

**Election Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2014**

Present: Marjorie Butler, Jan Huffman, Nancy Levine, John McDermott

Also Present: City Clerk David Olson

Minutes

The minutes from the May 7, 2014 and August 7, 2014 meetings were reviewed. A motion to approve the May 7, 2014 minutes as presented was made and seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously. Jan Huffman noted that he was not at the August 7, 2014 meeting and asked that his name be removed as an attendee. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made and seconded. The amended minutes were approved unanimously.

Certification of the State Primary Elections and the Special Municipal Election held on September 9, 2014.

The City Clerk distributed for approval the results for both the Special Municipal Election in Ward 3 and the State Primaries, both held on September 9, 2014. He noted that the only change to the Ward 3 Municipal Election totals were the inclusion of blank voted ballots. These were ballots that people took and then decided not to vote for anyone, so the ballots were placed in the hand-count slot during the day and were tallied at the end of the night.

For the State Primaries, there were 75 hand-counted ballots, 3 provisional ballots, and 10 UOCAVA ballots that were added to the unofficial results from election night. A motion to certify the final results of both the elections was made and seconded. The Commission voted unanimously and each member signed the certification sheets.

Commissioner Huffman asked if both the municipal ballot and the primary ballots went through the same machine. Clerk Olson explained that there were two separate machines and ballot boxes in the Ward 3 precincts. This was done to accommodate the AccuVote programmers who felt they would have difficulty trying to program for both the primary and municipal ballots on one machine. AccuVote loaned the City additional machines and boxes for each of the four Ward 3 precincts at no additional cost. The ballot boxes were clearly marked and voters placed the appropriate ballot in the appropriate ballot box.

Review of the conduct of the Elections held on September 9, 2014.

Clerk Olson noted that things went very well on Election Day. There were no major concerns or complaints. The Waban Library Center and Cabot Park Village were both used for the first time at this election and both worked very well. The layout of the

room at Cabot Park Village will be adjusted based on the flow of the room. The Waban Library Center worked well. Alice Jacobs from the Library Center was pleased with the turnout and the visibility of the Library. The dual election in Ward 3 went very well with no problems.

Training for poll workers was held at the end of August and about 60% of the workers attended. Clerk Olson distributed copies of the training session handouts to the Commissioners. He noted that the training covered a variety of topics including: the changes in precincts, the notification to voters, and signage at the Cabot and Zervas Schools directing people to the new polling locations. Commissioner Levine noted that it was a great looking postcard that did not look like junk mail and Commissioner Huffman added that the signage at the schools matched the look of the postcards. Also covered were: the new polling equipment that will be used at the election; a review of the opening and closing procedures of the AccuVote machine; and using the designation "Rep" and "Dem" to denote Republican and Democrat in the Voter's List. Finally, the training covered new tally sheets to help streamline the end of the night process and make the recording of handcount and write-in votes more streamline. Most Wardens did a good job with the new sheets at the election, but additional training will be provided before the November election.

The City Clerk reminded the Commissioners that once the ballots are sealed at the polls, the Clerk's Office can't go back in to them if there seems to be a discrepancy until 10 days after an election. It is important that the end of the night tallying be done completely and accurately by the Wardens and Clerks at the end of the night.

Commissioner Huffman asked if the Poll Workers were paid for coming to training. Clerk Olson responded that they are paid for their time in training. It was asked if the Inspectors would have any additional training before the November election. Clerk Olson stated that there would not be an additional training for Inspectors before November. There were no major concerns with the Inspectors during this election and the process will be easier for them in November as there will only be one ballot.

Clerk Olson noted that on each election day the Clerk's Office has been sending out an Elections Newsletter to all of the poll workers. The Newsletter covers election topics that we want to make sure poll workers pay attention to. For the September 9th Primaries, the newsletter looked at completing the Affirmation of Continuous Residence form to re-activate inactive voters and included an insert for the Ward 3 Poll Workers providing guidance on running the dual election. Commissioner Huffman noted that he had heard positive things about the newsletter.

Clerk Olson noted that the new parking lot and handicap ramp were completed and installed at the Waban Library Center before the election, but the painting of the lines in the Parking Lot did not happen before Election Day. Commissioner Huffman asked why the Library needed a new handicap ramp, because there seemed to be one there

already. Clerk Olson stated that the old ramp did not meet the minimum ADA requirements for a handicap accessible ramp as it was not wide enough and lacked handrails. The Waban Library Center and the Zervas PTO contributed funds to purchase the ramp.

Commissioner Levine asked that the Auburndale Library be looked at as a location to replace the Burr and/or Williams School. Clerk Olson noted that the office would also be looking at moving the polling location out of the Bowen and Memorial Spaulding Schools. It was asked if churches could be used. Clerk Olson responded that they could be used, but many of them have daycare centers in them.

Review and discussion of the plans for the November 4, 2014 State Election.

Clerk Olson presented a draft of the signs announcing the election that will go out in the village centers around the City. Commissioner Butler asked if the sign could include the times that the polls will be open and that an announcement be placed on the City's Homepage on Election Day reminding residents to vote.

Clerk Olson noted that there will be three ballot styles used in Newton; one for each of the Representative Districts. The 10th, 11th, and 12th Rep Districts each will have their own ballot, but only one ballot style at each Ward and Precinct. The ballots in the 10th district will not have questions 5 and 6. The Absentee Ballots have not arrived but should be coming shortly.

Commissioner Huffman noted that the new Handicap Voting Booths at the Waban and Library Center and Williams School were not adequate. They seemed to be too high and the writing surface was not flat. He noted that the Hyde Center had used a table with cardboard privacy surrounds for handicap voters and it worked well. Clerk Olson noted that the table and surround was a good idea that could be used in other places.

Commissioner McDermott noted that there were a number of dried out markers in the booth that he used. He did get a new marker from the poll workers, but wondered why they were drying out. Clerk Olson noted that the markers are water-based to avoid any bleed through on the ballot. When a cover is left off the marker, they tend to dry out quickly. We purchase new markers every year to replace those that have dried out.

Review and discussion of the status of processing UOCAVA Ballots.

The Secretary of State's Office has complimented the Clerk's Office on getting the UOCAVA ballots out on time and reporting to them on our progress.

Review of the progress of the new Poll Worker Training Manual.

Clerk Olson reported that the new Poll Worker Training Manual is still being worked on and will be ready for the 2015 elections. The manual will include Task Cards that will provide step by step instructions for particular tasks that need to be done at the polls before, during and after the close of the polls on Election Day. Based on a suggestion by

Commissioner Huffman, an Inspectors version of the Manual will be created to include only those tasks that an Inspector needs to know. This will make it a little less overwhelming for those only interested in being an Inspector. Clerk Olson noted that the Elections Advisory Committee had taken a look at the manual and was impressed. They suggested that we take the time to do the manual correctly as opposed to getting it done quickly.

To set the date for the next meeting of the Election Commissioners.

The Commissioners set the date of Monday, November 17, 2014 at 5:00 pm for the next meeting. The agenda for this meeting will include certifying the results of the November 4, 2014 election.

Any other business.

Clerk Olson informed the Commissioners that the Office of Campaign and Political Finance has announced that Aldermen will need to file Financial Disclosure Forms directly with the OCPF beginning January 1, 2015.

Clerk Olson asked the Commissioners if the form of reporting on Election night that was used at the Primaries was acceptable or would they like to go back to the former format. The Commissioners asked that it go back to the former precinct by precinct format.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Submitted by

Marjorie Butler, Chair