

**RANKED CHOICE VOTING AD-HOC COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**APRIL 15, 2021**

**Present:** Chair Dan Gilbert, Chris Korczak, Sara Amorosa, Tom Peake, Jackie Brousseau-Perreira and Barbara LaBombard. Absent: Owen Zaret.

The COVID meeting statement was read by Dan.

**Public Speak Time:** None

**Acceptance of Minutes:** Motioned by Tom, seconded by Chris to accept the February 25<sup>th</sup> minutes. Unanimously approved.

**Overview by Dan of March 31<sup>st</sup> training/testing session with LHS & State Elections Division:**

- Image scanning will be turned on for the ICP voting equipment. This will help with ballot adjudication and write-in resolution.
- Skipped rankings may cause issues as one of the ICP settings during the test was not able to differentiate between skipped and stopped rankings in terms of voter prompts. Jeff from LHS did, however, think there may be a way to differentiate; he will follow up with us about this.
- We have been told (and it was affirmed by the Elections Division) that hand tallying of unreadable ballots and write-ins can be done during a “day two” process. This adjudication process is used by Cambridge and in other states.
- We have received the laptop with the Democracy Suite software from LHS that will be used for the RCV process. It was noted by Barbara that we’ll be able to use the tallying software for non RCV elections as well.

**Proposed addition to the draft RCV ordinance – ballot adjudication and resolution of write-ins:** Dan presented proposed new sections to address the “day two” process. The wording was adapted based on other election jurisdictions in the country, as well as a conversation held with elections staff from Cambridge.

After discussion and some minor wording changes, the following was agreed upon by the committee:

**Sec. X-5. Adjudication of unreadable ballots; ballot duplication.**

- a. The purpose of the ballot duplication process is to ensure that any ballots that were unable to be read by the voting equipment are properly tabulated according to the intent of the voter. For example, some ballots may be received damaged or improperly marked. During this process, the original ballot is supplemented with a new ballot that the voting equipment can read. Duplicated ballots are still only counted once.
- b. During the duplication process, any ballot issues (over votes, skipped rankings, etc.) should not be changed or corrected. The goal of this process is to replicate the original ballot to allow it to be machine-readable. Write-in votes should be transferred verbatim. However, if the voter did not place a mark next to their write-in vote and their intent is clear, a mark may be added on the duplicate.
- c. The duplication process must be performed by a panel consisting of three election judges as designated by the city clerk. Ballot markings as described below may be performed by handwriting, printing, stamping, stickers, or any combination of these methods. The ballot duplication process must involve the following steps:
  - The original ballot must be marked “ORIGINAL” with red ink.

- The duplicate ballot must be marked “DUPLICATE” with red ink.
- The duplicate ballot and the original ballot must be assigned the same serial number, which must be written on both ballots with red ink. The serial numbers must be unique for each election and must start at “1” and increase sequentially.
- One panel member will call out the valid selections from the original ballot while another panel member will mark the duplicate ballot with the valid selections using black ink.
- The panel must vote on whether to accept the duplicated ballot as a valid and accurate representation of the original. If the vote passes, the ballot must be marked “APPROVED” with red ink. If the vote fails, the duplicate must be altered or spoiled and restarted until the vote passes. Any spoiled duplicates must be marked “SPOILED” with red ink and kept alongside any originals.
- After all applicable ballots have been duplicated, any ballots marked “ORIGINAL” or “SPOILED” must be placed in a marked envelope for storage. Any ballots marked “APPROVED” will be processed through the voting equipment.

**Sec. X-6. Resolution of write-in votes.**

- a. The purpose of the write-in resolution process is to ensure that any write-in votes are accurately tabulated for the intended person.
- b. The write-in resolution process must be completed after the ballot duplication process and after any resulting duplicate ballots have been read by the voting equipment.
- c. Write-in resolution must be performed by the city clerk or their designee.

**Comments on the ordinance following testing?** Dan believes the ordinance is in good shape after the testing. Chris questioned whether there should be a “bail out” clause in case of some unforeseen incident or equipment change. It was decided to leave the ordinance as is and to see if the city attorney suggests any such addition.

**Review of Ranked Choice Voting tabulation settings:** There may be some adjustments that will need to be made to this document, but for now no changes were made.

**City Attorney Review of Ordinance:** It was felt the ordinance is ready to be sent to the city attorney for his review. That way, if he suggests any changes, they can be made prior to the ordinance being sent to the City Council. It is hoped his comments will be available for the next committee meeting, but if not, then discussion will shift over to voter education. Tom/Dan will reach out to the council president Conniff about forwarding the ordinance to the city attorney.

**Cost estimates from LHS for the ballot coding/printing:** LHS has provided an estimate of costs for coding and printing based on a comparison between the city’s Nov., 2019 ballot and the March 31<sup>st</sup> test. The biggest increase is in coding, which almost doubled (from \$759 to \$1,743). The cost for printing was almost the same (\$3,085 in 2019 compared to \$3,176 for the 3/31 ballot style). An increase was included in the proposed FY ’22 budget that will hopefully cover the increase. It was noted that, as always, costs vary depending on the number of candidates and ballots ordered.

**Next meeting:** The committee will meet next on **Thursday, May 20, 2021** at 6 p.m.

On motion made by Sara and seconded by Tom, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Time: 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara LaBombard". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Barbara LaBombard