

Takoma Park's board of elections met electronically on 4/16/2020. Participating: Brian Ernst (board chair); Arthur David Olson (board vice chair); Lori Grazio (board member); Curtis Antonucci (board member); Kimberly Allen (board member); Matt Ling (board member); Jessie Carpenter (director of council affairs); Irma Nalvarte (assistant city clerk); Donna Wright (city communications specialist).

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. We approved the agenda. We approved the minutes of our 3/12/2020 meeting and our 4/2/2020 special meeting.

We noted that Curtis Antonucci's term is expiring. Curtis would like to continue on the board; Jessie undertook to send Curtis necessary information.

Donna Wright, the city's communications specialist, has developed options for logos for the 2020 city election. Donna noted that work in the past few weeks has focused on pandemic-related matters; election work can begin soon. Matt noted that a move to a vote-at-home election might require changes to the focus of the logo; Donna agreed. We heard a sense that the city's seal is not recognizable as such to most folks and might be left out; we heard a sense that use of the seal makes the logo look official. Folks liked the "Your City Your Vote tag line, but it might be left out of the logo. We heard a sense that uniform colors in different parts of the logo would be helpful. We heard a sense that a check mark might not be appropriate if the city uses filled bubbles for voting; an (artistically) filled "O" in "vote" might be preferable. We heard a suggestion that the logo's edges might mimic a stamp's perforations to encourage mail-in voting. Donna made notes of the discussion and undertook to prepare new options.

Irma reported no new developments in electronic mail solicitations for election workers. Jessie noted that a message could acknowledge that there's some uncertainty about how the election is to be conducted.

Arthur David reported that Maryland's state primary is to be mostly mail-in; no plans have been revealed for November. Jessie sees value in following the county/state practice in November, whatever it is; Brian noted that using a different method might cause confusion.

Jessie reported having sent our list of topics of interest to the recommended election equipment vendor, along with additions of Jessie's own; Jessie hopes to schedule a teleconference. Jessie undertook to learn whether the evening of 4/23/2020 or 4/30/2020 will work for the vendor.

We considered how we would manage if we had to do all (or almost all) vote-at-home in November. Jessie reported that Donna plans to research costs of an all-mail-in election. Jessie noted that the state's efforts to ensure ballots go to correct addresses will mean that the city's ballots will tend to go to the correct address (since the city uses the state's list for most city voters).

Matt felt it was unlikely that the county would participate in joint mailings; Jessie agreed. We did not know whether Rockville did signature verification for its 2019 mail-in election; Brian noted that signature verification was not mentioned in Rockville's report. Jessie noted that a recent state government order may provide leeway to change the city's charter to allow later-than-usual time limits for election-related actions (such as reporting results).

Jessie noted that, for the city election, folks would not need to travel for to drop off ballots. Brian reviewed some of the expenses incurred and equipment used by Rockville; Brian noted that some equipment might be unavailable for our election given that, in comparison with Rockville, more jurisdictions will be holding elections at the same time. Jessie noted that lots of information on vote-at-home is now being produced.

We heard a concern that the postal service might be shut down in November; we heard a sense that if that happened, we could use whatever solution Maryland uses. Arthur David believed that while Rockville's election cost about \$15 per voter, ours might cost less given less of a need to educate voters on vote-at-home and less of a need to check on correct addresses for voters (since the county/state will be doing work in these areas).

Jessie noted that the county's work on the Presidential election will limit the help the county provides. Brian suggested that the printing company used for the county's June election might be an option for the city's election. Jessie's sense is that the city council will look to the board for guidance on whether to go with vote-at-home. Jessie's sense is that staff can continue to work on preparations for both a vote-at-home election and a traditional election.

We considered the city's voter registration form. Arthur David undertook to send proposed changes to the city clerk and to board members.

We considered instructional and motivational videos for candidates, election workers, and voters. Jessie suggested that board members provide ideas for videos; Jessie did not see a need for videos for election workers. Jessie and Irma have been working on other material for candidates (focused on the city's new campaign laws). Brian saw usefulness in getting help from City TV with voter outreach, especially if the nature of the election changes again. Jessie saw use in educating people about ranked-choice voting. Arthur David undertook to see if generic ranked-choice-voting videos are available. Jessie noted that the city does have "a really bad one" made in 2007. Jessie asked that scripts for videos reflect running times of two to three minutes. Jessie has a feeling that we are not going to run short of candidates in the upcoming election.

We scheduled meetings for 8/27/2020, 9/24/2020, and 10/22/2020; Arthur David undertook to circulate an updated calendar. We will add scheduling of election worker training to our agenda.

Jessie reported that a recording of an online meeting with a poll book vendor is available; Jessie will provide a link to the video; the vendor is still prepared to work with us.

Jessie reported that the city attorney is available to assist us and plans to review the committee's minutes.

Arthur David noted that the city manager's proposed budget has about \$53,000 for the election; Jessie noted that it includes salary for an intern. Jessie underestimated the cost of mailings; Jessie plans to ask for an increase in the budget. Jessie noted that if we go to a vote-at-home election, the budget is out the window.

We adjourned at 8:46 p.m., to meet next on 5/14/2020 at 7500 Maple Avenue (or electronically if need be).