

## 2012 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION COMMISSIONER

**Instructions to Candidates:** The following questionnaire will be used to evaluate candidates for the office of Democratic Election Commissioner. Please answer each question so that we can compare the answers of each candidate and so that you can give the Cambridge Democratic City Committee a full and fair picture of your qualifications and ideas for the position. Responses should be in a form suitable for reproduction, in single-spaced format. Responses must be received by Secretary Jefferson Smith by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 1, 2012. Mr. Smith's address is 134 Tremont Street #2; Cambridge, Mass. 02139. He may also be reached at jefferson2016@gmail.com.

1. State your name, residential address, business address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address.
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 elections laws, 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?
3. **Reason for Seeking Office.** Please explain why you are seeking the office of Election Commissioner.
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?
  - b. **Information.** Do you have any proposals for improving the existing voter education program? Do you support or oppose proposals requiring the posting of the MA Voters Bill of Rights in every polling place? Do you support or oppose proposals that would allow Cambridge voters to check their registration status online, as Boston voters may?
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?
6. **Election Commission Staff.** What is the proper balance between the commissioners and the staff? How will you hire and evaluate the Commission's executive director? How will you work with the Commission's staff? Do you have any basic principles you follow when hiring and managing staff?

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?
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? How would you evaluate the 2011 reprecincting process? 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?
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 2011?
10. ***Recount Procedures.*** What is your evaluation of the recount procedures of the Commission? How did the commission handle the 2009 School Committee recount? What changes, if any, would you suggest? What standards would you use in deciphering disputed ballots?
11. ***Voting Rights.*** Do you favor voting rights for legal immigrants in municipal elections? Do you favor lowering the voting age in municipal elections? Do you favor same-day voter registration? Do you favor requiring all (or any) voters to show a photo ID before they vote? What special problems or opportunities would each such change cause for the Election Commission?
12. ***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?