

**Ad Hoc Polling Place Review Committee**  
**September 5, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Engineering Conference Room**  
**Woburn City Hall**  
**Woburn, Massachusetts**

Attending: City Council President Paul Denaro, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor Marie Lingblom, Woburn Handicapped and Disabled Citizens Commissioner Jennifer Murray, Republican City Committee Member Daniel MacGilvray, Democratic City Committee Member Joseph Demers, Unenrolled Voter Shaheen Mozaffar, Ph.D., and City Clerk William Campbell.

Absent: Assistant Superintendent of Schools Joseph Elia.

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William Campbell began the meeting by proposing that the minutes from the August 14, 2012 meeting be adopted. The minutes were adopted by the committee, all in favor. Joseph Demers presented the committee with copies of his PowerPoint presentation for the public hearing that is scheduled to be held on September 12, 2012. President Denaro made a motion to include this document in the permanent record. The motion was passed, all in favor. In addition, Joseph Demers will send an electric copy to William Campbell.

Joseph Demers stated that he included general information in his PowerPoint, including the purpose of the committee, the number of times the committee met, and an explanation of the basic principles that helped guide the polling place review process. He said that he included the safety risks involved with holding elections in elementary schools, Dr. Mozaffar's breakdown of the number of voters in each precinct, and the cost efficiency of consolidating voting locations. However, Joseph Demers did acknowledge that there is not a lot of data regarding the expenses of holding elections in the elementary schools because the committee has not received the cost figures from the School Department. Shaheen Mozaffar stated that the committee should have a general idea of the costs in case an audience member asks for expense specifics, to which William Campbell responded that he has a general estimate of the cost savings. President Denaro stated that the cost savings are not substantial enough to encourage the public to support the consolidation, and that the safety issue will be the leading factor. However, William Campbell stated that saving any amount of money is a positive aspect of consolidating.

Joseph Demers also included in his PowerPoint presentation the three possible voting location options. He mentioned the positive and negatives aspects of completely consolidating to the Joyce Middle School or Woburn High School and of jointly consolidating to the Senior Center and the Joyce Middle School. Joseph Demers asked whether he should include six wards at the Joyce Middle School and one ward at the Senior Center, or five wards at the Joyce Middle School and two wards at the Senior Center, to which William Campbell responded that two wards could be sent to the Senior Center.

President Denaro stated that having the Joyce Middle School and the Senior Center as a solution will give the public with the option of not supporting a complete consolidation into one location. Daniel MacGilvray stated that the cost of elections would be greater with two buildings than with one location. President Denaro suggested that the committee eliminates the option of a joint consolidation to the Joyce Middle School and the Senior Center. Joseph Demers stated that he wanted to include the Joyce Middle School and Senior Center option to show the public what solutions the committee considered. Shaheen Mozaffar stated that the purpose for this committee was to consolidate to a central location and that it makes sense to only include the options of solely consolidating to either to Joyce Middle School or Woburn High School. President Denaro stated that committee could issue a recommendation of using the Joyce Middle School and the Senior Center as a fallback option. Daniel MacGilvray suggested that the committee eliminates the option of a joint consolidation to the Joyce Middle School and the Senior Center because he thinks that the committee should stay with the main principle of consolidating to one location. William Campbell stated that Ward six may feel excluded, to which Joseph Demers stated that the committee looked at other options but they did not work out. President Denaro made a motion to remove the Joyce Middle School and Senior Center option, and the motion was passed, all in favor.

Lastly, in his PowerPoint, Joseph Demers included the official recommendation of the committee and an outline of the procedures for accepting this change at both the local and state level. President Denaro stated that it is important for the public to understand the legislative procedure. Joseph Demers stated that he will add that these changes will not go into effect for the upcoming November election.

President Denaro asked when the Special Legislation would be passed at the state level. Joseph Demers answered that the Special Legislation would be sent in January and the committee meets in February. He said that it could take between three to six months for the legislation to be passed, due to the fact that there is no precedent. Joseph Demers stated that he does not foresee any issues arising, but acknowledges that organizations or local citizens could challenge the consolidation effort. William Campbell stated that in the City of Amesbury, one voting location is used, and Joseph Demers stated the Town of Franklin has a similar population to the City of Woburn and it has one consolidated polling place.

William Campbell stated that a public opposition could occur at the public hearing. Marie Lingblom stated that she has spoken to local parents about the consolidation to the Joyce Middle School and she has heard positive responses. Jennifer Murray stated that there is a threat of having registered sex offenders voting at the school. William Campbell stated that the School Department frequently receives calls about sex offender concerns during elections. President Denaro stated that most people are unaware of the fact the registered offenders are allowed to vote inside the schools.

William Campbell stated that there should be a microphone for audience members to use during the public hearing. Shaheen Mozaffar stated that the committee could give specific details if audience members ask them but the PowerPoint should be short and

concise. President Denaro stated that people do not like change but he does not see any objections because this change is to ensure a safer and more cost efficient election season. He stated that he hopes the public understands that this consolidation effort has been a long process and that the committee has recommended the best solution. Jennifer Murray stated that the committee should stress that safety is the top priority and that people can argue and reject the committee's recommendation but safety triumphs their objections.

Joseph Demers stated that microphones, tables and chairs, a projector, and a screen are needed for the public hearing. President Denaro asked if William Campbell would be opening the hearing, to which William Campbell responded that he was. In addition, President Denaro suggested that speaking time limits should be established. Joseph Demers stated that residents should be limited to one question each, and President Denaro stated that each resident should be limited to three minutes of speaking time. William Campbell stated that he is interested to hear the public's opinion. President Denaro stated that he hopes residents will come to the public hearing, but Daniel MacGilvray acknowledged that people might not come to the hearing. Shaheen Mozaffar asked when the committee would present its findings to the City Council, to which President Denaro responded that the committee would give its recommendation to the City Council on October 2, 2012.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on September 13, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Megan Murphy