

Election Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2022
Council Chambers and Virtual

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

Also present: Carol Moore -City Clerk, Chris Sullivan- Assistant City Clerk

To listen to the entire meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/ZpNTcX5V9tt7RijXdhO9gnUHPssXxHSRXzEPWDhb9j_N_mEsTxxsIJhC H9VxTAVwowDCElgJzUpalw0.plAdD2k8i6R-iqNq

Recap of 2021 Elections

Clerk Moore reviewed the administration and issues of the 2021 November Municipal Elections. This review would cover the UOCAVA (Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) timeline, Election Day stewardship, Election Results presentation, and other priorities in the workplan.

UOCAVA ballots: The issue identified was a short turnaround time for these ballots to be sent out and returned. While there was a high UOCAVA turnout for the March special election, typically the return rate is closer to 20%. The Clerk's Office is also unable to confirm that all ballots were received on time. Ms. Moore said that she wanted to use stronger messaging to get out the details and to overhaul the Elections webpage to provide more information. There would also be more attention brought to the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB). There is also the need to time the timeframe and turnaround time for elections into account.

Stewardship: Ms. Moore said that poll workers are instructed to remove prohibited materials found at polling locations, such as campaign-related flyers. While these workers receive training, the compensation is lower than surrounding communities. Going forward outreach for poll worker recruitment will be improved.

Presentation: Some incomplete results were shown after the election due to a clerical error of not selecting the right printing option. This error was addressed soon after it was discovered. There will be improvements to the spreadsheet, but there are limits to formatting with the current spreadsheet style it is set with the machines. Commissioners discussed possible ways to provide check and balances for certifying the results.

Commissioners also discussed ways to provide more staff to assist during the Elections season. They stressed how important Election's administration is within the City and the need to have enough staff on hand to help.

Redistricting Overview

Assistant City Clerk Sullivan explained the redistricting for the City of Newton was completed in October 2021 but the State's own redistricting came back with three sub precincts. One of the three sub

precincts has approximately 123 residents while the other two are vacant land. The occupied sub precincts will have separate ballots for state elections.

Purchase of Voting Machines

Clerk Moore provided an update on the status of the purchase of new tabulators. Clerk Moore explained that there are two machines certified by the State, LHS and ES & S. Clerk Moore would set up those demonstrations. Clerk Moore did not want to move forward with a decision if it comes close to the fall elections. Assistant City Clerk Sullivan answered questions from Commissioners We must give the State 120 days' notice before implementation.

Other Business

City Clerk readdressed Commissioner Butler's question about how to answer questions from the press. Commissioners talked about a policy on how to address the press as one or a designated speaker.

Assistant City Clerk Sullivan addressed a question from the public about poll worker schedules and offering part time slots. He mentioned that splitting the time means providing more poll workers. Shortage of poll workers is a continuous problem with more municipalities.

The meeting ended at 7:43 PM.