

**Election Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2017**

Present: Nancy M. Levine (Chair) Marjorie Ann Butler, John P. McDermott, Jan Huffman

Also present: David A. Olson, City Clerk

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 31, 2017 MEETING

Minutes of the January 31, 2017 meeting were accepted unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE FALL ELECTION CALENDAR

Clerk Olson noted that the City Council approved the preliminary election date of September 12th. It looks like there will be a city-wide preliminary as there are three announced candidates for Mayor at this point. The three candidates are Amy Sangiolo, Ruthanne Fuller, and Scott Lennon. Nomination papers will be available on Monday, May 1st and Clerk Olson expects to see a number of candidates coming in to get their nomination papers that day. There are no changes from the last year's calendar and the office is currently in the process of getting ready for distribution of nomination papers. The office has created a new City of Newton Candidate Guide on it is available on the City website. The guide provides information about how to run, how to fill out forms for the Office of Campaign and Political Finance and a copy of each of the forms needed. These are being distributed now as a number of people are interested and have questioned what is involved to run. Commissioner Huffman asked if the office had to create them as fillable forms. Clerk Olson noted that we had been able to get all of the forms as fillable .pdfs from the Office of Campaign and Political Finance, so did not have to spend a great deal of time working on it.

Commissioner Huffman asked if a funding request would need to be made for the fall elections. Clerk Olson stated that he would not need to make a separate request as the FY18 Budget includes funds for the two fall elections. The budget discussion for the City Clerk's office is scheduled for the first week of May. Clerk Olson noted the City Clerk's budget is in good shape for what is needed in the coming fiscal year.

Commissioner Butler asked how the new proposed Charter fits in. Clerk Olson noted that the Charter will be on the November ballot and at least two weeks before the Election, the Election Commission will need to send out a mailer to every household with a brief description of the changes that are going to be in the Charter and a statement from both the pro- and the anti-charter groups. This would be similar to what was done recently with the nuclear power question. Home rule legislation requires this be done before any ballot question goes on the ballot. The Charter Commission as well has to send out their final proposed text of the Charter, along with a summary of the changes to all voters. There should be some coordination with the

Charter Commission as to whether these two mailings can be combined together or if they will remain two mailings to all households. Commissioner Huffman asked if voters would also get a copy of the current charter mailed to them. Clerk Olson stated that it would only be the new proposed Charter. Commissioner Butler pointed out that the current Charter is on-line now and the Election Commission could put that information in its flyer. Commissioner Butler suggested that the Charter Commission send theirs first and then the Election Commissioner could send its version. Councilor Huffman asked who would write the pro and con statements. Clerk Olson noted that there are two organized groups, one for and one against who might be able to write those statements. Clerk Olson suggested waiting until the end of the summer to see if any other groups get organized. There was discussion amongst the Commissioners about finding a way to highlight and present the changes between the old and new charters, perhaps doing a side-by-side comparison of the two on the website. Clerk Olson felt that it could be done but suggested getting the advice of the Law Department.

UPDATE ON THE CHARTER COMMISSION'S APRIL MEETING

Clerk Olson updated the Commissioners on the Charter Commission's discussions of creating Districts as part of the new Charter, and their suggestion that the Election Commission set the boundaries of the districts. At their meeting the Charter Commissioners abandoned this idea and voted to stay with their original proposal of 4 at-large councilors with no ward residency requirement. Commissioner Huffman asked if this would simplify our ballots. Clerk Olson stated that there would only need to be one ballot for the whole city. We would no longer need to have eight different municipal ballots.

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2017

Jan Huffman was unanimously elected Chair of the Commission for the coming year.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Internships for 2017

Commissioner Levine asked about the Internship Program. Clerk Olson stated that applications for the Internship Program will be sent out to Newton North High School and Newton South High School. Students who applied last year as juniors and not accepted will be sent an application directly for this year. The criteria will include that students must be seniors and that there will be an interview process that will also be required.

Commissioner Levine asked about criteria for selection of the interns. The Commissioners discussed but did not come to any conclusions. Commissioner Levine asked about the experience and what would be included. Clerk Olson talked about what would be expected of the interns and noted that specific days between September and November 7th could be scheduled for interns to come in to help with packing up the ballot bags or working with the League of Women Voters to do a voter registration session at the high schools. He noted that the schedule would not be a rigid set of dates but will be able to accommodate the student schedules. Clerk Olson suggested the possibility of having a Charter Commission member come in and explain why the Charter is important. He also noted that the Charter Commission hired

consultants from the Collins Center at UMass Boston who might be willing to come in and talk globally about Charters in Massachusetts and what they have seen since they have worked with a number of communities creating Charters in Massachusetts. Commissioners asked that the application deadlines and interviews be scheduled before students have to begin finals or come home from camp to participate. The dates were moved to an application deadline of May 26, 2017 and Interviews on May 31, 2017.

Poll Worker Training Sessions

Clerk Olson provided information on the new Poll Worker training sessions that will be offered this spring. The sessions will be held on Wednesday's at noon and will be voluntary and unpaid. One of the sessions is going to be looking at the forms used on Election Day. Information will be provided on completing the affirmation form, and a provisional ballot form. The invitation to the poll workers was sent out just a week ago and already 10 to 12 people have signed up for each of the 5 classes. The sessions are currently scheduled during the day but we have been asked to also do them at night for those who have day jobs.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Election Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, May 31st at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jan Huffman, Chair