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# Response to Council Order #056, dated 4/14/97

**Date:** 04/23/97

**To:** Robert W. Healy, City Manager

**From:** Board of Election Commissioners 

**RE:** Response to Council Order #056, dated 4/14/97 Re: Sample Ballot for  
Upcoming Municipal Election

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The Board of Election Commissioners is pleased to respond to the City Council's request for a progress report on computerization of the municipal election scheduled for November 4, 1997. Attached is a comprehensive and detailed report outlining the steps and timetable for implementation.

Accu-Vote ES-2000 scanning software has been available since the end of March, as scheduled. Tabulation software was received from Jerel at the beginning of April. Scanning software and tabulation software will be tested together using sample-only ballots on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. A copy of the prototype ballot was received on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Printing specification documentation is imminent and will be submitted for bid to graphic design firms as soon as it is received. Bid specifications for ballot printing for the

04/23/97

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municipal election should be available by early July, as is customary. The final ballot design is a function of the number of candidates.

Attachment

# **computerizing proportional representation elections in Cambridge, MA**

Date: 4/23/97

To: Board of Election Commissioners

From: Teresa Neighbor, Executive Director 

RE: Steps and Timeline for Implementation - Update #3

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## Steps for Implementation

1. Testing and Certification
2. Ballot Design
3. Voter Education
4. Pollworker Training
5. Election Night Procedures

## 1. Testing and Certification

- a. Development of sample ballot for testing purposes only - Month of April:
  - LHS produces design based on Accu-Vote requirements - April 14
  - LHS produces ballots for internal testing - April 22
  - print ballots for testing purposes only - April 28  
5,000 ballots @ \$0.40 per ballot = \$2000
- b. Three-stage test preparation:
  - plan space to "conduct PR count" for one day - April 17;
  - hire 10 pollworkers @ \$7 per hour to "vote" and to tabulate ballots (approximately 70 hours total) - April 25;
  - prepare equipment and supplies for mini-count - April 28;
  - train pollworkers how to "vote" sample ballots - May 3;
  - train pollworkers how to conduct mini-count - May 3;
  - tally and record mini-count ballots - May 3;
- c. Three-stage test procedures:
  - schedule training on "PR Master" with on-site rep - April 28;
  - "voting" of sample ballots for testing purposes only - May 3;
  - test election" with Accu-Vote scanning equipment and software - May 3;
  - computerized "PR Count" - counting of sample ballots with "PR Master" - May 3;  
(2 single-blind - 1000 ballots each; 1 double-blind - 5000 ballots, including 2000 ballots from first 2 tests.)
- d. Verification of results - May 3;
- e. Schedule test with Elections Division at SOC - May 14

## 2. Ballot Design

- a. Requisition to hire graphic design consultant to work with LHS on ballot design: (20 hours @ \$100 per hour) - April 28;
- b. Plan "focus groups:" (3 groups of 10 persons each at \$7 per hour for 2 ½ hours) - May 19;
  - pollworkers
  - members of senior center
  - "wo/man in the street"
  - Councilors and candidates

- c. Board reviews input of "focus groups;"
  - decides on ballot design - June 1
  - work with LHS to prepare specs for final ballot bid - June 15

### 3. Voter Education Outreach

- a. Publicity coverage preparation - Month of July
  - media coverage
  - press releases
  - cable shows
  - feature articles
  - City Web Page
- b. Preparation for mailing sample ballots to voters - Month of August
  - prepare copy for sample ballot - August 4;
  - cover letter - August 4;
  - sample ballot proof reviewed - August 18;
  - schedule printing of 50,000 pieces - September 8;
  - distribution of samples to mail-in affidavit distribution locations (optional);
  - schedule mailing to voters - October 20
- c. Candidate briefing - Month of August
- d. PR Brochure (optional)

### 4. Pollworker training:

- a. Election day manual revision - September 15
  - ballots "rejected" by scanner
  - how to deal with "jammed" ballots
- b. Schedule training for pollworker training- Week of October 27
  - election day set-up of sample ballots
  - demonstration of new ballot for voters
  - how to deal with "rejected" ballots

### 5. Election Night Procedures

- a. Return of "memory cards" to Election office - November 4
- b. Computerized tabulation procedure - November 4
  - unofficial "First Count"

- manual data entry of write-ins; inspection of blanks
- computerized PR ballot tabulation - "Official Count"

c. Computerized tabulation results - November 5

- Auditor verifies results
- Commissioners verify results

d. Cable coverage



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
ROBERT W. HEALY  
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI  
Deputy City Manager

April 28, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item Number 35, relative to a progress report on the sample ballot for municipal election, please find attached a report submitted by the Board of Election Commissioners.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy  
City Manager

RWH/dls  
attachment

Consent Agenda #18

S-226

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number  
Thirty-Five, regarding progress report  
on the sample ballot for municipal  
election.

In City Council April 28, 1997

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