



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

51 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139-1732 • Telephone 617-349-4361 • TTY: 617-492-0235
Fax: 617-349-4366 • Email: Elections2@cambridgema.gov • Website: www.cambridgema.gov/election

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 October 4, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM on October 4, 2023, by the Chair, Commissioner Harris. Present were the Chair, Commissioner Victoria Harris, Commissioner Larry Ward, Commissioner Charles Marquardt, Commissioner Ethridge King, Executive Director Tanya Ford, and Assistant Director Lesley Waxman.

Roll Call:

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

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were given.

Motion: To close Public Comment.

Moved by Commissioner Harris
Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt
Passed: 4-0

II: MINUTES

Motion: To approve the Minutes of October 4, 2023 with corrections.

Moved by Commissioner Harris
Seconded by Commissioner Marquardt
Passed: 4-0

III: REPORTS

1. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director noted a correction to the drop-box draft schedule, changing the opening date from October 6 to October 13.

The Executive Director reported that EV and AV ballots will start to be mailed out on October 10, 2023.

The Executive Director inquired about the status of the Commissioners' designated healthcare facilities (DHCF) on-site voting. All commissioners confirmed they had contacted their respective DHCFs and would schedule a date after the voter registration deadline.

Commissioner Harris suggested the commissioners assist the office staff with preparing DHCF ballots and paperwork for onsite voting.

Executive Director Ford requested the Commissioner schedule a date for the random precinct draw.

Commissioner Harris proposed an in-person random precinct draw date at October 18 meeting.

Executive Director Ford suggested that the Commissioners schedule the election night meeting, and the Count.

Commissioner Harris recommended a start time for the election night meeting of no earlier than 9:30 PM to allow the Commissioners time to collect the memory cards from all the precincts.

Commissioner Marquardt proposed scheduling the meeting for 9 AM, the Board agreed.

Election night meeting (November 7) will start at 9 PM

The Count will start at 9 AM on November 8 and is expected to last two days.

Executive Director Ford asked about the progress of the final Poll worker lists. Commissioners agreed to provide updated lists by Wednesday, October 11.

Assistant Director Waxman reported that ScytI online training platform would be ready before Friday, October 13.

Executive Director Ford inquired about the Poll worker training date. Assistant Director Waxman suggested moving it from October 24 to October 26, with a second session scheduled for October 28, covering ballot box and Inspector training.

- Tuesday, October 26: Inspector training at 5 PM and ballot-box training at 6:30 PM.
- Saturday, October 28: Inspector training at 10 AM and ballot-box training at 11:30 AM.
- Commissioner Harris noted that Inspectors will be given a quiz after the training.

Executive Director Ford reported that the City Council approved the request for 32 police officers for election day.

Commissioner Harris references the staffing issue that was raised in Monday night (10/2) City Council meeting, if the Councilors were given update. Executive Director Ford stated that the staffing issue is public knowledge.

Commissioner Harris inquired if the office had experienced any recent incidents threatening office staff safety.

Commissioner Marquardt questioned the City Manager's discussions about the future of election administration and suggested directing the question to the City Manager for clarity.

2. Assistant Director's Report

Assistant Director Waxman provided a vote by mail update: As of October 3, 11,286 EV and 103 AV ballots were requested, with 4,582 ballots mailed out starting on October 3.

3. Commissioners Reports

Commissioner Ward reported that he and Commissioner Harris are continuing to work with CRLS students.

Commissioner Harris mentioned a current City Councilor candidate's concern that voters did not understand the PR system. She shared information about Voter Guides with QR codes for multilingual information and requested feedback on promoting rank choice voting.

Commissioner Marquardt received inquiries about rules for candidate signs in public tree-wells, recommending reporting to DPW through Commonwealth Connect.

IV. ACTION AGENDA

Old Business

Municipal Election

Commissioner Marquardt asked Executive Director Ford if a meeting with all department heads was planned this year.

Commissioner Harris asked if the office was prepared for a potential influx of last-minute ballots.

Executive Director Ford stated the office had three temporary employees and one full-time permanent hire.

Commissioner Marquardt inquired about informing DPW of Commissioner building access during off-hours.

Commissioner Harris reported on Assistant Professor Justin de Benedictis-Kessner's class conflict and offered to meet with the professor along with another commissioner to provide an update to the commission.

Commissioner King asked about the data used by the Charter Review Committee for Municipal Election changes.

The Board engaged in an extensive discussion regarding election-related issues considered by the Charter Review Committee.

New Business

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:32 PM.

Moved: Commissioner Harris

Seconded: Commissioner Ward

Passed: 4—0

A True Record

Attested by: Ethridge King
Ethridge A. King, Secretary