.
- Commissioner Marquardt asked how many job postings for the Election Office are open?
- Executive Director said that there are currently two fulltime positions posted/open.
- Poll Worker lists are due the first week in January.
- The Chair recommended that next meeting should be in person so that the Commissioners could sign the City Council and School Committee certificates.

New Business

No New Business

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 20 at 5:30 PM at 51 Inman Street.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Moved: Commissioner Harris

Seconded: Commissioner Marquardt

Roll Call:

Commissioner Victoria Harris: Yes

Commissioner Charles Marquardt: Yes

Commissioner Ethridge King: Yes

Passed: 3—0

A True Record

Attested by: *Ethridge King*
Ethridge A. King, Secretary