

City of Salem, Massachusetts



"Know Your Rights Under the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A ss. 18-25 and City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033."

The City Council Committee on _____ Government Services co-posted with the
_____ Committee of the Whole _____

met in the Council Chamber on _____ Tuesday, March 29, 2016 _____ at 6:00 _____ P.M.

for the purpose of discussing the matter(s) listed below. Notice of this meeting was posted on

March 8, 2016 _____ at 3:50 P.M. _____

(This meeting is being recorded.)

included in record:

- comparison of Salem's website to others
- Q+A
- Salem police memo to officers
- voter engagement timeline

ATTENDANCE

ABSENT WERE: C. Dibbel arrived at 7:33 pm, C. Lovely departed at 6:41 pm

SUBJECT(S)

#40 - Accessibility of voters at the Salem polls on election day and all early voting efforts for the 2016 elections with particular attention paid to the elderly, voters with disabilities and voters with any language barriers

° City solicitor B. Rennard:

° Spanish ballots - waiting for information from the state

° Mail - Ana Fran LLC → Resolution for the city council re-tied into council's role

° Board of Registrars - drafting an Mail

° voting responsibilities of council - support mission, supporting funding

° Mayor Driscoll:

° come to an agreement, ensure voters rights

° how do we work together as a community and local government?

Plan the work, work the plan - collectively as a group

* C. Eppley - Raise rates of poll workers + wardens 2) allow 1 hr. training
3) attract translators (interpreters)

* Mayor - what we are paying poll workers - shouldn't be act of reach,
practices can be improved, other communities
we can improve

* Chief Butler - LLC has helped, approached officers + provided laws around
issues + what is expected of them, Police deal with crimes
and issues of impressions - will share document

* Chuck Barton - Board of Registrars - met to discuss roles + responsibilities,
touching meeting of a Mol. main duty - registering people to
vote, recounts - discuss/decide on contested ballots

* David Martell, Princeton Crossings, Disabilities Commission

- visited polling places

- St. Mary - Castle Hill - handicapped parking behind school

- Witchcraft Heights - not a clear entrance, needs sign for voting

- certified by state on surveys → know what to look for - ramps,
spaces between tables etc.

* C. Eppley - polling locations with 2 precincts - direct people to their
correct line

* Debra Lobsitz - Disabilities Commission

- Function - resources + guidance re: disabilities, guidance + assistance

- Specialty - hearing loss + use ASL + rely on devices (hearing aid +
amplification devices) - willing to help provide training for
those with hearing loss

On the motion of C.

the meeting adjourned at 8:28 P.M.



(Chairperson)

- other board members have other expertise

° Ana Nuncio, 12 winter St, Latino Leadership Coalition

- Mail - working tool, Mail not going away because problems not resolved → but are working / on the way

- distributed - what other cities are doing online - comparison

note:

Revere - Election Commission vs. Board of Registrars

- strongly advises having annual meeting to evaluate how voting went - within 2 weeks of an election

- work collaboratively w/ clerk, Latino Affairs - recruit English + Spanish (bilingual) workers for elections

° C. Gerard - what was the criteria / why were these particular cities selected? (comparison)

Ana - % , larger population #s
inactive list ?

6:41pm - C. Lovely left - prior commitment

C. Milo - survey increase in Latino population

C. Sargent - when off census + at same address it can become difficult - happens all over, especially when people move

- can the LLC meet on a night the ZBA meets?

Ana - yes.

C. Turiel - list of what is on the website → some are low hanging fruit. Some can easily be put online

one of the bigger problems - communication, have remained open and untouched for many years.

Ana - want to make things better, feel as though they are now being heard

° Linda Cefail - council on Aging

* barrier to voting = transportation → can C.O.A provide rides?

- has worked at polls - Bently, Winthrop Heights, former ward 4 →

when ward 4 combined - appeared lower % of elderly voters

- in favor of having a greeter tell people precinct & where to go - training issue

- Resources - as a warden the ^{wage} earnings were too low - an issue should add more \$ for wage + better training

- education - need to do more to educate about civics

How are we educating students & new citizens about civics?

- C. Sargent - his high school civics teachers would be appalled. maybe high school students could help?

Do we have procedures in place if someone needs ASL and one (translator) isn't available?

- C. Eppley - Can CCA use vans to transport seniors to the polls?

- Mayor - need to look at a list, rides to medical appts etc.

& the vans stop at 2pm - need to work on.

- C. Eppley - advice on early voters & seniors?

- Linda - need to educate & explain stvoters about early voting. maybe hold an event at CCA about early voting + absentee ballots

- C. McCarthy - 6 yrs ago, shuttle service, needed to be done in advance

- C. Milo - great programs at CCA. collaboration between departments, programs - work w/ head of CCA programming

• Lucy Corchado, 1 Chase St. #2

- need to acknowledge mistakes that were made (passed out timeline). But, moving in a nice direction

- what is the mechanism - if there is a concern, timeline + process?

- should have a clearer process → need for oversight + communication

- need to have ongoing conversation + oversight

[C. Famico - El mundo 3/2/16 on listing - what is it?

[Lucy - Spanish newspaper

[C. Famico - could El mundo help cover future movements?

[Lucy - yes

C. Tunnel - emails - didn't get, in general easily accessible. if you don't hear from him - call him

• C. Eppley - interested in accountability. would like to know more about an Election Commission. Lawrence has a board of registrars and elections commissions.

Lucy - sure that folks would come from other cities to help / work with Salem

C. Eppley - concerned w/ role of council supervising elections as councillors are elected

Lucy - if anyone has any negative experience at city hall - who can they go to and when can they expect a response?

C. Gerard - grandmother served on election commission → was an appointed / paid position

C. Sargent - if you send an email to all and don't get a response - send it again.

Lucy - new website - general contact form for councillors

C. Sargent - received October email. called board of registrars, spoke with city clerk. we are trying to get better, not go by the minimum.

C. Turkel - As of this year 10/11 councillors can be reached by city of Salem email system

• Jeff Cohen, 12 Hancock St, No Place for Hate

- city clerk has agreed to attend a No Place for Hate committee

- committee has a member of the police, LLC, city - soon to be a member from the schools

- communication - small city - can do better to diminish problems

- council overseeing elections - problematic because elected, and councillors don't necessarily mirror at large population

Electoral commission - may be a positive step, be

representative of the city. Beyond election

day, but year-long process - require more

info. / knowledge to community / communicate importance to community

• Jean Kempthorne - Dearborn, Common Cause

- Sec. Galvin has distributed draft guidelines about early voting → leaving to discretion of city/township clerks
- common cause - urging cities w/ more than 35,000 to add 1 more voting location + add weekend + evening hours → common cause willing to work with cities + towns to reallocate funds + allocate funds

[- 7:33pm - C. Dibbel arrived -]

- C. Eppley - Florida has early voting & has weekend + evening hours. Not anything new
- Jean - wants to move MA forward w/ resources
- C. Eppley - Common Cause is suggesting Salem has 2 early voting locations
- mayor - would Council have a task force? Voting locations + early voting efforts? - Do it collectively together, better budgeting
- C. Eppley - can have a task force for early voting & resolution
- C. Famico - would a new order be required?
- city solicitor - could request a task force

• Russ Grand - 97 Freedom Hollow

- appears to only be a Latino Population issue - Salem is a patchwork city → discriminatory issue → can't focus on just one language issue
- C. Famico - certain group reached up to us, high % of population, & what is written is always a snippet of what is said - up to writer. ALSO - affects many different groups
- C. Turiel - depends on the city's % of what language, need to get more people to vote. want to get # of people engaged up.
- C. Ryan - kids in the schools - schools info. in English + Spanish.
- Russ - people issue -
- C. Ryan - need to make it so everyone can vote
- C. Famico - schools send info. + multiple languages
- C. Sargent - can have steps taken for everyone

- issues came from redistricting → change of voting location
caused confusion

- Russ - MCJ, if you have laws in place, then the laws
nullify the MCJ if there is something not covered
by law, then draft an MCJ - use laws that you
have to act on problems w/ staff, departments, etc.

- C. Sargent - at elections / (inauguration) swear by state + federal
laws

- C. Famico - How did you find out about meeting
Russ - via C. Dibbel

• William Legault - 2 Orne St.

- Repulsed by some of what he heard - voting rights issue brought
by LLC - exercised constitutional rights to bring an
issue forward

• Chuck Barten, Board of Registrars

- below expectations of 21st Century - technology can help
with the process → do not block out technology when
moving forward

- C. Sargent → at voting location, have list of streets per precinct

- C. Turiel → can do a lot quickly moving forward

• Ana Nuncia, Winter St.

- MCJ needed as latino community singled out → lawyer who is a
member of LLC helped write → civil rights were violated →
MCJ a tool became necessary → attempts to bring to
level of equality.

• Russ Grand, 97 Freedom Hallway

- police at polls → city council needs to send a message - play
by the laws

- Title 42, 1975, deprivation by color of law - consequences for the people
who do it

• Mayor - when we discussed the MCL (lawyer or LLC), we aren't a committee that only depends on laws as our standards - (cited antidiscrimination) be more proactive, equity + education - all have ability to succeed + communicate w/ local government - acknowledge faults + be better at addressing - break down barriers + create equal access

• C. McCarthy - comes down to communication & how we work through issues

① • motion C. McCarthy, 2nd - C. Gerard - keep matters in committee
vote: 5-0

② • motion C. McCarthy, 2nd - Gerard

~~the~~ Government Services Chair work with the city solicitor to form a task force early voting, voting issues and the feasibility of a voting commission
5-0

motion to adjourn: Gerard 2nd - Sargent 8:28 PM