

**Election Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
April 27, 2015**

Present: Jan Huffman, Nancy Levine, John McDermott - Chair

Also Present: City Clerk David Olson & Assistant City Clerk Eneida Tavares

**To Approve the Minutes of the March 30, 2015 meeting.**

The minutes from the March 30, 2015 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made and seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**To Hear an Update on Home Rule Legislation to Set the Date of the Preliminary Election.**

Clerk Olson noted that Rep. Balsler had contacted him to let him know that the Home Rule legislation to eliminate the restriction of holding a Preliminary in Newton on a Tuesday has passed the House and was in the Senate. The Senate calendar showed that it would be taken up by the Senate on April 30. Clerk Olson stated that he will be using the date of Thursday, September 17, 2015 as the date for the Preliminary in the materials that will go with the nomination papers which will be available on May 1, 2015.

**To Discuss Change of Polling Locations.**

Clerk Olson noted that he did not expect a vote tonight, but that information would be provided about possible locations and that at the next meeting of the Commission, Aldermen from the effected Wards would be invited to hear about the potential changes and provide input. If the Commission was ready to vote on any of the changes, it could do so at the May meeting and those changes would be docketed with the Board for their approval. If the Commission was not ready to vote on a change at the May meeting, he suggested that it be held until after the fall Municipal Elections as there would not be enough time to get the request through the Board of Aldermen and then get notification out to voters before the elections.

Asst. Clerk Eneida Tavares presented information on the gyms at Newton South High School. She and Clerk Olson toured the facilities with Michael Cronin, Operations Manager for the School Department. She reported that they looked at the small gym and at the Field House . The small gym would be ideal for moving Countryside, Bowen and Memorial Spaulding. She noted that they were all in adjacent precincts and about the same distance from Newton South. The parking outside of the small gym was much better than at the field house. Commissioner Huffman asked about providing signage in the gym that identified both the Ward and Precinct, but also the old location so that voters could easily identify where they are going. Commissioner McDermott was concerned about the amount of parking in the morning and hoped that there was enough for three precincts.

Asst. Clerk Tavares presented options for moving out of Fire Station #1. She noted that she had asked the YMCA, but that they were not interested. She spoke with Grace Episcopal Church and they were excited about accommodating us. They have a small parking lot, but it is better than the Fire Station and there are handicap spots right near the door. She noted that the lighting was not great in the room, so we would need to deal with that. There are options for lighting including floor lamps and lights that could be attached to the polling booths. The church does however, have tables and chairs stored right there which would be a big help in setting up. Commissioner Levine asked about the other possibilities in the area and Asst. Clerk Tavares noted that each of them had issues that would make it impossible to use them as polling locations. Lincoln Eliot School was mentioned as a location that could accommodate another precinct. Clerk Olson noted that we should avoid Lincoln Eliot as it may become unavailable in the near future due to the School Departments plans for the building.

Clerk Olson asked if there were any other locations on our high priority list. Asst. Clerk Tavares noted that Church of the Redeemer is a high priority, but she has not been able to find any alternate locations. She has looked at the Longwood Cricket Club, the theater and Star Market, but each of them has not been receptive. Commissioner Levine asked if we could pursue Payment in lieu of Taxes as a negotiation strategy with those that want to charge us. Clerk Olson noted that at this point none of the venues we are looking at fall into that category, but it could definitely be a bargaining strategy. Beaver Country Day School and Pine Manor College were also mentioned as possibilities.

**Other Business.**

It was asked if there was any news on filling the Elections Coordinator Position. Clerk Olson noted that he and the staff will be interviewing six candidates in the coming week.

**The Date of the Next Commission Meeting.**

The Commission will next meet on Monday, May 18, 2015, at 5:00 pm.

**The meeting adjourned.**

Submitted by

John McDermott, Chair