ELECTION BOARD

The Election Board met on February 18, 2015 at 10:32 a.m. with Chairman Garfinkel presiding. Members present were Mr. Caldwell, Dr. Matthews, Ms. McDowell Boyer, Mr. Raymond, and Mrs. McDowell.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS
By unanimous consent, the agenda was adopted as presented.

Selection of Polling Places for 2015 Municipal Election
Mrs. Traci McDowell, City Clerk, informed members that for the April 21, 2015 election, there would be a City-wide mayoral race. She stated that there were City Council candidates for the First District, and the Second District candidate was unopposed; therefore, voters in the Second District would be voting only for the Mayor. Mrs. McDowell explained that the regular seat in the Third District would expire in May, and there was an additional vacant seat in the Third District, so there would be two (2) different elections for Council in this district. She noted that there were also candidates for the Fourth District.

Mrs. McDowell advised that the Elks Lodge had been reserved for the First and Fourth Districts, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church, the polling place for the Second District, was not available. She stated that the former Dover Public Library could be used for the Second and Third Districts, if members chose not to use a single polling place.

Members were provided a City of Dover Delaware Voting Districts map ***(Attachment #1)***. Mrs. McDowell pointed out green stars depicting the center of each district and the yellow star denoting the center of the City. She noted that three (3) polling places were also depicted, the Elks Lodge, the former Dover Public Library, and St. Andrew's Church. She informed members that staff had contacted St. Andrew's Church, on the highway near Towne Point, to see if it was available; however, had not heard back yet.

Dr. Matthews indicated that a centrally located spot was needed.

Mrs. McDowell explained that she thought that one (1) option would be a single polling place at the Elks Lodge, which had been done many times in the past.

Dr. Matthews commented that this would be less confusing. Mrs. McDowell agreed, stating that this would prevent people from coming to vote and being told they were in the wrong polling place and being sent elsewhere.

Mrs. McDowell explained that Third District voters would be voting somewhere new because the Dover Park Recreation Center that was formerly used had been demolished. She indicated that Second District voters would also be voting somewhere new, and the former Dover Public Library or St. Andrew's Church could be chosen. Mrs. McDowell stated that all voters had voted at the Elks Lodge at one time or another, noting that the last mayoral election had been held there.

Mr. Raymond stated that the main advantage of holding the election at the Elks Lodge would be that everybody who comes there to vote would be at the right place.

Mr. Garfinkel noted that the Elks Lodge is amenable to a high level of traffic circulation.

Responding to Dr. Matthews, Mrs. McDowell indicated that the Elks Lodge was on Saulsbury Road. Mrs. McDowell advised that the Lodge has plenty of parking, is easy to get in and out of, and is big enough to hold the four (4) districts in separate areas.

Mr. Caldwell asked if staff had thought about alternative locations if St. Andrew's is not available. In response, Mrs. McDowell stated that St. Andrew's could be used for the Second and Third Districts, and the former Dover Public Library could also be used for these districts. She stated that staff was sure the library would be available because it is owned by the City, noting that is in the downtown area and that some parking spaces could be blocked of if this location was chosen.

Mr. Garfinkel asked if St. Andrews was a bit of a distance for people in the Third District. Responding, Mrs. McDowell referred to the map, stating that St. Andrew's was a pretty good location for the populated areas of the Second and Third Districts. She expressed her belief that it would be less of a distance than the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Mr. Garfinkel asked if it would be as good as the Elks Lodge. Responding, Mrs. McDowell stated that everybody knows where the Elks Lodge is and there would be less confusion, especially for voters in the Second and Third Districts who would have to go somewhere new, whether it be St. Andrew's or the former library.

Dr. Matthews asked if Mrs. McDowell had any recommendations for how to get more people out to vote. Mrs. McDowell stated that she wished that she did but was unsure. She advised that dynamic candidates increase voter turnout. Mr. Raymond indicated that this was an ongoing problem. Mrs. McDowell stated that elections are a lot of effort for a turnout that is generally 6% or less.

Dr. Matthews asked Mr. Caldwell if he was still teaching at the college, and Mr. Caldwell advised that he is an adjunct. Dr. Matthews questioned if Mr. Caldwell had any recommendations on how to get students out to vote, noting that they are in the largest district. Responding, Mr. Caldwell noted that students are not particularly interested in what is going on in the City of Dover. Dr. Matthews commented that someone at the college, perhaps the student government, needed to address voter turnout. She noted that Mr. Caldwell could not do much about this as an adjunct; however, she stated that he knows people out there. Mr. Caldwell stated that this was an ongoing problem, and he would like to see the community involved. He indicated that this election seemed to be exciting due to the current candidates and it may stir up some more people to vote.

Mr. Garfinkel stated the need to resolve the issue of a single, central voting place versus multiple places. He asked for members' thoughts about the amount of turnout and the ease of getting voters through the polls.

Dr. Laws indicated that it would be easier and less costly for the City to have voting in one (1) place, as long as that facility can handle a potential large turnout. Mrs. McDowell noted that the Elks Lodge could handle a large turnout.

Mr. Garfinkel advised that logically it would be easier to direct people to the right district in a different aisle in a single facility rather than sending them across town.

Mr. Raymond stated that the Elks Lodge was close to the populated areas of the Second and Third Districts. He noted that the Second District is spread out; however, the Elks Lodge is basically right in the middle. Mrs. McDowell noted that it was not far from the center of the entire City.

Mr. Garfinkel noted that the Elks Lodge is located at the crossroads of the major conduits of Forrest Avenue and Saulsbury Road, and one can get there from everywhere in town.

Dr. Matthews stated that there would only be a problem for those who do not have transportation, referring to those on the other side of the highway. Mr Garfinkel stated that this would be true of any location.

Dr. Matthews commented that another issue was the Dover Air Force Base, stating that she was unsure if this should be a focus. She questioned the purpose of having an election if people do not come.

Mr. Caldwell noted that the turnout could not be projected and stated the need to get the word out. He stated his hope that more people would show up for this election than before, which would be a turning point. Mr. Caldwell expressed the need to get the word out and his hope that people know there is an election taking place in the City. He indicated that many people do not know who is running for election.

Mrs. McDowell stated that once Council chooses a polling place, there would be advertisements in the *Delaware State News, Dover Post*, Facebook, and the City's web page. She noted that it is up to the candidates to get the word out.

Dr. Matthews asked what could be done to advertise in front of City Hall. She noted that a banner could be put across the building or at 5 East Reed Street, where many people come to pay their utility bills. Mrs. McDowell noted that notices about the election date, time, and place are usually put on the electric bills. Dr. Matthews asked if a poster could be placed in that facility as a route to getting important information out so that it could not be said that a poor job was done of advertising, and Mrs. McDowell indicated that she would look into it. Dr. Garfinkel suggested stockades with a little poster. Dr. Matthews suggested a banner across Loockerman Street. Mrs. McDowell stated that there was not money available for a banner. Dr. Matthews expressed her understanding that this would be expensive; however, she indicated that there would be other ways to do this.

Mr. Garfinkel advised that getting out the vote was not a current agenda item. He stated that a central location would be easy for people to get to and the Elks Lodge was a central location for traffic. Responding to Mr. Raymond regarding the polling hours, Mrs. McDowell stated that the hours would be 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Ms. McDowell Boyer moved to accept the Elks Lodge on Saulsbury Road as the single voting place for the 2015 election, seconded by Dr. Matthews and unanimously carried.

Mr. Caldwell moved for adjournment, seconded by Dr. Matthews and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

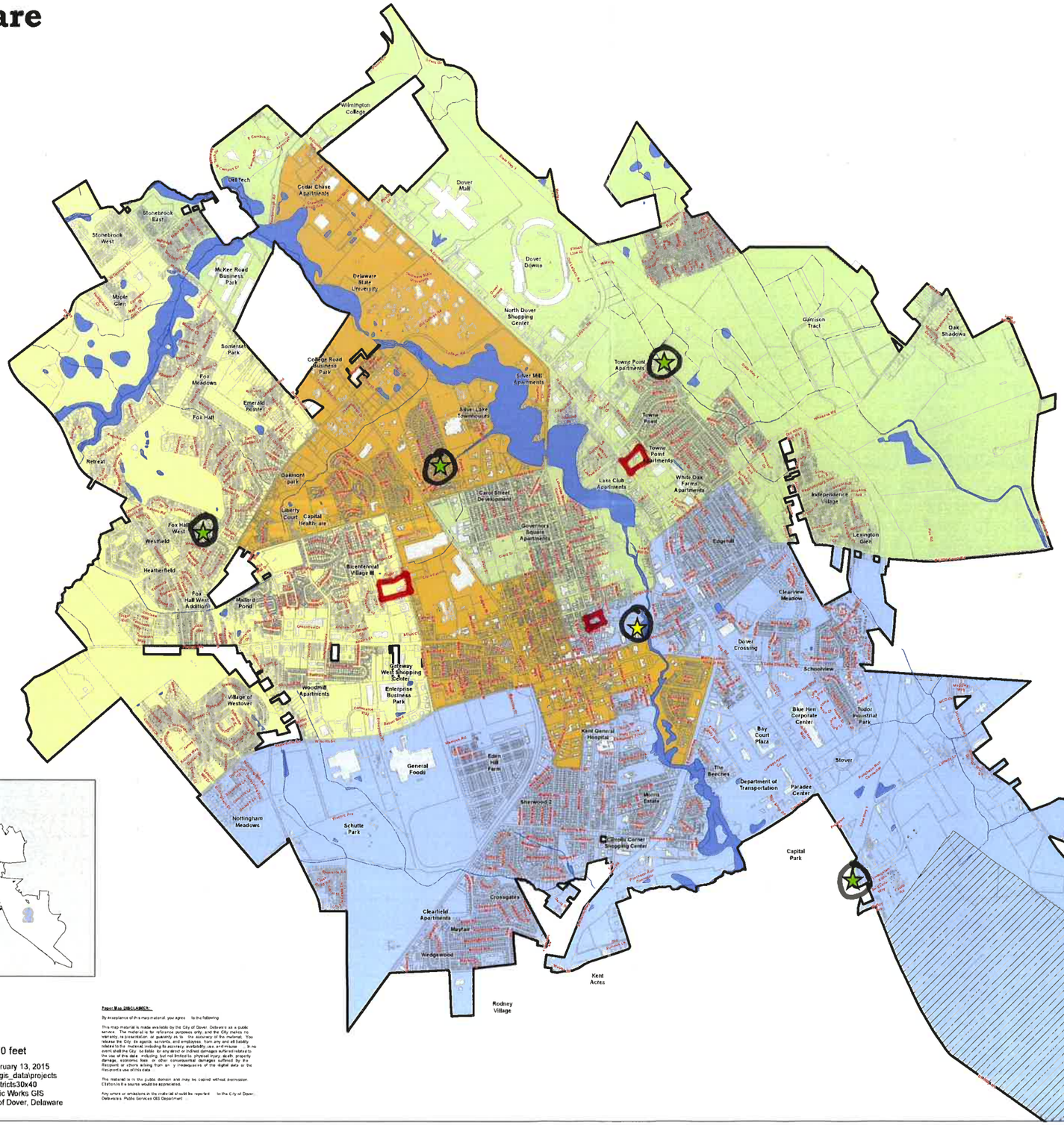
William Garfinkel
Chair

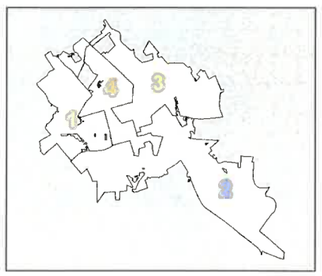
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Attachment
Attachment #1 - City of Dover Delaware Voting Districts Map

City of Dover
Delaware

Voting Districts





1 inch = 1,170 feet

Date Printed: February 13, 2015
File: m:\mapdata\gis_data\projects\voting districts30x40
Department: Public Works GIS
City of Dover, Delaware

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ATTACHMENT #1
Election Board Meeting of 02-18-2015