



Zoe Dzineku  
Beverly Athens  
James A. Pope  
Mark Paton  
*Commissioners*

## **Board of Election Commissioners Meeting**

**Tuesday July 20, 2021**

**Via Zoom Conference**

**5:30 PM**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **1. Roll Call and Attendance**

**Start Time 5:34 PM**

Meeting called to order by Chair Zoe Dzineku. All commissioners present.

#### **2. Old Business**

Minutes from previous meeting were not available. Mr. Paton would provide notes to Mr. Veloso as soon as possible.

#### **3. New Business**

A. Discussion on polling locations for City's eight municipal districts for 2021 municipal elections.

Mr. Veloso informed the Commissioners that two individuals had registered speak, Judith Durant and Geoff Foster.

Commissioner Pope presented a hand-drawn map he created giving each district two or more polling locations. Based on his map, all of the districts would have two polling locations except District 6. (Refer to the Election Commission meeting recording on LTC.org for further images.)

The Chair opened the meeting to allow the registered speakers to speak first before moving to the agenda items. No objections.

1. Judith Durant: Expressed her belief that the City needed more than one polling location per municipal district for the 2021 municipal elections. She noted that she has been talking to residents while performing voter outreach and that in her experience up to 75% – 80% of the voters she spoke to were unaware of the changes to the City's voting system for municipal elections and did not know where they were to vote. Stated she supported effort to allow for more polling locations.
2. Geoff Foster: Expressed his support for subdivision of the City's municipal districts. Mr. Foster stated that the City had to follow state law and that the districts had to be 4000 voters or fewer. He stated that he supported the City retaining an expert to assist with the subdividing process.

The Chair recognized City Solicitor O'Connor. Solicitor O'Connor stated that in order to subdivide districts would require an amendment to the federal consent decree in the Huot matter. The current consent decree is silent as to subdivisions. Solicitor O'Connor stated that Mr. Foster was incorrect in his statements that state law required the subdivision of the districts, as it applied to precincts and not districts. Solicitor O'Connor also stated that Mr. Foster's statements that subdividing the districts would be simple or easy was not accurate. Solicitor O'Connor discussed her conversation with LHS Associates regarding the challenges to subdividing the districts and ensuring that the integrity of the election was maintained. Solicitor O'Connor discussed the need to ensure that voters voted in the correct district and that they only voted once. Solicitor O'Connor also discussed that LHS was in contact with the manufacturer of the electronic poll pads to determine if they could be reprogrammed to add a third field, and the time and expense that would be required.

Solicitor O'Connor recommended that the Election Commission hire an expert to assist with the drawing of the sub-district lines.

Chairwoman Dzineku stated that there is a standing invitation to the Secretary of State Office, LHS Associates, and the Law Department to attend future Election Commission meetings.

**MOTION:** by Chairwoman Dzineku to hire an expert to assist in the drawing of the lines for the subdivision of districts. Seconded by Commissioner Anthes. Vote: 3-1 in favor of the motion. Commissioner Pope opposed. Motion passes.

Chairwoman Dzineku asked that Commissioner Pope's map be provided to the expert.

B. Discussion on feasibility of Common Cause "Roadmap to 16 Polling Locations in Lowell."

Chairwoman Dzineku asked Solicitor O'Connor what would be required from the Commission to subdivide. Solicitor O'Connor stated that the consent decree had to be amended by approval of the federal court prior to any action being taken by the Election Commission. Solicitor O'Connor informed the commissioners that the City Council had scheduled a special meeting for Thursday July 22, 2021. Solicitor O'Connor invited the commissioners to attend if able.

C. Update of implementation of municipal elections with LHS Associates.

No further information except what had been previously stated. (Refer to meeting recording on LTC.org.)

**4. Adjournment:**

Motion by Chairwoman Dzineku to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Pope. All in favor.

**End Time 6:46 PM**