



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

362 GREEN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139-3395 • TEL. (617) 349-4361
FAX (617) 349-4366

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

ARTIS B. SPEARS
DARLEEN G. BONISLAWSKI
LYNNE ALEXIS MOLNAR
WAYNE A. DRUGAN, JR.
Commissioners

TERESA S. NEIGHBOR
Executive Director

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

FROM: Darleen G. Bonislowski, Election Commissioner

DEB

DATE: February 20, 1996

RE: Attached response to Council Order #032, dated 2/5/96

RE: **PLANS TO INCREASE VOTER PARTICIPATION**

RECEIVED
96 FEB 20 PM 4:36
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



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TERESA S. NEIGHBOR
Executive Director

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
FROM: Darleen G. Bonislowski
Chair, Community Outreach and Voter Education committee

DATE: February 20, 1996

RE: Council Order #032, dated 2/5/96
PLANS TO INCREASE VOTER PARTICIPATION

RECEIVED
26 FEB 20 PM 4:36
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

The Election Commission welcomes the opportunity to respond to the above Council Order regarding the Commission's voter participation plans and activities.

The Election Commission has implemented the "Motor Voter Law," which encourages community outreach by mandating that mail-in voter registration forms be made "widely available for distribution through governmental, non-governmental and private entities, with particular emphasis on making them available for voter registration sessions".

The Commission identified three primary goals to achieve the law's purpose and increase voter participation. They are:

- (1) Community outreach to educate the public about the Motor Voter Law and the availability of mail-in registration forms.
- (2) Distribution of mail-in registration forms at City departments and other city locations.
- (3) Voter registration through the 1996 City census to increase voter participation.

The Election Commission has utilized various methods to achieve the above goals as follows:

- Widespread availability of voter registration forms through the development of a comprehensive citywide distribution network. The creation of this network includes providing voter information to each site. The forms are now available in a variety of locations.

- Creation and distribution of bookmarks containing voter information. Bookmarks will also be produced for the September primary and November Presidential election and distributed at local libraries and other city locations.
- Participation in voter education activities for bilingual students of Concilio Hispano and the City Links program at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.
- Yearly training sessions to provide the community with information regarding voter registration.
- "Sidewalk Sessions" at designated squares. In addition to providing mail-in voter registration forms and other voter information they serve as a visible reminder to register and vote.
- Outreach to the print media including the Cambridge Chronicle, Globe, TAB, El Mundo, Bay Windows, Bay State Banner, North and East Cambridge News.
- Media outreach on cable television.
- City Council enactment of an Election Commission resolution designating the week of July 4th, 1994, as "Motor-Voter Week" with accompanying material to advertise the new law.
- On site absentee ballot voting conducted by Election Commissioners at designated health care facilities, which promotes voting participation of residents.
- Outreach to Cambridge schools, includes providing voter registration materials. Also, technical assistance to students and faculty who have utilized the assistance to enable them to conduct school elections and a simulated PR Count.
- Availability of videos through a Voter Education Library. Selections include "First Tuesday," set in a futuristic society where young revolutionaries are trying to restore voting which has been outlawed. Another is "Case of the Missing X," a Sherlock Holmes spoof about voter registration and voting with numbers in a PR election.
- Distribution of colorful posters encouraging voter participation, which are available to the community.
- Participation in the St. Patrick Day parade which provided a visual reminder encouraging voter participation. The Election Commission's banner reads,

**"HOME OF THE PR COUNT
CAMBRIDGE ELECTION COMMISSION
REGISTER AND VOTE"**

- Posting of City Hall Lawn signs advertising voter information.
- A display table set outside the Commission's door containing voter information including mail-in forms, bookmarks, absentee ballot applications and other voter data. During non-business hours visitors can obtain voter information and leave materials in the mail slot.
- The Commission maintains information in the computerized City Hall network.
- For the first time the Commission is including mail-in voter registration forms in the 1996 City Census mailing.

Recent figures support the effectiveness of the Election Commission's efforts to increase voter participation through vigorous community outreach. Voter registration has increased since the Motor Voter Law was enacted. The following statistics confirm that mail-in voter registration is the primary method of voter registration in Cambridge.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Election</u>	<u>Voter Reg. Total</u>	<u>Voter Reg. by Mail-in</u>
1995	City	3479	2167
1994	State	4512	2883
1993	City	1442	(Pre-MV Law)

It should be noted that even with the extensive community outreach the Election Commission provides, voter turnout is affected by other variables such as the type of election. Historically voter turnout tends to be lowest during Primary elections as compared to higher turnouts in General and Municipal elections. Other factors impacting voter turnout include contested seats, ballot questions, and voter interest. This accounts for the varying percentages referred to in the above Council Order.

Enclosed for review are several documents which highlight a variety of the Commission's community outreach and voter participation activities.

The Election Commission will continue efforts to increase voter participation and educate Cambridge residents about mail-in registration. We welcome comments and suggestions from you and the City Council.

Enclosures: Newspaper articles
 Distribution network
 1995 Voter Registration statistics
 Bookmarks
 "Motor Voter Week" resolution
 St. Patrick Parade photo



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Mail-in Voter Registration Sites

Cambridge Public Library and all branches

U. S. Post Office -- all Cambridge branches

Schools - Public & Private Elementary and High Schools

Cambridge Fire Department - all Fire Station Houses

City Agencies: City Clerk's Office (City Hall)
Community Learning Center (19 Brookline St)
Consumer's Council (Lombardi Building)
Council on Aging (806 Massachusetts Ave)
Department of Public Works (147 Hampshire St)
Election Commission (362 Green St)
Finance Department (City Hall)
Human Services (51 Inman St)
Inspectional Services (Lombardi Building)
License Commission (Lombardi Building)
Personnel Office (City Hall)
Substance Abuse Task Force (19R Brookline St)
Traffic & Parking (57 Inman St)

Cambridge Housing Authority: Administrative office (675 Mass Ave),
various public housing sites and
tenant councils

Public Health Agencies: Cambridge Hospital and Neighborhood Health
Clinics at the following locations - Cambridgeport, East Cambridge,
North Cambridge, Riverside, Windsor Street.

Other Sites: Cambridge Economic Opportunity Comm (11 Inman St)
Cambridge Head Start Day Care (221 Hampshire St)
Cambridge Ladders (765 Concord Avenue)
Cambridgeport Problem Center (One West Street)
Cambridge Youth Guidance Center (5 Sacramento St)
CCTV (675 Mass Ave)
Child Care Resource Center (130 Bishop Allen Dr)
Tutoring Plus (71 Cherry St/Margaret Fuller Hse)
YWCA (7 Temple Street)

2/13/96

1995 Voter Registration Statistics
(year-to-date, through 10/18/95: deadline for Nov. 7th election)

Registry of Motor Vehicles: 366

Public agencies are not identified but are coded for statistical gathering by the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office.

Agency AAB: 115

Agency BAA: 62

Agency BBA: 29

Mail-in Registration forms: 2,167

Over-the-Counter: 244

Federal Registration Forms: 6

Saturday Sessions:

DATE	Central Square	Harvard Square	Porter Square	TOTAL
6/3	3(1)	8(1)	canceled	11(2)
6/10	3	10(1)	8	21(1)
6/17	10(1)	8(1)	5	23(2)
6/24	5	6	canceled	11
7/1	4	4	12	20
7/8	3	1	0	4
7/15	4	7(3)	4(3)	15(6)
7/22	10(1)	6(3)	canceled	16(4)
7/29	5(3)	7(3)	5	17(6)
8/5	4	8(6)	3(10)	15(16)
8/12	0	11(2)	11(2)	22(4)
8/19	4	12(1)	canceled	16(1)
8/26	6(2)	11(7)	10	27(9)
9/9	9(1)	5	11(10)	25(11)
9/16	10(2)	15(4)	22(5)	47(11)
9/23	12(2)	11	7(3)	30(5)
9/30	12(1)	14(10)	21(5)	47(16)
TOTAL	104(14)	144(42)	119(38)	367(94)

Numbers in parenthesis represent registrations outside Cambridge.

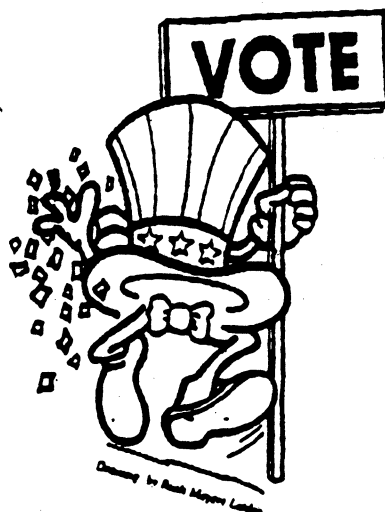
Special Registration Sessions:

June 1	21	CRLS graduation rehearsal
June 5	19	CRLS graduation rehearsal
June 6	8	CRLS graduation rehearsal
June 6	1	CRLS graduation ceremony
Sept 10	20(10)	Cambridge River Festival
Sept 24	53	Central Square World's Fair
Sept 28	1	CRLS Class Elections
TOTAL:	123 (10)	

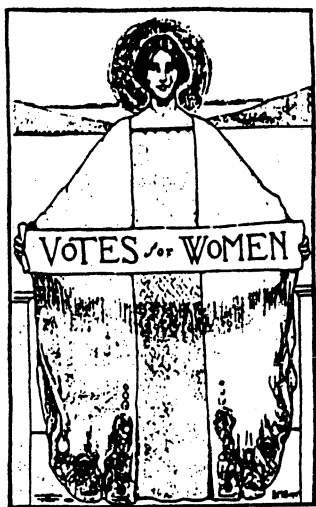
CUMULATIVE TOTAL: 3479 (104)

**SOMETIMES
IT TAKES A
FOUR-LETTER WORD
TO BE HEARD**

AFL-CIO



★
City of Cambridge
Election Commission
362 Green Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 349-4361
★



75 YEARS OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

CITY ELECTION
November 7, 1995

✦ CITY COUNCIL
✦ SCHOOL COMMITTEE

★
City of Cambridge
Election Commission
362 Green Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 349-4361
★

★★★★★★★★★★

In order to **VOTE**
you must **REGISTER**
and be a

- * U.S. citizen
- * Mass. resident
- * 18 years old
by Election Day

• **IN PERSON**

At the Election
Commission or any
registration event.

• **BY MAIL**

Fill out a form and
mail it back to the
Commission. Forms
are available at
the following
Cambridge
locations:

- * City Hall
- * City Hall annex
- * Libraries
- * Post Offices
- * Public Housing
- * Health Clinics
- * Consumer Council
- * Public and Private
Schools
- * Fire Stations
- * Public Works
- * Council on Aging
- * Human Services

**LAST DAY FOR
VOTER**

REGISTRATION
October 18, 1995

CITY ELECTION
November 7, 1995

★★★★★★★★★★



Register, vote

While the eyes of the nation are on the state of New Hampshire, site of the first presidential primary, local residents will be making news of their own. The passage of the Motor Voter Law has created a new first for city residents who will have the opportunity to register to vote by mail in 1996 through the city census.

With three elections coming up this year on March 5, Sept. 17 and the presidential election on Nov. 5, the Cambridge Election Commission is "kicking off" the upcoming election season and making a special emphasis to get out the vote.

The election commission took advantage of a provision in the new law that allows voter registration forms to be sent with census forms. City residents may register to vote by filling out the voter registration forms which will be enclosed with their census forms that will be going out in the mail this month.

In order to vote a person must be age 18 and a US citizen. A person who will turn 18 by the next scheduled election is eligible to register.

The election commission announces that the deadline to register to vote in the March 5 presidential primary is Wednesday, Feb. 14, at 8 pm.

The Election Commission office, located at 362 Green St., third floor, in Central Square will be open until 8 pm on Feb. 14, for voter registration. Regular office hours are 8:30 am to 5 pm, Monday-Friday. A table with voter registration forms and other materials for public use is set up outside the Election Commission office to provide access to information after regular office hours.

Mail-in registration forms are also available at various locations, including post offices, libraries, schools, fire stations, neighborhood health centers and public housing. All registration forms mailed to the Election Commission Office should be postmarked by midnight, Feb. 14. For more information about voter registration, call the Election Commission office at 349-4361.

Early evidence shows Motor Voter Law is working

The following is a report from the Cambridge Election Commission:

In a recent article on the successful implementation of the recently enacted Motor Voter Law, the Boston Globe stated that Americans were taking advantage of the new law which simplifies voter registration by signing up at a "record pace." The Cambridge Election Commission reports similar experiences with residents who may now register to vote by simply filling out a form and mailing it back to the Election Commission.

Since the intent of the new law is to make the forms widely available in places where people congregate, work, visit, or otherwise conduct business, the commission

has embarked on a vigorous campaign of community outreach to distribute the forms throughout the city, and in anticipation of the Nov. 7 municipal election for city council and school committee.

The first results are in, and they indicate that the Election Commission's community outreach has educated many Cantabrigians about "mail-in" registration.

From July 1, 1994 when the new law took effect, through Oct. 11, the last date of voter registration for the November 1994 election, 4,512 city residents registered to vote. Of this number two-thirds registered using "mail-in" registration forms.

The law also requires that city residents be informed on their census forms that they may request

*For further
information contact
the Cambridge
Election Commission
at 349-4361.*

"mail-in" voter registration forms from the Election Commission. Another indication of the Motor Voter Law's success is reflected in the enthusiastic response of nearly 800 city voters who, after receiving this information, contacted the commission to request registration forms.

In its continuing effort to provide forms throughout the city, the

Election Commission has expanded its distribution network. Forms are now available at city hall, the city hall annexes at 51 and 57 Inman St., local libraries, post offices, and Concilio Hispano. In addition the Cambridge School Department, Cambridge Hospital, and the Cambridge Housing Authority are making the forms available at city health clinics, public housing complexes, and schools.

Voter registration forms are available on request. In addition, people may continue to register at the Election Commission office. For further information contact the Cambridge Election Commission, 362 Green St., Cambridge, MA 02139, telephone 349-4361, FAX 349-4366.

Letters to the Editor

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Making registration easier

The Cambridge Election Commission agrees with the Sept. 13 TAB editorial ("Easier voting") that the passage of the Motor Voter Law is cause to "celebrate."

As noted in the editorial, the Secretary of State's office has performed the commendable job of distributing them at the statewide level, the Cambridge Election Commission has performed this activity at the municipal level.

The commission has placed a strong emphasis on distribution because the new law's intent is to encourage voter participation by making the mail-in cards widely available through governmental, non-governmental and private entities, with particular emphasis on making them available for organized voter registration.

Voter registration cards are available at all Cambridge libraries, post offices and city offices including the City Clerk, Human Services, Traffic and Finance offices.

We also provided voting information to local newspaper and cable outlets and designated the holiday week of July 4 "Motor Voter Week" to kick off the new law. In addition, we have contacted more than 100 Cambridge organizations to inform them of the Motor Voter Law and the availability of mail-in cards. We have also produced colorful bookmarks containing useful voting information. Anyone wishing to know more about the Motor Voter Law or how to obtain voter registration cards and/or bookmarks can do so by contacting the Cambridge Election Commission at 362 Green St. 349-4361.

We are committed to a smooth implementation of the Motor Voter Law, and most importantly, we urge Cambridge residents to register to vote and participate on Election Day.

Cambridge Board of Election Commissioners:

Edward J. Samp Jr., Artis B. Spears,

Darleen G. Bonislowski,

Lynne Alexis Molnar

Editor's note: The TAB will carry mail-in registration forms in the Oct. 4 issue.

SCHOOLS

PAGE 16

CAMBRIDGE CHRONICLE

Students buck adult voting results in mock election

BY SCOTT FARMELANT
Chronicle Staff

Election results are in and the new city council and school committee feature a decidedly Independent flavor, as conservatives landed eight of nine city council slots and four of six school positions.

This according to the ballots of juniors and seniors in the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's social studies program, where students recently bucked the adult voting trend in a mock proportional representation (PR) election.

Teacher Bill Tobin reported that the process, which topped a week-long program on PR, allowed students to meet the candidates and

learn about Cambridge's electoral system.

In fact, the mock election had all the flavor of the real thing, with the Election Commission providing curriculum material, videotapes and even actual voting boxes and booths. Tobin reported that the program was designed to encourage students to participate once they reach voting age.

Students conducted candidate forums, solicited a one-page summary of stances on issues and voted on Nov. 1 before tallying votes under the elaborate counting process unique to Cambridge. Candidates also distributed campaign literature and gave speeches.

In the council election, 168 students voted, choosing Michael Bal-

Students conducted candidate forums, solicited a one-page summary of stances on issues and voted on Nov. 1.

dasaro, Manuel Barros, Gloria Beeks, Anthony Galluccio, Bill "Jonesy" Jones, Jim McSweeney, Mayor Ken Reeves, Tim Toomey and Michael Sullivan. Quota was set at 18 votes.

In the school race, the 229 students participating tabbed Christine

Arruda, Salvatore Framondi, Joe Grassi, Robin Harris, David Maher and Denise Simmons. Quota was fixed at 33 votes.

Other candidates also participated in the forum, including Frank Duehay, Randolph Lowet, Elaine Noble, Katherine Triantafillou and Bill Walsh for the council; Henrietta Davis, Fred Fantini and Henry Lukas took part in the mock school election.

Tobin praised several CRLS staff members, including Dionne Green, a new history teacher in House A, Thomas Conward who teaches in the Leadership group and the recently retired Lawrence Clinton. Tobin also reported that the social studies program will repeat the process in two years.



City of Cambridge

49.

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 20, 1994

MAYOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
COUNCILLOR WALSH

- WHEREAS: A bill officially titled **An Act Increasing Electoral Participation in the Commonwealth**, was enacted as Chapter 465 of the Acts of 1994; and
- WHEREAS: The bill, popularly known as the "Motor Voter" Law brings state law into compliance with the federal **National Voter Registration Act of 1993**; and
- WHEREAS: The "Motor Voter" Law will be implemented in three stages in 1994, 1995, and 1998, with Cambridge residents seeing many changes in state voter registration procedures; and
- WHEREAS: The Cambridge Election Commission will implement the "Motor Voter" Law, it will educate the public about these changes, and it will continue its longstanding efforts to actively encourage voter participation; and
- WHEREAS: The first provision takes effect on July 1, 1994, allowing for mail-in registration, in addition to the traditional method of in-person registration; and
- WHEREAS: The intent of the "Motor Voter" Law is to encourage voter registration by making the mail-in affidavit forms widely available through governmental, non-governmental and private entities, with particular emphasis on making them available for organized voter registration; and
- WHEREAS: On July 4, 1776 the Declaration of Independence announced the birth of these United States, and signaled the beginning of an American Revolution committed to principles of democracy; and
- WHEREAS: Before and during the American Revolution only white male property owners could vote, and for over 200 years the struggle continued to extend the vote to non-property owners, African-Americans, women, and the poor whose right to vote was tied to payment of unfair poll taxes; and
- WHEREAS: The "Motor Voter" Law is a continuation of the Revolution's principles of democracy, inasmuch as it promotes full voting participation; and

WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge is committed both to the principles of democracy upon which this nation was founded, and to full voter participation; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That this Cambridge City Council does hereby proclaim the week beginning July 3, 1994 and ending July 9, 1994 to be "Motor Voter" Week in the City of Cambridge.

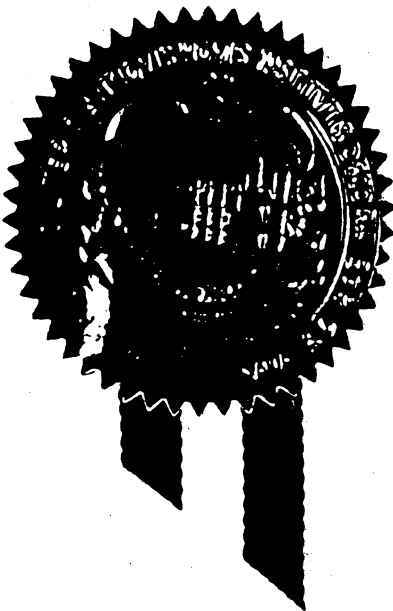
In City Council June 20, 1994.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



XO Margaret Drury
D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

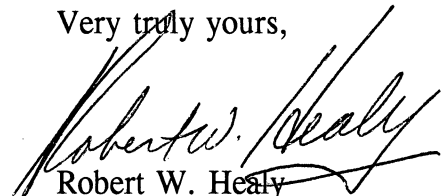
RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

February 26, 1996

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 24, regarding plans to increase voter participation, received from Election Commissioner Darleen G. Bonislowski.

Very truly yours,


Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #6

5-77
Cal. 6

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Twenty-four, regarding plans to increase
voter participation.

In City Council February 26, 1996

Report accepted by an affirmative
Vote of nine members.

Placed on file