

1. State your name, residential address, business address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address.

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2. Personal. Give a brief biographical summary, including your occupation and past activity in the Democratic Party, community, Cambridge politics, and voter registration. Attach a resume or CV. Please include your experience, if any, with election law, proportional representation, and Cambridge election procedures. Is there, or do you anticipate, anything (time, other commitments) that would present a conflict of interest or otherwise make it difficult to fulfill your duties as Election Commissioner for the full four-year term?

*Although not a Cambridge native, I've lived here longer than anywhere else during my lifetime, having resided in the City for the past 26 years, and currently live in mid-Cambridge with my husband and two college-age children. I'm originally from Rochester, NY, where I lived before relocating to the Boston area. I feel very fortunate to have made a home in this City, and am grateful that my children grew up here and were educated from kindergarten through high school in the Cambridge Public Schools.*

*My resume is attached for review. I have masters degrees in public health and social work from Boston University, and have worked primarily in program management and evaluation. Currently I am a consultant. Most recently, my time was focused on taking care of my mother, who has dementia and required full-time supervision. In addition to my work in public health/social work, I also served as the aide to former City Councillor Sam Seidel. Prior to attending graduate school, I gained extensive experience in fundraising and volunteer management working at Emmanuel College and Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries.*

*In addition to my paid employment, I have also been an active volunteer at my children's schools, and have served on the board of the Friends of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (FoCRLS). I'm currently on the board of the Cambridge Community Center, where I serve as chair of their fundraising committee.*

*My history does not include any specific experience with election law. I do, however, have experience with political campaigns at the local, state and federal level. I worked as treasurer for two city council candidates (for four years each) and currently am the treasurer for School Committee member Kathleen Kelly. In addition to municipal races, I've also canvassed for state and federal Democratic campaigns in Massachusetts. In 2008 I worked on the Obama campaign in Ohio, and in 2016 worked for the Clinton campaign in North Carolina. And last, but not least, I've had the honor to be Vice-Chair of the Cambridge Democratic City Committee as a member of the Ward 6 Committee.*

*Regarding conflicts of interest, I would resign my position as treasurer of Kathleen Kelly's school committee campaign if offered the position of election commissioner.*

3. Reason for Seeking Office. Please explain why you are seeking the office of Election Commissioner.

*Voting is a way to shape your community and determine its future. Each person's vote counts equally, and I would be honored to have responsibility as an election commissioner in maintaining the local process for this fundamental right of our democracy.*

4. Voter Participation (registration and turnout). a. Increasing participation. Given the dynamic nature of the City of Cambridge, with a highly transient population, how do you propose to increase the number of people who register and vote across elections for different offices? Do you have any specific suggestions for increasing participation? *One way to increase the number of people who register to vote is to continue to effectively publicize (through social media, city publications, etc.) the methods by which people can register, including the on-line option. And as endorsed by the CDCC, I am also in favor of automatic voter registration as a proven method to increase the number of registered voters. For those who may not have a computer or internet access, I would consult with area community organizations to determine ways to do effective outreach those persons.*

*Overall, I think that turnout is more of an issue than registration. As I see the aspect of the job, an election commissioner can effectively promote and encourage voting as a person's civic duty. But when there are compelling issues and candidates more people will show up at the polls in significant numbers. I was very heartened to see the noticeable increase in voters at the 2017 municipal elections, and credit the renewed interest in running for office (given 2016 election results) and the substantive campaigning done as reasons why we saw these results. So, political parties and issues groups really have the "heavy lifting" to do with increasing voter turnout by putting forth candidates, messages, and issues that are meaningful to the voter.*

b. Information. Do you have any proposals for improving the existing voter education program? Do you have or support proposals to publicize voter rights, such as requiring the posting of the MA Voters' Bill of Rights in every polling place? *I think the Election Commission did an excellent job with their most recent voter guide outlining the municipal elections, and trust that there will be funding in the future to continue publishing this information. The guide was clear, concise and informative both in print and on-line forms. As others have mentioned in past years, I would strongly support efforts in our schools to educate students to the PR voting process in Cambridge, and thought it was great that PR voting was introduced into the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School elections in 2016. Familiarizing kids in our City with the process at an early age would hopefully translate to registering and voting as soon as they are eligible. I know that the Election Commission has worked with CRLS to register seniors before they graduate, and would like to continue these types of activities. I definitely support posting the MA Voters' Bill of Rights in every polling place.*

5. Accuracy of Voter Lists. Do you think that the existing system is adequate to minimize voter list inaccuracies (e.g., erroneously dropping voters, or carrying nonresidents on the voter lists)? Do you have an opinion on the current policy regarding inactive voters? Do you have any improvements to propose? Would you propose any changes to the yearly city census? *The current system seems to work well with regard to voter list inaccuracies, since there hasn't been a lot of issues with the system in the past few years as far as I can tell through research of the issue. The current policy regarding inactive voters seems to be fair in that it only takes off a voter if they fail to vote in two consecutive biennial state elections and/or failed to return their census forms (and given the number of reminders the City mails out, in addition to the on-line option, responding to the census is relatively easy to do.) I don't have any improvements to propose to the inactive voter policy, and would like to hear from election commission staff about the city census before making any recommendations.*

6. Election Commission Staff. What is the proper balance between the commissioners and the staff? What factors would you use in the evaluation of the Commission's executive director?

*The day-to-day operations of the Election Commission and its staff is overseen by the Election Commission's Executive Director, with the commissioners attention (regarding staffing) focused on the hiring and training of election workers for polling places. The factors I would use in the evaluation of the Commission's executive director would be those outlined by a review process that I assumes includes input from the Executive Director and the commissioners regarding goals for the position outlined on a yearly basis.*

How will you work with the Commission's staff? Do you have any basic principles you follow when hiring and managing staff?

*Re working with the Commission's staff, I'm assuming that a Commissioner would be in contact with staff (other than the Executive Director and Assistant Director) during elections (?) General guiding principles for hiring staff in the type of work of an election worker include identifying people who understand the roles and responsibilities of a position; matching qualifications and background to the job; enthusiasm and a strong focus on customer service; and someone who demonstrates a strong work ethic and creative thinking. I would aim to hire someone who is going to be helpful and courteous to the voters who show up at the polls.*

7. Election Commission Budget. What comments or changes, if any, would you suggest for the Election Commission's budget, in order to make the commission more cost-effective? What experience do you have administering and managing budgets?

*I don't have any comments or proposed changes to the budget; my assumption is that expenditures are dependent on the number of elections held in any given year, and that there may be unforeseen events such as a recount or special election that is not able to be planned for in most cases. As a department head, I have been responsible for creating and managing budgets, and in my role in fundraising, have been responsible for meeting revenue goals.*

8. Operation of the Election Commission. Do you have any comments on, or changes to propose, in the day-to-day administration of the Commission? Has the commission been appropriately responsive to candidates, political parties, and interest groups that request or require its services? If not, what changes do you propose? *The Election Commission seems to run well, and I, along with many others that I've talked to, have had positive interactions with staff. I don't have any changes to recommend at this time.*

Do you favor having evening meeting and hearings of the election commission? How would you evaluate the Commission's training of election workers? How important is it to you that election day workers live in the communities where they serve? *I do favor evening meetings if it allows more people to attend, which I trust it does. Regarding the Commission's training of election workers, a great deal of effort appears to have been made to ensure that everyone working on election day received proper training, ,and additional sessions were arranged to accommodate scheduling conflicts. I would advocate for a paid de-briefing session with election workers (if possible financially) to gain their feedback on the process during election day. While I can see benefits to having workers live near to the polling locations where they serve, I think it's most important to place people where their skills are needed.*

9. Election Day Procedures. How can the Commission avoid problems at polling places on Election Day? What role should the Commissioners play in insuring a trouble-free Election Day? Do you favor the continued use of optical scan voting devices in Cambridge elections? How would you evaluate the way in which the proportional representation "count" was done in November 2017?

*I believe the best way to avoid problems on Election Day is to have everyone involved in the process be as prepared as possible - including proper training of election workers, taking into consideration possible turnout*

*and staffing accordingly, and having materials to help guide workers if problems or questions do come up. Election Commissioners play a key role in worker preparation, and should be available throughout the day to check in at polling locations to help address issues as they arise. There are going to be unanticipated situations (hopefully few) I imagine on any given day. I do favor continuing to use the optical scan voting devices, and feel that there are proper procedures in place to address any malfunctions with regard to tabulating results. Given memory card errors that occurred in the 2017 municipal election, I thought the PR count was handled as quickly and efficiently as possible.*

10. Recount Procedures. What is your evaluation of the recount procedures of the Commission? With reference to the commission's handling of previous City Council recounts, what changes, if any, would you suggest? What standards would you use in deciphering disputed ballots?

*The recount procedures seemed to have gone well, and candidates involved in the process didn't have any large complaints.. I think disputed ballots need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis; I'm not sure you can have a standard or system in place ahead of time to determine voter intent. And I haven't heard of situations where our local Election Commissioners had any contentious situations regarding determining voter intent.*

11. Voting Rights. Do you favor voting rights for undocumented immigrants in municipal elections?

*I would consider the option of allowing undocumented immigrants the right to vote in municipal elections. If people are living here, paying taxes and contributing to our community I think that could make a case for allowing them a say in how local government is run. But I would need to research the issue further with the Election Commission staff and others before coming to a conclusion.*

Do you favor lowering the voting age in municipal elections?

*Yes, and currently individuals at 16 are allowed to pre-register to vote in Massachusetts, so we have a system which could be a starting point for the process.*

Do you favor same-day voter registration?

*Yes, I would be in favor of same-day voter registration both on election day and during early voting. This would require additional staffing, however, given the time and additional training involved in registering people to vote versus checking people into the voting booth on election day.*

Do you favor requiring all (or any) voters to show a photo ID before they vote?

*I don't see the need for people to show a photo ID before voting. The system has worked well without this requirement, and the number of cases of voter fraud is extremely low. I think this would add additional time and effort to the election workers duties.*

What special problems or opportunities would each such change cause for the Election Commission?

*(Responses are included in answers above.)*

12. Please evaluate recent changes in election law and their impact on Cambridge.

*Early voting, which began in 2016, has been well-received in Cambridge and throughout Massachusetts, where over 1,000,000 people voted before election day. Approximately 19,894 people - around 28% - took advantage of this option in Cambridge.*

13. Miscellaneous. Do you have any other suggestions for carrying out the powers and duties of an Election Commissioner? Is there anything else you would like the Cambridge Democratic City Committee to consider in evaluating your candidacy for the office of Election Commissioner?

*The opportunity to serve as an election commissioner is a very exciting one, particularly given recent proposals to encourage more people to register and vote through automatic voter registration and same day registration. These efforts in Massachusetts are encouraging signs in a country where other areas are experiencing various forms of voter suppression. I was fortunate to grow up in a household where my parents took me to their polling place on election day, so it was easy for voting to become a habit for me when I turned 18. If offered the position of election commissioner, I hope to do my part in encouraging and motivating the voting-age population of Cambridge to turn out on Election Day by providing a responsive, fair and transparent process at the polls. Thank you for your consideration.*