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ICRC

11/19/20 Meeting

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>> Steve Lett: Good morning everybody. As chair of the commission I welcome you to this meeting. All of us here on Zoom as well as the public out on YouTube or wherever you are viewing it from. I welcome you. This is a Zoom webinar. It's being live streamed to Facebook and YouTube. For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform, they are currently using please visit our social media at [redistricting mi](http://redistricting.mi) to find a link for either viewing on YouTube.

Live stream today includes closed captioning.

Excuse me.

We have ASL interpretation available for this meeting.

If you are a member of the public watching who would like easier viewing options for the ASL interpreter on your screen, please e-mail us at redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will provide you with additional viewing options.

Similarly members of the public who would like to access translation services during the webinar can e-mail us again at redistricting@Michigan.gov for details on how to access language translation services available for this meeting.

Translation services are available for both Spanish and Arabic.

Please e-mail us and we will provide you with a unique link and call in information.

We certainly want you to be able to view and understand what we are talking about.

This meeting is being recorded and will be available at [redistricting mish.org](http://redistricting.mish.org) for viewing at a later date.

This meeting is also being transcribed and those transcriptions will be made available and posted on [redistricting Michigan.org](http://redistricting.Michigan.org).

Along with written public comments submissions.

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Tracy Weemer media relations director at department of state.

Members of the media should have her contact information.

For purposes of the public watching and the public record I would ask the State Department staff to take note of the commissioners present.

I would ask at this time for a roll call.

>> Commissioners please unmute and say present when I call your name.

Anthony Eid.

>> Present.

>> Brittini Kellom.

>> Present.

>> Cynthia Orton.
>> Present.
>> Doug Clark.
>> Present.
>> Dustin Witjes.
>> Present.
>> Erin Wagner.
>> Present.
>> Janis Vallette.
>> Present.
>> Juanita Curry.
>> Present.
>> MC Rothhorn.
>> Present.
>> Rebecca Szetela.
>> I believe she is joining any minute.

Rhonda Lange.

>> Present.
>> Richard Weiss.
>> And Steve Lett.
>> Present.
>> All right, I would have everyone look at the agenda which was provided to us.

If everyone has had an opportunity to look that over is there anything that we need to add either under new business or old business?

Hearing none, I would entertain a motion to accept the agenda as presented.

>> So moved.
>> And a second?
>> I second.
>> All in favor say aye.
>> Aye.
>> All opposed the same sign.

The agenda is adopted.

The minutes have been sent to us and hopefully everybody has had an opportunity to look those over.

Are there any additions, deletions or corrections on the minutes?

Hearing none, I would entertain a motion to accept the minutes as presented.

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>> Erin: Motion to accept.
>> Chair: Second?
>> Second it.

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>> Chair: All in favor say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Chair: All opposed the same sign.

Now, we have an opportunity for public comment and I'm informed that we do have some persons who would like to make public comment.

Because this is a virtual meeting members of the public have to sign up in advance to address the commission.

Staff at the department will unmute each member of the public for up to two minutes on a first come, first serve basis.

This meeting is members of the public will be called on in order in the order in which they signed up to address the commission.

To those members of the public participating in public comment please note you will have no more than two minutes to address the commission this morning.

You can also submit your thoughts to the commission and the public by e-mailing redistricting@Michigan.gov.

The department of state will provide your written thoughts to the commission.

By indicating in that e-mail that you would like to submit your written comment as public comment it will be included in the online meeting archive for the commission.

Public comment sign up links are also posted at redistricting Michigan social media pages on Facebook and Twitter.

At redistricting mi.

Now, I would like to recognize Sally Marsh from the department of state and she will handle the specifics on the public comment.

Sally.

>> Sally: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As was noted individuals who signed up will be now allowed to do so. I believe we have two of the people who had signed up on here present today. So first I'll go in order of submission. If you're on a computer you will be prompted by the Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak. If you're on the phone, a voice will say the host would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six to unmute. I will call on you by your first name. And please note that if we unmute you and you have audio issues, we will go to the next person and then we will try to trouble shoot with you in the meantime. So first up is Joe Spaulding.

>> Joe, can you hear us?

>> I can, thank you Sally.

>> Great, thanks. You have two minutes.

>> Wonderful. Hi, my name is Joe Spaulding and I understand that you are performing the important work of selecting an executive director in this meeting and the next. I wanted to call it in and say a few words about that. I'm a professional political operative. At the local level this means I sometimes help candidates get elected or not

elected to partisan or nonpartisan office. I've only ever worked for candidates who lean in one specific direction and that is my choice. I'm far from unique in my field but my point is simple if someone is elected to a nonpartisan office that should place increased suspicion on them that they are partisan. If they have been elected mayor and in say a West Michigan city a place that I have lived almost all my life that was 20 years in Holland and ten in Baxter in GR and said Rick Snyder and GOP and republican candidates long enough to make the book of numbers blush they are probably too partisan to be in charge of this board. As someone who went to college with Fahye and ran the spreadsheets with the communications book and designed the record breaking petition campaign that resulted in this commission I was thrilled to learn when our lawyer Jim Lancaster was not able to pursue the ED position because he was too biased for the commission. That means that you guys are doing due diligence and trying to make sure we get the right executive director here. As someone who knows the history of the forced gentrification in Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids border area and knows that is connected to a prior failed attempt at gerrymandering the last district in the state the 76 seat and look back on the video there were three districts of 76 around Grand Rapids and as a resident of Baxter neighborhood and Aquinas grad, I'm applying for the candidate for seeking this executive director role. As aside I'm very happy this meeting is getting lots of attention online, more transparency is better for everybody that is why I worked pro bono for six months to make sure proposition two was passed and public section in the Wayne County board of canvass meeting reprehensible decision that happened there this week. Thank you all for your service. Thanks for your diligence and please be very, very careful when you are making your final decision for executive director because they have a lot of power in this commission.

>> Mr. Spaulding thank you. Your time has concluded. Next in line is Nancy Wang. Nancy can you hear us?

>> Ms. Wang can you hear us?

We can hear you, can you hear us?

>> Yes.

>> Great, go ahead, you have two minutes.

>> Good morning and thank you. I'm Nancy Wang executive director of voters not politicians. Our campaign was inspirational because it was uniting, we brought everyday people together from across the political spectrum to create a fair impartial and transparent redistricting process that serves all voters and ensures fair representation. To all voters regardless of who we are, where we live and who we vote for. As you contemplate who you will hire to be your executive director please look at not just what the applicants say about themselves but also examine the information being offered by the public. Member of the public raises concerns that a candidate is too partisan to do this job well or has a troubling history of alternating colleagues and stakeholders it's important to listen. They are speaking from their desire to keep this redistricting process

in the public confidence. And to protect the integrity of this great institution that we so carefully built. The public will be providing critical input to you every step of this journey to bring fair to Michigan, that is the process playing out in exactly as it was intended. You have the power to hire. It's entirely in your discretion to choose you like and there is no perfect candidate that is going to please everybody but there is still right and wrong choices. The right choice will continue to bring voters together. The wrong choice will tonight to tear us apart. We hope as you are making your hiring decision that you will keep in mind that the public's trust in you and our new process is paramount so when hiring executive director please choose someone who can skill fly help you navigate unchartered waters and someone who can help you build, trust and inspire confidence in voters.

regardless of who we are, where we live and who we vote for, thank you so much for your service.

>> Perfect timing Ms. Wang your two minutes has concluded. And I believe the third person who had signed up is not present at the meeting. In this moment. So that concludes our live public comment for the day and commissioners you received other written public comment via e-mail we will be posting on our website as well.

>> Mr. Chair: Thank you Sally and thank you to Mr. Spaulding and Ms. Wang for their comments to the commission. We certainly hear those loud and clear and we have, in fact, made that exact consideration we hope in who we choose. First up for old business is a report from the staff regarding administrative items. Who is up on that?

>> Commissioners it's me again. So really briefly a couple of quick updates. Your phones should be actually in the mail as we speak. Verizon is working on those deliveries, so watch for a Fedex or UPS delivery of your phones. And then you should also receive communication from the DTMB that is the department of technology, management and budgets smart device support team who will reach out to you to make sure that you have everything you need to set it up properly and then you don't have any technical issues there. I think some of you may have started to see in your e-mail in boxes the beginnings of the ticket which is kind of how the department of technology and management and budget tracks individual items and makes sure that they follow them through until the end. So if you see e-mails like that keep an eye out and if you have any questions of course do reach out. Your computers have been ordered. Well they have been approved to be ordered so more to come on that. I am sure they will be shipped in the coming days. And your pay, so we've been working with Kelly services on the paperwork to ensure that you are properly noted within their system and within the legislative Council system as in a way that fits the role that you have. It kind of goes to technical jargon but we are working with them to make sure you are not treated as a typical temporary employee and actually they understand the role that you play and the sort of compensation that you are eligible for. So I expect in the next few days that I will be potentially e-mailing all of you with paperwork or other updates that you will need to

maybe fill out or kind of other things to actually fully get this moving. So stay tuned but there is a lot of movement there. We are just working with their legal team to make sure that everybody is on the same page in that way you will be set to go moving forward. And then I will -- I can give sort of overview of the draft interview questions and hiring process documents that we sent to you and that is available for the public to view online once we get to that point in the agenda. So does anybody have any questions?
Great.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, correspondence it says next.

>> I wonder if that is related to the correspondence that Sally did on my behalf.

>> Yes, if I can jump in really quickly commissioners last meeting there was some correspondence that you all wanted to talk about and didn't have time to talk about in the last meeting. So this is that opportunity to talk about that research request that was mentioned and any of the other correspondence that you would like to discuss.

>> Okay so MC had some questions on that research proposal. MC do you have comments on that?

>> MC: I thought it was addressed appropriately and frankly I think I'm excited that we have not only an organization but educational institutions that could potentially, you know, work with this. And create more public education as well as our own education. I feel like it's an important step. I'd like to -- my concerns have been addressed and I feel good with you know going forward so I would be in support of doing this.

>> Mr. Chair: Anybody have any questions?

Rhonda?

>> Rhonda: Mine as far as being part of a study, I'm not interested personally. No offense when I took this you know when I applied for this, it was with a job in mind and that job was to do the districting lines and I'm not looking to do any extra things outside of that. And that is just me personally but I just wanted my thoughts out there on it.

>> Mr. Chair: Any other thoughts?

I have not -- I suppose a study is not a bad thing but certainly if Rhonda if you did not wish to participate, I don't think there is anything that says you have to with them so you can certainly let them know up front that when you're sending out your survey questionnaires skip me.

Okay, any other questions?

I don't know that we necessarily need -- well, does anybody want to make a motion to proceed with this study?

And let these people know?

>> Doug: I'll make the motion we proceed with Dave Dulio's request for a study.

>> Mr. Chair: All right a second.

>> I'll second.

>> Mr. Chair: Any further discussion?

>> I have one question.

>> Yes Doug.

>> If this is approved how will Dave be contacted?

Whose responsibility is that?

>> Mr. Chair: I would assume that either MC or Sally would do that.

>> MC: Sally I would defer to you.

>> I can contact him and get clarity on next steps and figure out if it makes more sense for him to be in direct contact with the department of state and then we share back with you. Or something else in writing so I'm happy to do that follow-up and let you all know.

>> MC: I see Anthony sorry Steve go ahead.

>> Mr. Chair: It's been a little while since I looked at their proposal. I guess it would be useful for the commission to have kind of an outline of what their process and timeline is going to be before we would get final approval.

>> Sally: I can absolutely ask them for that.

>> Mr. Chair: All right good. You can -- I assume well I don't know how fast they will be back but when they get back, we can put it back on the agenda.

>> MC: Anthony has got something.

>> Mr. Chair: Who?

>> MC: Anthony.

>> Mr. Chair: Anthony.

>> Anthony: Can you guys hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Anthony: I have mic problems, I think. If you could Sally if you could also ask what journals or conferences, they are planning to submit the results of this research to for publication, that would be something we probably would like to know.

>> Sally: Absolutely.

>> Anthony: Usually how like a scientific research project works is you know first you normally have an abstract you know with your methods attached to it and then after you're done compiling those methods and examining the results there is usually a discussion section and then after you compile all of that and it past different statistical analysis it's then submitted to journals for publication just so everybody knows so I think it might be important for us to know where they are planning to send it to.

>> Mr. Chair: All right, okay, anything else before we move on to questions and rating system for the candidates?

Sally, were you going to help us out with this?

>> Sally: .

>> Mr. Chair: Doug first Doug.

>> Doug: Going back to correspondence there were some other correspondence that got submitted. A couple other different people. Are we going to discuss that at all?

I mean one of them as I recall an individual from Wayne state was asking for Anthony to come down and talk. We got another one from Tom McMillan who used to be a state rep talking about his opinions on how the executive director should be selected and so forth.

>> Mr. Chair: Sure. Since they want Anthony, Anthony, what do you think?

>> Anthony: At this point I'll probably have to decline that offer. I don't want there to be any like conflict of interest between the school and this board. So I myself will have to decline. But if one of you want to you know go in and give a talk I think if you want to.

>> MC.

>> Would you be open to try to do something like our committees where there is one of each party so to speak?

And so that would be less a commissioner but more of a panel of commissioners?

I guess what I'm thinking about are you declining because you don't have the time to do it or you don't want to be a solo?

If you don't want to be solo, I think you are nonpartisan, right?

>> Anthony: Yes, but it's not really about that.

>> Okay.

>> Anthony: I just kind of will have to decline.

>> MC: Okay.

>> Rhonda: I'm wondering as far as that goes going in front on talking to the school and everything, could that walk a thin line between how we are not allowed to discuss commission matters?

I mean could that be a potential issue for us legally doing that?

I assume if you go in and give a talk somebody is going to ask questions and I mean could that hold us open to potential violations of our Constitution?

>> MC: I think I see the same thing Rhonda and interested in starting it now because I think we will get out in the public and we will have to gather information and have to try to understand how we are collecting this. And so part of me wants to do a test run and try to make a mistake early. I'm not suggesting we make a mistake but we have to figure this out and so part of me wants to figure it out and maybe we should wait -- I just thought about maybe we should wait until we have a staff who can advise us more. But it does feel like as commissioners I don't want to be so reticent to approach fellow citizens because we are being careful and independent. We are going to have to take risks to be as inclusive as possible and get all of our citizens and trust us. What I think I mean it's not just about inviting people. We have to go out, right, and find the people and the places that aren't typically approached. And understood and/or even want to be approached. I think we have to respect that. I don't want to suggest that we have to find everybody who doesn't want to be found. What I'm suggesting is this kind of thing could be important for us to test the waters and that is why I want to try it and I respect Anthony's decision and if we can talk about how we could potentially address their

request for commissioners that is what I would suggest is that we try to figure out if one or three or none or you know if it's all going to be Zoom, I imagine it's going to be relatively easy for us to do it but I would entertain that idea and I would be open to trying. I would and I'm a democrat.

>> Doug.

>> Doug: Yeah, I agree with you MC. We do have to give it a try. However, it may snowball on us too. We may have so many requests that we are not able to handle that as well as the things that we are here to do. .

>> MC: Thank you for that.

>> Yes.

>> Juanita.

>> Doug: I can easily see it snowballing.

>> Mr. Chair: Juanita?

>> Juanita: Yes, I was thinking that we should probably wait until we get the whole staff together before we attempt to do something like that. Because they would further advise us on what to do. And how to go about doing that. So I would choose to wait to get the whole staff together before we started that.

>> Mr. Chair: Any other, Anthony?

>> Anthony: After we get our general counsel in, I might be willing to reconsider. I do know Dr. Timothy Bloodso he is one of the advisor force my little sister who is currently an under grad. So there is a little bit of a relationship there. So after we get our GC in, I may be willing to change my mind.

>> Mr. Chair: Sally.

>> Sally: I was going to sort of say something to that effect and also say once you have your executive director and your communications and outreach director, your staff can set up a system through which they sort through requests and sort through you know where you go, when. That's what a lot of public officials have in some capacity is a system for identifying where you are going, why you're going there and you know whether it's within the sort of legal confines or perception confines of your role. So I think great conversation but I just wanted to put out there, there are sort of systems you can put in place especially once you have a staff.

>> MC: I appreciate all this conversation. I would tend to agree let's wait until we have a staff and a system and a way of, yeah, not let it snowball.

>> Brittini: One quick thing I also think from a practical standpoint there just isn't that much for us to say right now. So that was my first thought when I saw it unless it was going to be an opportunity where they kind of ask the basic questions that some of us have already been exposed to in an interview. I can't see what use I don't want to speak for the Wayne state community but I just we don't have a whole lot to say. At the moment. That would to me lend to kind of like a mini lecture style or even like community conversation.

>> Mr. Chair: I'm sure we are going to get more requests.

>> For sure.

>> Mr. Chair: The one thing that at least comes to my mind is nobody in Michigan has done this before, so we are just as expert as everybody else. Anything else, Doug, on correspondence?

>> Doug: Well, let's -- let me make one more comment on this item we are talking about. Are we going to have somebody get back to Wayne state and tell them that we tabled this until the organization procures further?

And who is going to do that?

>> Mr. Chair: Sure, Sally, can you let Wayne state know that we will give it consideration but not at this time?

>> Sally: Yes.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay.

Anything else?

>> Doug: I have nothing else on that. You asked me if there is any further things. There was a message from Tom McMillin he used to be a state rep. Actually I know him or I have met him because he was our state rep. And he had a suggestion which I don't really agree with. But let me read it, it has to do with the executive director. I would like to add one option in the selection of the executive director which would likely be very unconventional to have coexecutive directors to choose one who is clearly partisan democrat and one who is clearly partisan as republican. Same basic concept that our committees are based off of. I don't agree with that. I think it would be very difficult as an organization to work with two executive directors. So I would say that in by opinion we should not pursue that direction at all.

>> Brittini: We have the opportunity to be more decisive but Rhonda and Cynthia?

>> Rhonda: I agree with Doug also and also look at it from a budget standpoint that would be two executive director salaries. So you know, that starts adding up.

>> Brittini: Good point Rhonda, Cynthia?

>> Cynthia: I was going to say the same thing.

>> Mr. Chair: That is three speeches against. Anybody want to speak for it?

Not hearing anybody, that one Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: I will also add I understand the spirit with which it's trying to help us be nonpartisan. And that would be something we would consider if we can't find one person that we feel could be nonpartisan but I think we still have avenues we can try.

>> Mr. Chair: Anything else on correspondence?

All right, I think we are back to Sally to help us with the interview process.

>> Sally: .

>> MC: Thanks for keeping track of that, Doug.

>> Doug: I'm sorry what was that MC?

>> MC: Just wanted to say thank you for tracking that and helping us through the correspondence, not just the one.

>> Doug: Okay great, you are welcome.

>> Sally: All right everyone so a brief overview of the various interview and hiring related documents that we sent to all of you and for the public these are posted online as well. So the draft questions, so it's a list of draft questions based on some of the standard questions that the department of state uses in different interview settings for this kind of a candidate. You know some of them were edited slightly based on this particular role. You may want to add a subject area or take away some of the questions listed here. You know, for example if there is something that was raised in public comment that you would want every candidate to address you could add a question into that effect. The important thing and I think it was outlined in the hiring tips document, is just asking the same standard set of questions to every candidate so there is sort of equal opportunity to talk and to provide their insight to the whole board or to the whole commission. The things that you all will want to determine beyond just what are the questions themselves is who asks each question and so you know are you going to have the same person asking each question each time?

Who is going to start the interview?

Maybe preface it and maybe start with the first question. And just a note in terms of timing each interview is scheduled for 30 minutes. So with 13 questions and created 13 questions because there are 13 of you. That said with 13 questions it's only about two minutes per question so you may want to do slightly less so that people have more time to respond. And then also in that document is a sort of basic rating system and key. The idea there is that it helps you kind of take more standard notes for every person and then reflect back on what you thought during each of these interviews. You know, food for thought. You all obviously can do whatever you want in terms of note taking and in terms of discussion. The thing that you will you know probably want to discuss and decide is you know having an agreement upon all of you in terms of how you're going to talk about it after the fact. So that you have a way of discussing each candidate that is fair and you know is sort of representative of the actual interview itself. And then just a couple other notes in terms of the other resources that were provided. There is also kind of best practices like looking at people's online footprint. Or asking for references. That kind of thing. So far, we have sort of done the review and now you are at the interview stage, but I just wants to emphasize you don't need to make a decision today. If you get to the end of the interviews and there are open questions that you still have, there are multiple steps you could take. You know between interviews and hiring and so just wanted to kind of make that explicit. There is different types of follow-up you could do. With these candidates or with other candidates that would allow you to continue the process. So hopefully these interviews will be kind of an important data point in your

decision making process. I just wanted to kind of give that overview but really the floor is yours. Feel free to ask Mike or I any questions that you might have.

>> MC: I have one question Sally in the e-mails there were I think two candidates Janette and Sheryl who responded with additional information and not all of them so I guess my question is did you ask each candidate, okay, they just of their own volition gave it and Brandon Brice gave a duplicate.

>> Sally: Maybe a small edit in his but all of those sent to you were unprompted follow-up that they asked us to give to all of you.

>> MC: Thank you.

>> Brittini: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: Sally I want to know when were these possible questions posted online? I mean, is it something that every candidate could have seen ahead of time? So do you know what I mean?

Could they have practiced up on the answers is what I'm wondering?

>> Sally: That is a great question. I need to check. I don't know off the top of my head.

>> MC: How would that influence you?

>> Sally: I see Mike also.

>> Rhonda: They want us to ask all of them but sometimes you can tell interviewing people and I've been in interviews and done interviews, if they don't know the questions ahead of time they are not prepared. You catch them off and they might stumble or you can just kind of tell that they are truly sincere in what they are saying and it's not practiced. It isn't rehearsed. So that is why I asked that question. Because if I went through all of them and said, okay, if they ask me this one this is what I'm going to say are you truly being heart felt or is it just a practice you know a rehearsed act? I guess is what I'm saying. That is why I asked that.

>> Mr. Chair: Mike, do you have a comment on that?

>> Mike: I do good morning Rhonda I really appreciate the question. I completely understand what you're saying on that front. I think the just to speak to you know a little bit of the rationale there because this is a public meeting we wanted to make sure it was a level playing field for the first person versus the other ones so there are important kind of legal standards and frankly an argument for performance standards of asking similar questions of similar people again you may be asking questions and some naturally in the course of interviews and any conversation it may be a follow-up question you ask the one person that makes sense, that is okay.

But having a base line where you ask and again you don't have to ask all the questions but main point of feedback is offered to you in terms of what Sally has been presenting on is the value of offering you know consistent questions to each person. So if you want to change some of them by all means you are completely in control on this. You want to eliminate some questions or add new ones same thing you are completely in control but

if you ask one person a question and you want to make sure you are having equal opportunity equal standards and truly allow yourself to have an apples to apples comparison this is just one of those things about being a public body and having this interview in public that the first person would not know what the questions were but if you're the second person or truly the fifth or sixth I have to assume if you are at all you know, a sound professional you would be watching, they are watching the hearing undoubtedly or should be and if they are not shame on them. They are not obviously doing their homework to understand what you are talking about and thinking about that is where the question of level playing field comes into play so that was a bit of rationale there. And I think your question is absolutely correct. I would not do it any other setting because I want to see how people respond and react and hopefully that is helpful.

>> Mr. Chair: Juanita?

Can't hear you.

>> Can't hear you.

>> There we go.

>> Juanita: Can you hear me now?

>> Mr. Chair: I can hear you now.

>> Juanita: Okay great I was wondering as we as a commissioner is there any certain one or two things that we should be looking for out of these candidates that are anything that we should be looking for that we want particularly more so than anything else?

>> Mr. Chair: I personally thought the questions were covered a broad range. I didn't have any burning question in my mind that wasn't already asked. And I personally don't have one loan star question that is if it's answered right that is the winner.

>> Doug: Steve, I think one of the things that is important as we interview these people is to see how they handle themselves and see how they communicate. I think that is going to be one of the key things. So relative you know aside from all the questions that get asked.

>> Mr. Chair: One of the things that happens in interviews and I've done interviews as probably ever else here has you do the best you can, trying to discern who is going to be the proper fit and ultimately it comes down to you make your best guess and hope it works out. Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: In light to responses online replies and things we got is it possible can we ask them their party affiliation?

And if they made contributions to any party?

If we truly want it to be a fair playing field since that has already been an issue with some of our responses we've received, I think it's only fair that we ask every candidate the same question. Any thoughts.

>> Mike: You can. Yeah definitely. Everything about you know this commission. I mean, it makes it fair game for all the reasons laid out in the Constitution for you all for you to ask the question is a natural extension of it.

>> I would agree Rhonda. I was going to suggest modifying a question and I don't know if we are there yet but, yeah, I do have a way to hopefully a suggestion.

>> Mr. Chair: I guess my thought is if we ask them if they have a party affiliation unless they are registered, do they have to tell us?

I mean, isn't that part of free speech?

Free association?

They are not required to do that.

>> Go ahead Mike.

>> Mike: So they absolutely have free association right. None of your questions prohibit that in the same way that if there are some of you may be registered republicans or registered democrats on this commission, that wasn't a requirement for you.

You simply had to affiliate. The question is how you affiliate on your application. And so in the same regard you could ask them whether they registered or frankly whether they affiliate. They can decline to answer that question. And you know just like when someone takes the fifth it doesn't mean and I don't mean to equate things but you are allowed to ask a question and they allowed not to answer the question and you can decide collectively whether you care they declined to answer the question. Note it is absolute public record who someone gives money to. So there is no way to know how somebody votes and there is no way to know how somebody voted over the course of the history with no election at all. What is known and public record is which ballot in a primary somebody took because in Michigan you don't have to be registered in either party to ask or vote in either primary just as FYI that is how parties figure out this person asked for this ballot the republican ballot or the democratic ballot in a primary and so they kind of connect the dots that probably most people are going to ask for the party they affiliate when it comes to the primary. That is public record and somebody could figure it out for you. I'm not saying you have to do that. If you ask somebody and they say one thing someone could counter. The other piece if they have given money there are reporting requirements by candidates who receive money and other political action committees both under Federal and state law where while you're at the meeting you could actually pull that up and just do a search and see who has this person given money to, all that is public record. So again that does not perfectly equate to it but just to say somebody out there is watching this. And somebody is interested in making sure that people are just generally speaking kind of watchdog folks and otherwise I think there is that. Shifting gears and the last comment is one question I didn't see is whether you think there are too many questions. I think it covers broad ground I'm mindful of the fact there are six interviews so with six interviews you are down to 30 minutes and that is tight frankly. So that you will need to pass that you know is now set but along those lines if people offer anything but basic cursory answers are you going to have enough

time. The question I put back to you all is what are perhaps key questions that you absolutely want to cover?

And then thinking how many, what is a reasonable amount of time where you can really get a meaningful answer to help you figure out which of these six people you want to bring on and maybe you cut the number of questions down so you can actually have you know that have time for a back and forth, have time for follow-up and all of that.

>> MC: That is what Juanita is suggesting maybe three questions did I understand that correctly Juanita you were suggesting three?

>> Juanita: I would say three, yes.

>> Mr. Chair: Sally what time are we set to end?

What is our cutoff time?

>> Sally: You're set to end at 1:30. If you run a little over that is all right. Hard stop at 2:00, but I would also say I mean this is not the most determinative thing but just for your awareness we did schedule interviews every half an hour starting at 10:00. So it's all right if you get a little bit of a late start. But that's how it was scheduled.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, I thought that is what I was but I just wanted to make sure I remembered as well as everybody else. Doug?

>> Doug: I have a question. Who is going to take the lead on the interviews?

And how are we going to do this?

Specifically?

>> Mr. Chair: I think they have me scheduled to introduce people.

>> Okay.

>> Mr. Chair: Welcome them in and introduce all of you people. And then my thought process, if we are going to cut down, whatever we are going to do we have 13 questions so the easy way we would assign a question there one question to everybody if we are going to make changes than we need to work on that for the next ten minutes.

>> Doug: Yeah, I mean are we going to have the committee chair involved? Or is he just going to be one of the 13 people that we are asking questions?

>> Mr. Chair: I would be happy simply to be the coordinator.

>> Doug: Okay that is fine.

>> Mr. Chair: You guys can certainly ask questions the same way I would so it doesn't make any difference. Rhonda.

>> Doug: The 13 that are on this piece of paper, are we?

>> Mr. Chair: Pardon.

>> Doug: We are not limited to the 13 questions on this piece of paper?

>> No.

>> I would not think so.

>> Mr. Chair: We can make changes, we can add, delete whatever.

>> Doug: The questions I put together for each person was really specific to their experience. And that is something not the same question you could ask every one of

the people. So I don't know a good way to handle that if we get involved in those specifics or not.

>> Mr. Chair: Well, you can do if there is a question of these -- just using these 13, it does not mean we are stuck with these 13 but you certainly have the ability to do follow-up based upon what you feel would be appropriate to ask in regards to their experience.

>> Okay.

>> I was going to say I think we figure out what questions we are going to ask if we are going to limit the questions from the list and we make sure because Doug I'm on the same page that questions are asked specific to folks background and some of the other supplemental information that was provided to us. I think Rhonda had a question.

>> Rhonda: I was going to make a suggestion and maybe people wouldn't like it since we have three different party affiliations basically why don't we pick one person from each party to do the questions. I'm fine sitting out and listening to the answer so I can see reactions. But I think that way it might move it quicker rather than saying okay you go, you go and narrow it down to just a few people asking questions. Just a suggestion.

>> Doug: I like that suggestion and maybe we can use the committee members to do that because we have one from each party on the committee. And they are probably more familiar than anything with these people.

>> Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: I agree that it will go a little faster if we just have the three people do it. I also think that this is too many questions. I think somehow, we need to pair it down a little bit.

>> Mr. Chair: 13 questions you have two minutes a question.

>> Yep.

>> Mr. Chair: Having the committee members is everybody kind of on a consensus we do that?

Rhonda you are shaking your head no.

>> Rhonda: In all honesty I would be comfortable sitting back at this point because I really want to concentrate on what they are saying and I don't want to be like okay so I was actually I know when we first did this committee Doug talked about all of the experience he had. Throughout the 40 years with interviews and stuff so I would be very comfortable with Doug asking the questions at least for us if he is comfortable.

>> Go ahead.

>> Doug: I will do that if she would like.

>> You are talking about asking one-third of the questions, aren't you, Rhonda?

>> Rhonda: Correct. If the committee decides to do it that way with one person from each political affiliation asking the questions, then I personally would be comfortable with Doug doing that because even though I have some experience he has got way

more than me. So I wouldn't mind just sitting back and listening to the responses and watching reactions.

>> Doug: That is the key any way the responses. So I would be happy to do that, yeah.

>> Mr. Chair: Rebecca.

>> Rebecca: Anthony, aren't you also on the committee and aren't you an independent?

>> You can just nod if that is a yes. Okay so then do you want to do the questioning for the independents?

>> Anthony I can do whatever we decide to do it. And if anyone else wants to do it that is independent, I'm okay with that too. I was originally planning on doing the same thing Rhonda was just talking about trying to kind of gauge the responses. But if no one else wants to do it then I can definitely take that up.

>> Mr. Chair: We have Doug and Anthony and who else asking questions?

>> Doug: Who was the other committee member?

Dustin.

>> Mr. Chair: You're good with that Dustin?

>> Dustin: I was going to be taking a whole bunch of notes because I have my computer all set up for it to write down everything as best as I can.

>> Mr. Chair: If you miss something you can go back and review it on the site website.

>> Dustin: I guess that is true. I have no problem asking a couple questions.

>> Mr. Chair: If everybody is good with that nod your head. Okay consensus says we are good with that. We have our questioners. Hurrying us a long a little bit because we are running out of time if we want to have enough time, are there questions we want to delete?

Rebecca?

>> Rebecca: I wouldn't say questions I want to delete but I think one and 12 are two that are particularly important which is why do you want to be the executive director and then how do you anticipate working with the commission so those are the two I think are out of that list of 13 the most important.

>> Brittni: I agree and I eliminated or thought of eliminating question three. I think there are other ways that we can get that answered. Give me an example of a team decision you were involved in recently what was your role, what was the result. We have a lot of questions on there that deal with leadership styles, strategic planning, work situations, so I don't really think in my view that is particularly necessary. Rhonda looks like she has a question.

>> Rhonda: Not really a question just technical difficulties. My other laptop just went down that had the questions on it so I'm not able to see them at the moment. Is there a way that they could get popped up real quick?

Just so I can review?

I had them up here and it just totally crashed.

>> Sally: We will work on that. Give us a second.

>> There it is.

>> There you go.

>> Mr. Chair: Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: Can't hear you Cynthia. There you go.

>> Cynthia: I wasn't able to unmute. So speaking of these questions I do like Rhonda's suggestion of asking them which party they affiliate with and if they have contributed to a party. So we need to put that in there somewhere if everyone agrees. And there is -- I don't really see a question here. I want to know how they would like our big question I think is how would they handle being nonpartisan for us, they are representing us and we are nonpartisan?

>> Mr. Chair: Certain of us are.

>> Cynthia: Right but as a whole we need to be unbiased and I would like to -- I don't know the question but I want to ask them how do they plan to act.

>> Brittini: I wonder if you can play around with the intro if you ask them to introduce themselves and something that can be included in the snippet of the importance of being nonpartisan MC, sorry.

>> MC: I have a suggestion. So if you put up question number four I would suggest that we add this one as the third question being one and 12 and number four and modify it where it says because I think we are going to need more than just us and I think our executive right we will leverage as many relationships as we can and reach as many people as possible to reach the citizenry of Michigan and it speaks to me so what I'm suggesting is we add can you tell us about a time when you had to facilitate a decision or consensus between multiple different people, organizations or parties. I want to get a party affiliation and what I want to suggest here it's important not to just say your party affiliation but can you actually rise above your party affiliation. Can you demonstrate you have risen above it. We are in a tough situation where we actually need politically savvy people, right, not who are going to use their -- that and leverage it to an extreme outrageous advantage and create injustice but we do need state and political experience and so I think what I want to suggest is I think it's more than just asking their party affiliation. I think it's trying to say, yeah, modifying question four would help me I think help answer that and potentially give us a third question that might give us information that we need.

>> Mr. Chair: Juanita?

>> Juanita: Going to MC's question, I was looking at the candidates paperwork and I read it pretty thoroughly and if you look at the things they have done you will see that would almost answer the questions and we can go over it. But I found a couple of people in here that had a wide variety of interacting with the democrats, the

nonpartisans and the republicans. And if you really read it real good you would know which ones they are. And they add on and tell them to elaborate a little bit about it. But I kind of already got a couple of people here that met that category that you were talking about MC.

>> Mr. Chair: We certainly have the opportunity after the interviews before making any type of decision to review what you're talking about, Juanita, to take into our decision making process. Anybody else?

So far, we have we definitely want one and 12. There is a suggestion to cut three. Suggestion to add party affiliation/donations. And add to number four something along the lines of mediating party disputes. That is my words. Not exactly what MC said. Are there specific ones we want to eliminate? Besides the suggestion of number three?

>> Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: In the interest of pairing it way down, I think probably number two could be eliminated because they have probably addressed that in their letters to us. And the other information.

>> Brittini: The other questions kind of lend towards that I would agree Rhonda has a question or a comment.

>> Rhonda: I was going to say number seven if we could go to that one, that's kind of your style of management, that was one of the pre req questions when they did resumes people asked about how they considered their style of management, how they would explain their style to be. So I think that one is a little redundant and we could probably get rid of that one.

>> Mr. Chair: They will probably talk about in their other answers too.

>> Yeah.

>> Mr. Chair: Who is next?

>> Doug: Will we eliminate number seven?

>> Mr. Chair: We are talking about it.

>> Brittini: I'm already crossing them off.

>> Mr. Chair: We will get a final total here. Rebecca.

>> Rebecca: I was just going to say let's just focus on one, four and 12 because I feel like those are kind of the key ones. And the others were covered in their initial responses if you go back and read them you know they talk about their contributions or it is in their resume how they work with people. So I feel it's kind of like the core questions plus the adding on who have you contributed to. I would not ask party affiliation because I feel like that is kind of nebulous and squishy but contributions are a matter of public record and you should be able to say quite clearly who you contributed to and that kind of tells us what we need to know right there. That would be my

suggestion do one, four and 12, four with the modifications ask the question about who have they contributed donations to. Politically and I think that should give us kind of a good feel for the individuals.

>> Mr. Chair: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: In response to Rebecca's, the reason I said party affiliation is because it's obviously become an issue as far as the responses we've gotten. So I just thought I would make it a fair playing ground for everybody.

>> I agree.

>> If we came out and said that that way it makes it fair for everybody and people will know you know we are not picking this person because of party or anything. Everybody just goes. That is what my thought process was for that.

>> Mr. Chair: Let me ask it this way: We suggested cutting three, two -- two, three and seven is everybody in agreement of cutting those?

Nod your head yes. No. Okay so those are out. Are there others we want to cut?

Rebecca is suggested we only have three in there. I understand that but are there specific ones that we want to cut?

Anybody?

All right so go ahead whoever said something.

>> Brittini: That was me. Maybe five just because I think that will come up, but I'm indifferent to what five is. Give me an example of a work situation that required excellent communication skills, how do you approach that experience or moment and what was the result.

And in my eyes and experience with interviewing that is kind of a fluff question that someone could answer -- I can give you the right answer to that. I'm more interested in the questions that are going to speak about character. This question of number nine how are you actually going to approach strategic planning, that is going to be important for us as a commission. So I think five is like a freebie.

>> Mr. Chair: All of those five we are cutting five, nod your head appropriately. Okay five is out. And nine is in. I heard you say. .

>> Brittini: We are interested in how you engage in strategic planning, what processes have you found useful because that tells me about your experience and if you thought about what we are doing, where we are moving, if you have new ideas, you have questionable ideas, those I think you can get a squeeze a lot out of number nine.

>> Doug: I agree Brittini.

>> Dustin: I concur.

>> Mr. Chair: That would give us four questions for 30 minutes.

>> Brittini: That will give Doug an opportunity to add those kind of pop-up questions that he has thought about that are specific to individuals. That is just.

>> Mr. Chair: So are we set then?

We are going to do one, four as amended, nine and 12?

And Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: Are we doing the added on one too about parties?

>> Mr. Chair: Four as amended.

>> Rhonda: Okay.

>> Mr. Chair: That talks about party affiliation and donations and referral -- I put down Referee party disputes. Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: Will somebody type this up for us real quick so that we have the same -- everyone is on the same page?

>> Mr. Chair: I have to ask Sally.

>> Sally: Yes, so commissioners can I just read through the notes that I've been taking and then I will send them around to our staff who can change them? Because I was taking notes as I went some of the numbers changed as I was deleting so I want to make sure I have it exactly as you have been talking about. So number one, why are you interested in this position. Then a question about building partnerships, adding on and political parties to the end of the sentence. And then we are interested in how you engage in strategic planning. And then how do you envision all the way at the end how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and the commissioners. Blah, blah, blah. And then you would ask do you have any questions for us. Did I miss any there?

>> Mr. Chair: Hold on. We did number four can you tell us about a time when you had to facilitate between people and/or organizations.

>> MC: She had that one.

>> Sally: And political parties was the add on you wanted to put there and then sorry go ahead.

>> Mr. Chair: Where are you putting the party affiliation/donation?

>> Sally: So I was just going to ask I'm assuming you would want that as its own separate question. So you know what is your political party affiliation.

>> Mr. Chair: That is fine.

>> Sally: Your past political contributions do you want that towards the top everybody?

Or do you want that more towards the end?

>> Dustin: I would suggest the end.

>> Sally: You got it. Mr. Chair: Okay of the three people who are asking questions, who is taking which questions?

>> Dustin: I will take one.

>> Doug: I will take four.

>> I can ask about the political party affiliations and contributions.

>> That was Anthony.

>> Mr. Chair: Keep going.

>> Keep volunteering.

>> Number nine.

>> Anthony: I will do 12 as well.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, that got them all.

>> Are we asking six or no?

>> Brittini: The other ones are supplemental questions.

>> Mr. Chair: Six was not on the list of ask.

>> Okay.

>> Dustin are you asking are we asking six total questions or question number six?

Oh, question number six, okay.

>> Doug: Could you review Steve who is asking what question?

>> Mr. Chair: I did not get them written down so what are you doing, Doug?

>> Doug: I had a technical problem. I said yes to four but I think somebody else may have done that as well.

>> Mr. Chair: I'm not seeing head shaking.

>> Brittini: Anthony said he was going to ask about party affiliation. I don't think he said number four though, yeah.

>> Doug: That is number four though isn't it.

>> Mr. Chair: I think it was coming in as a separate question.

>> Doug: As a separate question, okay.

So I will do number four then, okay.

>> Mr. Chair: We have the party affiliation that we have Dustin what are you taking?

>> Dustin: I was going to take the first one.

>> Mr. Chair: Number one, four party affiliation. 12 who is taking 12?

>> Brittini: Anthony.

>> Mr. Chair: Anthony. And 13 is do you have any questions, I can ask 13 unless there is an objection.

>> Anthony: Did we get nine?

>> Brittini: No.

>> Mr. Chair: Not yet. Nine?

>> Anthony: Anyone want to do nine, Dustin how about you do nine?

>> Dustin: I have one and nine?

>> Mr. Chair: Thank you for your service. .

>> Welcome.

>> Mr. Chair: Does that cover them all?

We have one, 12, 4, 9 and I got 13.

>> And we are waiting for Sally and the questions. Anybody have any comments or questions while we are waiting?

>> Dustin: I take it we are asking the questions in order all the time so one, four, nine, 12 and 13 and I have one and nine.

>> Mr. Chair: Yes.

>> And we have.

>> Brittini: Anthony had a question.

>> Mr. Chair: Anthony, question.

>> Anthony: So we are down to -- we narrowed this down to five questions that is great. Good job everyone. And the question earlier if I believe Doug is going to ask after the five questions specifics follow-ups for the candidate. Are we doing that or are we sticking with just these five?

>> Mr. Chair: We can have follow-up after that as they answer the question and any of us have a follow-up inquiry we should ask it. I don't want you off in a five-minute question. .

>> Sally: Commissioners I sent an updated file to all of you and also to our team so once our team gets it, we can quick screen share if it would be helpful. They are all renumbered now because I deleted the ones that we didn't want. Screen share just to make sure you are all on the same page and then you can get started. .

>> Mr. Chair: Well, let's see what everybody got. Dustin: We can't download this, right?

>> Anthony: I downloaded it fine.

>> Mr. Chair: Anthony you are the only one that can do it.

>> Ann in I: Oh.

>> The only thing I can do is save it to a one drive. Mr. Chair: I figured out I can e-mail it to myself then I can do whatever I want with it.

>> Brittini: That is what I've been doing.

>> That is genius.

>> My question is easy and I have to ask if they have any questions and I can remember that I think. I'm just waiting for it to come in my e-mail and it's taking forever.

>> Sally: Commissioners the questions are on screen right now but once you start the interviews, we will take them off. Especially for the viewers. So our first or rather your first candidate is here. And ready to go whenever you are. So just let us know and we can kind of go to the technical aspect of promoting them and getting them in to the meeting.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay is everybody ready to go specifically the people asking the questions?

>> Juanita: I'm trying to see.

>> Doug: I think so.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay who is up first?

>> Brittini: Brandon Brice I believe.

>> Mr. Chair: Yeah, Dustin is asking the first question. And then Doug. .

>> Doug: Correct.

>> Mr. Chair: And then Dustin again. And then Anthony. Anthony you are doing the party affiliation and number 12 do you want to do those at the same time, please?

>> Anthony: I will do those concurrently.

>> Doug: On the interview questions e-mailed out I have that as closing on number four.

>> What is your party affiliation and past history of political contributions.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, Anthony you good with that?

>> Anthony: You want me to on this document I'm going to ask four and number five.

>> Mr. Chair: What was that?

>> Anthony?

>> Anthony: On this sheet the questions that I'm responsible for are four and five.

>> Doug: I thought I was responsible for four.

>> Dustin: The numbers changed when Sally e-mailed it out.

>> MC: Your question would now be number two Doug.

>> Doug: I got it.

>> Mr. Chair: Give me the numbers on the new sheet, I'm not looking at it.

>> Anthony: Dustin has one.

>> Brittini: Yes.

>> Anthony: Doug has two.

>> Okay.

>> And then three and I have four and five.

>> Brittini: And Steve has six.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, okay. We have Mr. Brice up to start with.

>> Brittini: He is here.

>> How is everyone.

>> Mr. Chair: Welcome Mr. Brice. Glad to see you.

>> Thank you for having me.

>> Mr. Chair: We have I'm assuming you can see everybody.

>> Mr. Brice: I can.

>> Mr. Chair: That is unfortunate for you because I myself are not very good looking. Okay, the -- I would ask that we very briefly just introduce ourselves starting in the upper left with Rhonda and we will go right around and everybody will tell you who they are.

>> Rhonda: Good morning Mr. Brice my name is Rhonda Lange from Reed city Michigan up north and it's a pleasure to meet you.

>> Good morning.

>> I'm Steve Lett I'm the chairperson of this wonderful commission and I hail from Interlochen which is up by Traverse City.

>> Hello Mr. Brice thanks for being with us today I'm Anthony Eid from orchard lake and good luck.

- >> Thank you.
- >> Steve you might have to say the order because I think on your screen it's totally different.
- >> I guess.
- >> It is.
- >> I'll go Janis.
- >> I'm Janis welcome and good luck.
- >> Cynthia.
- >> Cynthia Orton. I live in Battle Creek, Michigan; and it's nice to have you.
- >> Thank you.
- >> Brittini.
- >> I'm Brittini Kellom from Detroit and I'm the vice chair of this commission and welcome.
- >> Rebecca.
- >> Good morning, Rebecca Szetela from Canton Michigan and good luck.
- >> Juanita.
- >> Hi, Mr. Brice, I'm Juanita Curry from Detroit Michigan and we welcome you.
- >> Thank you.
- >> Dustin.
- >> Good morning Mr. Brice my name is Dustin. I am from Ypsilanti Michigan and I look forward to interviewing you today.
- >> Thank you.
- >> Erin.
- >> Good morning Mr. Brice my name is Erin Wagner from Charlotte, Michigan. Thank you for applying and we look forward to your answers.
- >> Thank you.
- >> MC.
- >> Good morning I'm MC and call me MC and yeah, I live in Lansing, Michigan and good to have you.
- >> Thank you.
- >> Doug.
- >> I'm Doug Clark I'm from Rochester hills, Michigan and it's great to have you with us this morning.
- >> Thank you.
- >> Richard.
- >> Good morning Mr. Brice nice to meet you. I'm from Saginaw, Michigan and good luck on your interview.
- >> Thank you.

>> Mr. Chair: All right I don't think I missed anybody. The scramble on this kind of confusing sometimes. But the way that we are going to do this so that you know is we will have four members of our commission asking you questions.

>> Okay.

>> Mr. Chair: And we will allow -- we are going to hold it to about a half an hour. And we are -- we will have follow-up questions after you answer a question there may be a follow-up to that answer. We will just see how that goes. Other than that, do you have any questions at this time about the process?

>> Mr. Brice: No.

>> Mr. Chair: Okay, all right, the first person that will be asking questions will be Dustin. Go ahead Dustin.

>> Dustin: Thank you, Steve. Okay Mr. Brice why are you interested in this position and the work of redistricting in Michigan more broadly?

>> Mr. Brice: So I grew up in Michigan and what is important to me is voter integrity. Also what is important to me is that I believe from the redistricting's perspective there should be no safe districts. Every elected official should have to fight for their district. I believe in putting the power back into the hands of the people not into the hands of political establishments. And so I take this commission very serious in that it makes sure our democracy stays afloat and it gives Michiganders the power, not Lansing or Washington.

>> Mr. Chair: Anybody have a follow-up inquiry as to that?
All right, next will be Doug Clark, Doug?

>> Doug: Yes, Brandon, can you tell us about a time when you had to facilitate a decision or consensus between multiple different people?
Organizations and political parties?

>> Mr. Brice: That has been the story of my life. My -- there has been two issues that I've been well three issues I've been very strong on in terms of galvanizing with republicans and democrats and I deal with youth services that is what I do. I'm a nonprofit executive so my job is to do much more with less. So being a good Stewart is extremely important. The other part is when it comes to issues like education reform, when it comes to like dealing with veteran service these are two issues doesn't matter if you are democrat or republican, they are important and should be important to you so I have been able to Galvanize resources and work with both Sides and create a win-win opportunity to hear the needs. I always say my favorite quote is it takes courage to be active but it also takes courage sometimes to sit and listen. Hear what the other side is saying and go at their understanding. And I have experience more than 14 years of experience in working with both groups. And working to Galvanize solutions to solve every day American issues.

>> Doug: Can you give me an example in your work life of this type of thing?

>> Mr. Brice: Sure, so I worked years ago with the New Jersey legislature on education reform. As you can imagine that was a very controversial issue. But what we were able to do is work with not only democrats and republicans but also galvanize outside groups, those groups like vendors, those groups like the business community to help them understand the education reform was more than just whether a kid gets a quality education but it's about the future of your workforce so they saw it as an investment not necessarily just as an issue. And then also we worked with the -- those democrats that were in support of reform the different groups which said certain issues like education and certain issues like redistricting certain issues like veteran services should not but partisan issues because they affect everyone.

>> Doug: My understanding as you work with Governor Christie and was on the republican side and but you did facilitate work with the democratic party within New Jersey as well.

>> We had to, everyone was a democrat except the Governor. They controlled both houses and so my job was to be the face but it was also to solve the narrative and the narrative was it doesn't matter on your zip code every young person deserves a quality education. Doesn't matter if you are democrat or republican. And as a result we got three bills passed. So apparently, we did something right.

>> Doug: And who specifically on the democratic side did you work with?

>> Mr. Brice: Well we worked with the speaker's office at that time and also worked with at that time the Senate president. I don't recall the name at the time. But we worked with those two factions and also worked with the New Jersey Department of Education at that time.

>> Doug: Okay that is all the question I have Brandon.

>> Mr. Chair: Steve back to you. Any follow-up from anybody?

All right, Dustin.

>> Dustin: Okay, we are interested in how you engage in strategic planning. What processes have you found useful and where would you start with the work of the commission?

>> Mr. Brice: I do strategic planning in this both the non-profits that I serve, I serve as board chair for two. But strategic planning is always important because we need to know where we have been, where we are and where we are going. The other part of that is working with the commission but also looking at some of the legal ramifications so this role we talk about redistricting there is a lot of legal issues that one would have to deal with when we talk about fair maps. When we talk about looking at fair district and looking over time of why districts were drawn the certain ways they were drawn and so my role would be a lot of research but also looking at working with the commission, working with you guys, to make sure that the direction is that and that my role is to execute that direction. The other part is looking at outside vendors and look at how do we look at paths and people who have either worked on the maps and why were some

of the decisions made for the maps and how do we get it relevant to move forward today and for the next two years.

>> Mr. Chair: Brandon, if you were to become the executive director, would you view your position as being one of I am the director and you as the commission serve me. Or we are the commission and you as the director serve us?

>> Mr. Brice: I serve as board president of two boards right now, one in Lansing one in Detroit. A healthcare board. I can tell you as the governance role and accountability our job is not to run the organization, that is the role of the CEO. As relates to in the commission I look at you guys as giving the direction, my job is to execute that. My job is also to have an honest up front and transparent relationship with each and every one of you. So that we can do the will and serve at the end of the day Michiganders this is not personal for me but important for me and a mix for me to make sure people have fair elections. My job is to be your executer but also your advocate and also your partner.

>> Mr. Chair: Executer, are we out to get somebody's head?

>> How about facilitator?

>> Mr. Brice: Facilitator. I'm not good on that facilitator.

>> Mr. Chair: Any follow-up from anybody?

All right, we are up to Anthony.

>> Anthony: Okay, Mr. Brice I have two questions for you. The first being do you have a political party affiliation?

And have you and what is your past history of political contributions?

>> Mr. Brice: My political affiliation I am a republican. But I don't always agree with everything that my party does unfortunately. As I shouldn't. It's the American way. My role is to make sure Michiganders are getting the best when it comes to service. I do not give political contributions. For the reason that I work with both Sides. I live in Detroit and I'm a true Detroiter so my role has always been crossing the aisle and working across the aisle and asking any democrat that I have sat before with. My job is very solution driven. I've always been a very independent thinker and so with me as I said before, my role has always been about transparency and always been about integrity, former boy scout and my job is also making sure regardless of my political party about who is right or what is right is there any follow-up to that question from anyone?

>> Doug: This is Doug. Could you give us an idea relative to contributions that you have made in the past?

Your contribution history to political parties?

>> I have and typically I don't make political contributions because I work with both sides and have been non-profit so we can't afford to be partisan.

>> Okay.

>> Go ahead, Anthony.

>> Any next question is, and you kind of alluded to this earlier, but how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and commissioners? How would you approach communication and your working relationship with the commissioners on an individual level and on a group level?

>> Well, I think it's very important that, you know -- and I will go back to my comment before -- my role is to be your partner, advocate, and facilitator. But with that, I also think relationship matters so I think with me, you know, any time I know or have information, it's my job to share that information with you with the commission once again, I believe in transparency and integrity. The other thing is I think it's important to have synergy -- if there's information that I receive or could potentially be a conflict of interest, I think we walk down a tricky road when people hide that information, especially when their role is to be a facilitator for something as important as the redistricting commission. So once again, my office will be one of transparency. It will be one of integrity, even among -- even with and among my staff. I believe that so we have credible election, moving forward.

>> Brandon, you understand, I'm sure, that this process as envisioned by the amendment and as required by the amendment, may be the most, open transparent process in the State of Michigan. Does that cause you any concern?

>> Not at all. I'm an open book. I'm a Christian and so I believe in, you know -- in other words, I think trans-- when you talk about government, what makes government work is integrity and why I put my bid in for this role, because I think it's time for us to get real about the future of elections. As you can see right now what is kind of happening both on the national and local level, I want to avoid that for the State of Michigan and make sure it's a fair, balanced map that represents all people who vote.

>> Any other follow-up for Brandon?

For any questions?

>> That's it.

>> All right. I have the last one, and this throws it back in your ballpark: do you have any questions of us or anything you would like to say? This brings it to a conclusion.

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>> Well, I just want to say, first of all, thank you for taking the time to interview me. One thing that I would add is that, you know, some of you may say, "Well, should we put -- make this guy the director of the executive commission?"

One thing, just to tell you a little bit about me, I'm somebody who believes in democracy and somebody who worked with both sides and in some cases respective on both sides because I have been integrity-based. I've always focused on transparency, and I've always tried to be honest in all of my dealings; and so when we talk about respect, that is something that will be a part of my administration, my team, to make sure that people are getting quality maps that are going to be fair and balanced. So I leave that with you to say I am a Detroit. I am a Republican, and I am an African-American man living in America; but at the end of the day, I want safer, more fair and balanced maps for you when you and your family vote. And so I ask for your support on this and I thank you for your time.

>> All right, anybody have any follow-up after Brandon's closing remarks?

Okay, if not, Brandon, we thank you for coming and we thank you for your application.

We will not have an answer today. We will deliberate and will come up with something; but you will hear from us one way or another in the future.

It won't be a long wait so thank you again.

Appreciate it.

>> Thank you!

Thank you. Bye-bye.

>> Bye-bye.

>> Okay, before we take the next person, are there any, um, any comments or anything we could do better? I think it went well, quite frankly; so I guess I'm not looking -- I'm not looking for problems but if someone saw one, I would certainly consider that.

I don't know how long that took; was anybody timing it? Sally, were you timing that?

>> It took about seven or eight minutes.

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>> Yeah, it took about 15 minutes. It was a little -- like around 15 -- between 15 and 20.

>> That's okay.

I thought we got a good feel for him.

Okay, Dr. Sheryl Mitchell is next, by my count.

>> Anthony?

>> I just wanted to see, uh, Erin said she needed to step away for a minute. Is she back?

>> Back.

>> Okay.

>> I have a nit-picky thing. You can roll your eyes if you want to. I think the interview could be more conversational where the people, the folks -- if you know when your question is coming, just ask instead of having our beloved Chair direct you to ask the question.

(Chuckling)

Just in the way of, you know, appearing independence and having us have autonomy. That's it.

>> And I want to offer, too, that I don't think -- this may be nit-picky again, but it may be more consistent if we agree on "Mr. Brice" or "Brandon." Sometimes if you hear both it's difficult. If we can help the candidate be at ease, like I believe Brittini is saying, if we're consistent, it could help them feel like "Whoa, what did that mean? If he used my first name, what did it mean?"

Those lift details can make a big difference to a candidate who is already nervous so I'm just --

>> I would agree with that and I would suggest that we stick with Ms. or Mr.

>> We can't hear you, Dustin.

>> Oh.

>> Mr.

>> Hello? Yeah, I was going to stick with "Mister" and "Ms" for example, and "Dr. Mitchell," definitely doctor because she's earned it.

>> Okay. And Dustin, I think your microphone is up here on your headset; if you bring it down, we may hear you better. Oh, is that your microphone? Okay, never mind.

>> So we are agreed on using last names and formal?

>> Yeah.

>> I would prefer first name, but if that's what we want to do --

>> It's not very warm and fuzzy, people, but if that's what you want, that's what we'll do.

>> I'm happy -- yeah, okay, but yeah, we have to move along and you know, like somebody said, she earned it. We can also -- here's a thought: how about we ask them? Well, no, that's awkward; never mind. Bad idea.

(Laughter)

>> No, that is actually a great idea.

>> Let's put it this way. Dr. Mitchell is here and will cut this short. Dr. Mitchell, welcome! We're glad to have you here and we're gonna use Dr. Mitchell. You can call us anything you want when you're talking to us.

(Laughter)

We're going to go around and I will call on people to introduce themselves. Normally I would just say "Introduce yourselves," but our pictures flip around and so I can't tell who is where on their screen.

So we'll start with Rhonda, who has not moved since the last time.

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>> I like my place. Good morning, Dr. Mitchell. We're very happy to have you here to interview with us today, and I wish you the best of luck. My name is Rhonda Lang from Reid City, Michigan.

>> Good morning, doctor. Steve Lett and I hail from Interlochen by Traverse City, I'm the Chair of the commission. Janice?

>> Hi, welcome, Dr. Mitchell. I'm Janice Vallette and from Highland Township in Michigan.

>> Cynthia?

>> Hi, Dr. Mitchell, I'm Cynthia Orton and live in Battle Creek and we're excited to hear from you today.

>> Anthony.

>> Good morning, Dr. Mitchell. Thanks for being here with us today. I'm Anthony Eid, originally from orchard lake, Michigan; and good luck today.

>> Brittini.

>> Hi, Dr. Mitchell. I am Brittini Kellom from Detroit, Michigan, vice-chair of the commission.

>> Good morning.

>> Rebecca.

>> Good morning, my nature is Rebecca Szetela, from Canton, Michigan, and welcome.

>> Juanita.

>> Good morning, Dr. Mitchell. My name is Juanita Curry from Detroit, Michigan, and I welcome you.

>> Dustin.

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>> Good morning, Dr. Mitchell. My name is Dustin Witjes from Ypsilanti, Michigan, and look forward to interviewing you today.

>> Erin.

>> Good morning. My name is Erin Wagner. Welcome, and we look forward to hearing from you.

>> Thank you.

>> M.C.

>> Good morning, Dr. Mitchell, my name is M.C. -- please call me M. C.

I'm in Lansing.

>> Doug.

>> good morning, Dr. Mitchell. I'm Doug Clark and from Rochester Hills, Michigan, and it's good to have you with us this morning.

>> Richard.

>> Dr. Mitchell, nice to meet you. I'm from Saginaw, Michigan.

>> Okay, that's everybody, Dr. Mitchell, and just to fill you in on the process, we have assigned some questions that we want all of the interviewees to answer; and there will be four of us that will be asking a series of questions; and you will have plenty of time to answer. There will be a follow-up question after each one if members of the Commission have those. And at the end, we will give you an opportunity to add whatever you would like and ask any questions you would like. So we will lead off with Doug on the first question.

>> Why are you interested in this position, and in the work of redistricting in Michigan more broadly?

>> Well, good morning, and thank you for the question.

It's really exciting to see the citizens' initiative come to fruition in this historic body; and one of the reasons that relates to my background -- I was a part of the 2010 Census

project for Oakland County when I was working with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and staff and support on the Redistricting Commission. So you see the process close-up and quite frankly, part of the shortcoming. I became involved with the league of women voters and educating residents about redistricting because they were a non-partisan body and recognized the importance of involving citizens in the process. And why I'm interested in this position is my passion is for assuring citizens' voices are heard in government decision-making tables. This led to my dissertation on priority-based budgets, which focused on the impact of citizen engagement to identify community values and priorities while alignment with government spending. I'm comfortable working in a government environment, particularly in a non-partisan and bipartisan boards. I have firsthand experience navigating the Open Meetings Act and that include the requirements under this new environment that allows for the remote meets like we have today.

I have a keen understanding and commitment to openness and transparency in government. In fact, my efforts resulted in the Sunshine Award when I was the City Manager in the city of Albion. So why am I interested? This is an awesome, amazing opportunity to be involved in a citizen-led initiative and making certain that as we move forward, working together, that the process is fair; is open; is transparent; and most importantly it engages a cross-section of residents from across our state.

>> Let's talk about the position for a moment. How do you envision the executive director working with not only the Commission but other individuals that are involved in this endeavor?

>> How do I envision the role of executive director working with the commission is to serve you in your goals and objectives to facilitate the processes to help you with aligning your objectives; what are the resources needed to make certain the communication happens both internally with each of you as well as what the constituency and any organizations that are needing to engage in. Having worked in the political realm for quite some time as an independent and professional staff person, I understand that my personal viewpoints aren't the ones that are as important as a body, making certain your initiatives are streamline and strategic as can be so we can move forward to a successful outcome.

>> Let's get a little more specific about the position. What do you see as some of the specific roles and responsibilities of the executive director?

>> Some of the roles and responsibilities will be helping you with your strategic process, understanding what your next steps are going to be, identifying what are the

resources and staffing needs to support those initiatives, making certain that you have qualified staff on hand in a strong, working relationship with the Michigan Department of State as well as bringing on board those consultants to have the expertise that will be needed; because this is very detailed work but it's very important work, so you want to make certain that you are working effectively and efficiently, making certain that the best practices are understood and aligning them with your work but also understanding that Michigan is unique so not everything that happened in other communities may be a best fit for us here.

>> Thank you, Dr. Mitchell. Steve, I'll turn it back to you.

>> Thank you. Any other questions from other members of the Commission, based upon Dr. Mitchell's answer?

Okay, Dustin, I'm not ignoring you; I was looking at a different lineup -- but you're up with your question and will take both of your questions.

>> Okay.

So let's go -- can you tell us about a time when you had to facilitate a decision or consensus between multiple, different people, organizations, or political parties?

>> Working for government is every day, and an example might be with Oakland County and the Board of Commissioners elected on a partisan basis. It was with the creation of the Women's Advisory Commission. Probably more than anything, I'm an advocate for empowering women, especially in leadership roles and young people in underserved communities so looking at opportunities in Oakland County to have a Women's Commission that would mirror the Michigan's Woman Commission created by the state and I was appointed to serve on; but as part of that process, there were concerns about it becoming partisan, and how do you elect or appoint individuals to serve on that so it didn't have a political party bias? So that was thought to be a seven-member commission, what was negotiated was at that time there were 25 county commissioners so the conversation that resulted was back there were 25 appointees to the Women's Commission so each commissioner was able to appoint who they felt best represented their district. So that was one of those outcomes.

Another situation would have been in Albion in Calhoun County and served on the Health Alliance Board; and they were looking at initiatives that were going to be helpful

to the residents. But the community that I served, Albion, had a high percentage of minorities, and they also had a high level of poverty so making sure their needs were represented on that board was important and was especially important because during that time was when we had the cop dam nation of lead in the water situation in Flint; and because Albion had a high number of homes that were older, they had high lead concentration levels in the blood levels of students there. So making certain that those conversations were inclusive of the needs of a community that otherwise might have been overlooked.

And another situation is working the state legislature and worked closely with Representative Knox, who is Republican, but our community was predominantly Democrat; so I had to represent the needs of the community and work with whoever is in the legislative decision-making representative because you serve the community and you have to work with everyone.

On the outcome from that, we were able to obtain multi-million dollar awards relative to supporting our infrastructure, including upgrades to our water system.

>> Are there any follow-ups to Dustin's question and Dr. Mitchell's answer?

Hey, Dustin, your next question, please.

>> Sorry about that.

We are interested in how you engage in strategic planning.

What processes have you found useful and where would you start work with the Commission?

>> I've worked with strategic planning processes with a number of organizations, communities, non-profit groups. Currently I'm working on the strategic planning in the Capital Improvement Plan for a city that is multifaceted and we're working with other entities relative to getting some of our infrastructure work accomplished. But my approach to it tends to be -- I think you're probably familiar with S.W.A.T. -- strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. I prefer S.O.A.R. -- strength, opportunities, aspirations, and measurable results. So you're focusing on the positive, productive, proactive approaches to your strategic planning processes and in terms of the Commission, I would focus first on the constitutional mandates you have to address; what are the legal requirements; what are the best practices and we are not the first to look at re-districting but one of the first to look at it from a citizens' initiative perspective.

So what are the best practices and especially what are the best practices relative to citizen engagement? I would say I have expertise in that area and finding innovative ways, not just a new approach but in a new time. So in a COVID environment, how do you engage citizens when you can't sit face-to-face with them easily these days? So we have to be very creative in those approaches and especially when you're using heavily technology like today's meeting; but what about those who do not have access to technology? How are you going to reach out to them and have them informed, as well as getting input from them? And then focusing on the goal of this Commission. What are you identifying as your goals? What are the time frames in what we have to meet, and what are those benchmarks to make certain we're on track? And always looking for the advice of experts in the field.

>> Are there any follow-up questions to Dr. Mitchell's answer and Dustin's question?

>> Dr. Mitchell, you mentioned thoughts about getting engagement in kind of challenging circumstances, and there was one other point you alluded to. Not to put you on the spot -- because these are very thorough answers -- but could you give some thought on the specific ideas that you would have, given what you know about the commission and what you've already watched?

>> Well, some of my thoughts -- you're talking about the engagement element -- is, one, capitalizing on the organizations that, one, I'm personally involved in such as Michigan Municipal League and League of Women Voters; and organizations that care about citizen engagement and government and government processes; as well as groups that represent underserved communities and helping them to become informed and engaged in their populations to be a part of the process. So creating a network, essentially creating a network that can branch out and could be on a divisional basis, on economic basis, all types of different social, economic terms in addition to political perspectives because all voices need to be heard.

>> Thank you, Dr. Mitchell.

>> Any other follow-up?

All right, we're up to Anthony.

>> All right, Dr. Mitchell, I have two questions for you today.

>> Okay.

>> The first being, what is your political party affiliation; and do you have a past history of political contributions?

>> I do not currently have a political party affiliation. To be perfectly honest and transparent, when I was Oakland County -- so I think that was in the early '80s -- I lived in the Township of West Bloomfield, and I ran for Parks and Recreation Commission; and because it was a township, it was a partisan office. I didn't understand the partisan nature of Parks and Recreation, but nevertheless, that was the world in which I lived; but I was very passionate about having a voice in my local community. So at that time, I did run a label -- I have a very strong dislike of labels and if anything, I would say I'm independent. I vote on individuals. I irritated some people because even though I was identified with one party at that point, I supported women who were serving on the township board at that time and they were of a different party. I don't look at party as a discerning factor in term of who I am and who I respect and will work with. I have to work with anyone and everyone; but I would also say that was 20 years ago so one of the lessons learned at that time was although as an individual I had the right to be involved in a parties activity, it is spilled over into my professional work so that was a lesson learned and since that time have definitely not been involved in politics, not supporting political parties, not supporting individuals. As much as I might like to for certain individuals, especially if they're friend of mine, they have to understand that, one, it's not appropriate because I have to work with everyone; and, two, I'm a member of the ICMA, International City Managers Association so I abide by the Code of Ethics that specifically states we CANNOT support financially or otherwise individuals or parties. So I adhere to those standards.

>> Okay, thank you for that answer.

Is there any follow-up to that question from any of the commissioners?

>> Yes. that was a wonderful explanation of your current and past affiliations, but I'm still curious as to what you ran as, Democrat or Republican?

>> I ran as a Democrat.

>> Thank you.

>> In a predominantly Republican community so it was really interesting.

(chuckling)

>> (Laughing)

Anybody that's lived in Michigan knows who the big cheese in Oakland County was.

>> I do have a follow-up question. I didn't -- you said that currently you don't make any contributions to any party. Have you in the past?

>> Yes, back in the early '80s I did.

And I would say I made contributions to both Democrats and Republicans.

>> Any other follow-ups?

Okay, Anthony?

>> Dr. Mitchell, I'll tell you I went to school in the West Bloomfield School District so I know a little bit about the area. My final question is, how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and the commissioners? With that, how would you approach communication and your working relationship with the commissioners, both individually and as a group?

>> Well, the role of the executive director is to support you and your initiatives so in terms of the communication, what is key is that everyone gets the same information at the same time. Sometimes an individual may reach out with a question but is very important to provide that question and response to all of you so the communications are totally open, totally transparent, and clear and fair for everyone that is involved. You can't play favorites and just being supportive of your role and your objectives is how I see my job.

And there may have been another part of that question. If you could repeat that.

>> Yes. so can you speak a little bit about your approach as far as communicating with us individually versus as a group?

>> Well, in terms of -- communicating with you individually, what I have found successful is on occasion, as much as time permits, having one-on-one sessions with you just to find your concerns and interests; is there anything else I could be doing that would better support you in your role? Then bringing that back together in how we're addressing the needs of the full commission. But again, being mindful not to play favorites but make certain those lines of communication are open. Some people aren't

as comfortable speaking in a group setting, especially one that's being televised and recorded; so just making certain you have access to me and to the staff so that you are supported in all of your objectives.

>> Let me follow up with asking -- if you are hired for this position, do you see yourself as working for the Commissioners, or do you see yourself as, I suppose, being in charge of the Commission?

>> Definitely working for the Commissioners, working for the citizens, not the State of Michigan. One of the interesting elements of government is if you look at the organizational characters it always start with the citizens at the top and then the elected officials and then the staff; so I understand that and adhere to it. One of the thing I think is important, however, is if the citizens are who we all report to, to make sure their voices are heard at the beginning of the process and not at the end of the process when all the decisions have been made. That's why it's so exciting to see this commission in place and the work you're about to engage in.

>> Thank you.

>> Dr. Mitchell, you understand that pursuant to the amendment that was passed in the constitutional mandate that this process is open to the public in all its aspects and is transparent and probably working with Zoom and computers and technology, it is an extremely, extremely open and above-board process. We cannot make any decisions without them being in open meetings. You have indicated you are familiar with the Opening Meetings and certainly as a City Manager would be. Does that cause you any concern that doesn't leave us with a lot of wiggle room to have decision talks out of the public eye? Everything is in the public eye in this case.

>> Well, that's the realm in which I work in and flourish, quite frankly. It is important to make certain all the conversations are transparent and that include that reminding commissioners that you should not be texting to one another; all the deliberations should be very public and accessible. And this use of technology is definitely transformative, but we also have to be very cognizant of how are we reaching everyone. The initiatives I had in Albion was to have the town hall meetings out in various neighborhoods of the community so people had access to their elected officials, to our staff, and we can also share important information with them; because one of the things you hear ALL the time in every level of government is citizens say they don't know what is going on. They don't know what information is being -- what decisions are being made that are impacting their lives, but they don't know about it. So how can we make certain that whatever those obstacles to having information as well as being, having the

opportunity to have input -- what can we do to overcome those obstacles and open up the doors and build bridges to communication and engagement that may be innovative? They may look at things and ways in which you have never done before but at all times must be open and transparent and fair.

>> Thank you. Any other follow-ups?

>> I have one quick question, and I apologize, Dr. Mitchell. I just got your resume in front of me again. On your resume it said you're currently a city administrator. Are you still presently?

>> Yes, I am.

>> Okay, is that a full-time -- I'm not real familiar with how administrations work and everything; is that a full-time job? Is it something that you would be leaving to do this role; or is it kind of part-time and you would do on the side I guess is what I'm asking.

>> Well, I'm very glad you asked that question. It is a full-time position, and the mayor of the village asked me if this was something that I could do in conjunction so could I work -- reduce my hour and work part-time there and do this role? If that is not an option, then obviously I would have to devote my energies to this position; but to answer your question, it's negotiable at this point.

(Overlapping conversation)

>> Doug?

>> Yeah.

Dr. Mitchell, taking a look at your resume, could you explain to us your relationship with the League of Women Voters?

And how, in addition to that, how do you see that relationship impacting your role as an executive director? Based on what their political objectives are?

>> Well, as I understand it, their political objectives are to educate and inform, not necessarily to advocate; so my current role with them is just simply as a member. I have not been active with them, quite frankly, since I went to Calhoun County so that's been five years now. In terms of the relationship with this body and any way we can use them as a support and getting information out to residents, they still do things such as the

voters' guide where they offered unbiased information to voters in terms of evaluating both candidates as well as issues that are on the ballot for their vote. So how can we leverage them and any other organization that is interested in educating voters? So I would just see them as one of the many resources that we would have at hand.

>> Thank you, Dr. Mitchell.

>> Any other follow-ups from anybody?

Okay.

Dr. Mitchell, are there any questions that you have of us or any final comments that you would like to give us?

>> Well, again, I want to thank you all for this exceptional honor and opportunity to be considered for the Executive Director of the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission -- my mouth is dry; sorry.

(Chuckling)

And again, I bring over 30 years of experience, and this is truly an exceptional opportunity to bring my skills, my talent, my education, my support system to support you and the work that you have ahead of you. I bring an approach that's energizing and inspiring, motivating, and I love working with guiding force in commissions in reaching their strategic goals. So I look forward to working with you and one of the questions I have -- because I know you have a very tight timeframe in order to move these objectives forward; what did you have in mind for this individual to start, and what do you -- how would you measure success of your executive director?

>> That we don't get sued at the end of this process. So you're probably gonna fail because everybody we've talked to has been sued.

>> Yeah.

>> No, we would -- I'm speaking for myself and others can certainly jump in -- we would measure success that you are able to, as an executive director, help us to achieve our goals of our providing redistricting in the transparent, fair method that would take into account not only the population but the communities of interest, which we are required to do; and in doing that, that would be a director who was working with us.

Anybody else?

Okay. We will not be making a decision today. We are interviewing a number of people, and we will then consider what the outcome will be and we will let you know; I can't tell you when that will be, but we will certainly contact you, and we do have the -- your current job in mind and whether it's full-time or part-time.

>> I very much appreciate that. Thank you all.

>> Thank you, and have a wonderful rest of your week.

>> Okay, best wishes to you all and happy Thanksgiving holiday as well.

>> You as well, Dr. Mitchell.

>> Bye, now.

>> Yeah, Rhonda.

>> By chance, do we have time in our schedule for like a quick three-minute break?

>> Sure! We'll take a little longer than three -- Sally, how long did that one take?

>> That one took about 30 minutes.

You know -- 30 to 35.

>> We were 15 ahead on the other.

What?

>> Yeah, so -- yeah, you guys are good and think you should take a break.

>> We'll take ten. So be back at 21, 11:21.

>> I just changed a setting on my microphone. Can you hear me better if I turn my head, out of curiosity?

>> Can't see you but can hear you just fine.

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>> Oh, I'll fix that in a second.

>> Hey, Dustin?

>> Yes, sir.

>> Yeah, it's Doug. Sorry for the mix-up when we started the questions.

>> Oh, that's fine.

>> Yeah, I'm glad it worked out fine.

Yeah, Steve said to ask question number -- tell me to ask number 1 and that's what I did; I didn't know we shifted the order or what was going on, so --

>> I think it went fine.

>> Yeah, I do, too.

I was happy with how it ended up.

>> Thanks for your questions, all. I think you're do it can great as a team to ask the questions. Yeah, I really appreciate it. Thank you.

>> Yeah, I haven't done this in a number of years.

Since 2010.

(Laughter)

>> David, I don't think we have said good morning yet.

Glad you made it.

>> I think we have everybody back.

>> We're missing Brittini still -- oh, there she is!

>> Okay, and our next interviewee is Janette Phillips. Anything before she comes on? I do have everybody down in the right order now; I was looking at my wrong list.

So I will call on Dustin first this time.

>> Yeah, we -- Dustin and I improvised.

We got through that.

>> You did a WONDERFUL job, too.

Okay, as soon as we have Ms. Phillips, we will get going.

>> Okay!

Hi, everybody!

I made it.

>> And there you are!

>> Here I am.

>> Okay, my name is Steve Lett, and I am the chairperson of the Commission; and we will go around and introduce ourselves to you; and once again, the screen in front of me is re-arranged so I will call on the people to introduce themselves. This time we start with Doug.

>> My name is Doug Clark from Rochester Hills, Michigan; and I'm also a former EDS employee, Janette; so welcome this morning.

>> Thank you. Hi, Doug.

>> Once again, my name is Steve Lett. As I said, I'm the chairperson of the Commission and I currently live in Interlochen.

Welcome!

>> Thank you.

>> Richard.

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>> Good morning! My name is Richard Weiss.

>> Rhonda.

>> Good morning and thank you for being here with us.

My name is Rhonda Lange from Reid City, Michigan.

>> Hi.

>> Cynthia.

>> Hi, I'm Cynthia Orton and live in Ball Creek, Michigan, and we're excited to talk to you today.

>> Hi.

>> Brittini.

>> Good morning. My name is Brittini Kellom and am vice-chair of the commission and from Detroit.

>> Thank you.

>> Janice.

>> My name is Janice Vallette and live in Highland Township.

>> Thanks.

>> Hi, I'm M.C. and live in Lansing, Michigan. Thank you for being here.

>> Anthony.

>> Good morning. I'm Anthony Eid and originally from Orchard Lake, Michigan. Thank you for being here today and good luck.

>> Thanks.

>> Rebecca.

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>> Good morning, my name is Rebecca Szetela from Canton, Michigan, and we look forward to speaking to you.

>> Dustin.

>> Good morning. My name is Dustin and I am from Ypsilanti, Michigan, and look forward to speaking with you today.

>> Thank you.

>> Erin.

>> Good morning, Ms. Phillips. My name is Erin Wagner. Thank you for sending the addendum to your resume, and we look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

>> Thanks.

>> Juanita.

Can't hear you.

Can't hear you.

>> You have to --

>> I got it.

>> There you go.

>> I was on mute.

Hi, Ms. Phillips. We're glad to have you here with us today. My name is Juanita Curry, from Detroit, Michigan, and we welcome you.

>> Thank you. Hi.

>> Just a few comments on the process here today. We have some convections that we're going to ask you to respond to, some questions, and they will be presented by

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different members of the Commission. After you respond, we will ask if there are any follow-up questions to your response to each question as we go.

At the end, I will ask you if you have anything to share with us that we haven't talked about or anything you have of us. Do you have any questions before we start?

>> No. I -- no, I will just let you start. Thank you.

>> Okay. Dustin.

>> Okay.

I hope everyone can hear me better now.

Here's our first question: why are you interested in this position and the work of the redistricting in Michigan and in a more broad sense of form?

>> Okay, well, I -- when I saw the job posting on the MNA website, it just spoke to me, the fact that this work is REALLY important to the entire state of Michigan; and I want to thank you right now, no matter what decision you make. Thank you for being on this Commission -- and, you know, you will help me and everyone in the state so it's such an important and beautiful work that you're gonna do here in the next year. I know you're going to work very hard. When I read the job description, I just felt that -- I know it does - - it pulls ALL of the things I've been good at and experienced throughout my career, together, to help lead a group of independent citizens to the finish line and to make the right decisions in this redistricting effort to help all of us.

It just really -- the job description spoke to me so I applied.

>> Any follow-up?

What do you feel are couple of things that you say the job description spoke to you -- what parts, one or two things that you felt most important in that description that you feel your experience will aid you in helping us?

>> I think that the key point for this executive director role is that they need to support the Commission; and I've had -- we can talk about it; I think it will probably come up later -- I started my career in the corporate world and did a lot -- I was in sales so I know how to communicate with people. I understand how to get groups of people to form consensus to get to the finish line, whatever that may be. My job was always to help

clients. It wasn't to "Sell" something -- a box or a service -- it's to help a client fix a problem that they have. That's the whole point, and clearly the problem you all need to solve in the redistricting of Michigan is a big problem. And I love to help, and that's just kind of who I am. I know I sent you a big document -- three pages -- but -- yesterday -- but I tried to consolidate and, you know, condense some of the information because this is only a 30-minute interview; but I'm very organized. I do my homework. I understand strategy and then the tactical steps required to get to the strategy to allow you all to make the decisions you need to make to help you get the information from the community to help you make those decisions. You know, I see this role and who I am as a person as kind of lifting you up, giving you what you need, the base you need -- not just myself but an entire staff of people -- to keep the wheels moving so you guys can really focus on the decision. You know what I mean? Ming your arms around all of the data and all of the information you need, talking to the various communities of interest throughout the state -- some we know; some maybe we'll discover on the way; consolidating that information so it's easy for you to grab. And then you guys are the ones who will make those decisions, right? It's not me; it's not anybody behind the executive director, the staff -- obviously the lawyer will provide you tons of guidance and guidance, I suppose, is all he can do. You guys have to deliberate and decide. Once you decide, then the map-makers and all those people are gonna put it together; but my job is kind of to orchestrate the back office so that you, as the front office, can do the job, not the administrative stuff, the working with the community, and obviously deliberating and then deciding. To help us all.

(cat meowing in the background)

>> Okay.

Doug?

>> Yes, Ms. Phillips --

>> Oh, please call me Janette. Sorry. Just call me Janette; thank you.

>> Okay, Janette. You mentioned working with a staff.

How do you envision the staff? What positions; what type of support in the back office -- you referred to it as back office. How do you see that being staff and with what functions?

>> Well, I -- I'll answer that question, but first, I want to let you know that I did a lot of homework once I got the e-mail that said I was going to be a finalist. So I watched every open meeting you've had so far and I feel like I really know you all, even though you don't know me. I feel like I know you. And I really was listening to the California Commissioners when they gave you some advice and the woman from Arizona.

So they -- the California people especially talked about the fact that they didn't have enough time; their budget blew up, mainly for the lawsuits on the back end; and I found the org chart of the California Commission for this round.

So I've modified it already. I'm, like, starting to think about it; but in big-picture words, you need an executive director. I don't have government experience, okay; so probably we would want to have someone on the team, if Sarah or Sally weren't -- I'm assuming maybe they will stay part of the team so we'll have that government liaison, but if we don't, we need a government person, just somebody to help us navigate the State because clearly, I don't have that.

You'll have your legal person. That man or woman may need some support staff; I don't know. We'll have to ask.

Communications director. She may need one support staff or contractors, but -- and then for me, the executive director, my -- what I see my strengths on is help with the budget and help with the timeline. Those are the two big things we have to figure out fast, is, you know, you have -- call it -- you have, I don't know, eight or nine months to get a lot of work done. We have to parse that up and just make sure that we have enough people on the team to do the planning, the event planning, the data collection -- all the Open Meetings Acts, make sure the mail -- all the data, kind of the data of your process is organized and accessible so that, again, in one of the conversations I've already heard, somebody said "The best way to avoid FOIA's is just have it open, and then people just go and look."

It's all that thinking. And so is the staff ten people? It is five people? It is 15? I don't think it will be 15, but I'm not exactly sure, but I know kind of the big buckets; and clearly, I would talk to people in the Secretary of State's office, you guys, talk to California; and help us all sort that out and make a recommendation to you. And obviously you guys make the decisions. I don't make any decisions; I don't want to make the decision. I want to give you the information.

>> Thank you.

>> Any follow-up? Yes, Anthony.

>> Hello, Janette.

>> Hi, Anthony.

>> I see that included in the documents that you sent us was a 60-day work plan. Can you speak a little bit about how you came up with this plan and kind of your process that went into it?

>> So sure.

Again, I did my homework, and you need somebody who's proactive and is, like, it -- you know what I mean? Again, you may not choose me, and that's going to be okay, but I've learned a lot about what you've got to do for all of us so it was fun. I had some fun and that's also important, right? You want to have fun.

But absorbing everything I did and researched and learned -- you know, I put this thing together. Again, the number one priority is just absorbing everything -- which, you know, I have a head start on -- but I think this hit list is appropriate for whomever you choose. So this org chart, the draft budget, and the timeline are the top, you know, top three -- you have to -- we have to get our arms around how big the breadbox is, right? "Okay, what are we doing and when do we have to get it done?"

This gets to strategic planning. But my job is to give you that road map so that you can decide who you want to meet with, when you want to do that, and then I make sure it happen so that you don't fall behind.

Did I answer that?

>> Yes, thank you.

>> Okay.

(Cat meowing in the background)

>> Any other follow-ups on this response?

Okay.

Dustin?

>> I'm sorry about my cat; can you hear that cat in the background?

No noise all day and now I got the cat.

Sorry.

(Laughing)

I have two dog and a cat, just so you know.

>> I have a cat, too, that does the exact same thing.

>> His name is Henry and he wants to come in -- and I can throw him in another room and walk away for a minute, or you'll have to hear the cat. I'm sorry; I don't know what to tell you.

>> The cat is fine.

>> it's okay. Henry encouraging you through the interview.

>> Yeah, well, he's nagging me is what he's doing.

(Laughing)

You know who's in charge; I'm never in charge, right?

Everybody else is in charge so I'm just like -- (Laughing).

>> All right, next.

Next question.

>> This is Doug.

Can you tell us about a time when you had to facilitate a decision or consensus between multiple, different people, organizations, and political parties?

>> So I will tell you as briefly as possible about my GMEDS project; and Doug, you work with at EDS, right?

>> Right.

>> This was back in the '90s. You probably were there; I don't know.

>> I was, yes.

>> I will talk about that in a minute and then will segue into the political side of that, but again, I -- I've worked in business and in non-profits. I'm not political and so -- a long time ago I handled the GMEDS account for Ameritech. It was our largest account for the entire company. The revenue was \$30 million a year, and we supported their voice telecom across the country.

EDS came to me and say, "We want to outsource all the voice communications. It's not strategic." And they focused on data more.

So we -- it's complicated sale, but we did it. We made it happen, and I had to overcome a lot of internal challenges to even get to the point of getting a price to EDS that was acceptable; but once we made the sale, you know, EDS is -- I learned a lot from them. They're REALLY strong organizationally. Their purchasing department was AMAZING. Ross Perot ran EDS so he was -- they're all very well trained. But we had to cut over -- we had to convert the whole 200,000 voice ports in six months to coincide with the shutdown for GM for the fourth of July. And again, we made the sale; and personally H.R., Operations, the technicians -- you name it. Every department within Ameritech -- Chicago was headquarters but no way; we can't get it done; no way; you don't have enough money; all no. And I'm like, Yes.

We have to get this done by the fourth of July and so that whole process -- I mean, I was just a salesperson. I wasn't a vice.

I wasn't a vice president and I wasn't in charge of 5,000 people. It was me and this disappeared team -- dotted line everywhere -- just moving the elephant an inch at a time and we had to change out computer systems. We hired hundreds of people from EDS. Their technician pool came over to our company. We had to bridge their service. There was all kind of -- it was complex. We got it done and was successful and did it under budget for Ameritech and saved money. It was very successful and that process -- I was young and it was years ago, but I learned SO much about how to bring people together, how to get different groups who may or may not agree, just keep inching them along for

the big goal. In our case, it was the fourth of July cutover; in your case, it's like September 15. You have to have maps for people to start poking at, right? So I think I'm your person to just get this organized and whatever I might lack in the government piece, we can find that out. Do you know what I mean? In are lot of people here to help you, and between the academic people that you've listened to in this speeches and Sally and everybody behind Sally and Mike Brady, you know, there's a strong team there. I just see myself as helping you get the -- you know, the noise away so you can focus on what you're really supposed to be doing, talking to the community and deliberating and then deciding what the best answers are for all of us.

>> Janette, the example you gave relative to the voice cutover -- your responsibility was on the sales side, not the operational side of coordinating.

>> Well, I ended up being the team lead for the whole implementation. I became the program manager for the implementation. That's what is so astounding about it. That was -- that's the piece I tried to explain to you. I did sell it. I had to do all the front-end work and typically the salesperson just walks off and gets check.

>> Correct.

>> Yeah. No.

>> Yes.

>> No, no, I did that -- I had to do the job; and then after it was cut over, right, there's still work to do. And lining once you make that decision and becomes firm -- I don't know, December 31 -- there's still work. And so I'm going to just answer that question. I know it's not on your list, but after -- this is a two-year contract is what it was written for.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Why? You know what I mean? Here's the "Why" because after it's done and the dust settles, we need to document everything for the next round. Ten years, it's probably not going to be me -- it may or may not be you guys -- but all of that information and, you know, the best practices; what could we have done better; the documentation so people can see -- you know, it's all open and I commend you for doing so much in video. I'll tell you about the back end. I know how to do this work.

>> Any other follow-up after that response?

Okay, next question.

>> Okay, Janette.

So I think you touched on this a little bit already, but we're interested in how you engage in strategic planning. So what processes have you found useful and where would you start work of the Commission?

>> Okay, so I would refer back to that document that I sent to you guys as, you know - again, I sent it is early so you could see that I'm thinking. I have -- you know, I'm of detail. I like to document thing. I'm a good writer. I can lay it down. So again, as far as the strategic plan goes, I see my role as helping you -- you have a date to meet and you know what the pieces are in between and what you need to do and the big thing to me, you know, the thing that is like this in my head is talking to the public in the communities of interest, identifying them, getting out there to talk to them. And talk to them, getting out there means what? Zoom. And it's going to be more complicated and others have said -- we have to find groups that may or may not have technology available to them but, you know, we can figure that out. That doesn't worry me so much, but you know the end goal. So now the strategic plan is just the plan. How do we get there and make it as hopefully -- it's going to be a lot of work for all of you but my job is to make it as painless as possible so you can say "I trust Janette will have this call ready. Janette is talking. Janette's team is talking to the right people to get the right community of interest engaged." I think communication is obviously very important, and I would recommend -- again, whatever. I suppose I can recommend. I'm not on the job. Subcommittees so people who really compare about the community of interest work, there's a little subcommittee to talk about that. Some people -- there are two lawyers on your team and legal piece -- like guide and conquer a little bit but again, the communication it -- everybody has to be moving together and the plan unfolds and the work gets done.

Is that okay?

>> Any follow-up on that response?

All right, Anthony.

>> Okay. Well, I have two questions for you. The first being, what is your political party affiliation; and have you made a political party contribution in the past?

>> So even though I -- this, too me, this is a bit of a complicated question for me. I'm going to answer it first by saying, number one, I really commend this Commission, even

though some are Democrat and some are Republican and some are independent. You don't talk about it. You don't bring it up. I remember in one of the videos M.C. is like, "Well, do we have one of each person on this committee? I don't know who they are." I'm like, wow.

I love it.

So I just want to lay that out first. I am NOT anything. You know, in the end I'm a person and I see the job and I want to help you guys get the job done. Now I'll answer Anthony's question, but I hope it isn't -- whatever. I'm just going to answer it. Back in the '80s when Ronald Reagan was king, I joined the Republican Party. I was a lifetime member. I guess I still am. Then 2016 happened -- again, I'm not political; whatever. I just joined. I paid the monies -- like I joined the Alumni Association of the University of Michigan, wrote one check for the lifetime membership, and I did the same thing with this because I'm chief. And the reason I joined the Republican Party is because I'm a fiscal conservative. I want us to pay our bills. I can't stand the deficit being so high and, you know, our kids and our grandkids are going to pay the price of things that are done. So I believe in the Republican tenets of fiscal conservatism, keeping government out of people's lives -- blah blah blah, all that. 2016 changed me, and obviously it changed a lot of people. So I -- I don't know what I am anymore, and I did not vote for -- I did not vote for Republicans. I can't do it right now.

So I guess I'm independent. I mean, I just -- I'm homeless.

It's a weird -- it's a weird time, right? But I did donate Rosemary Bayer -- you got two recommendation letters for me. She is a personal friend when I worked for the Michigan Women in Technology, she was the founder of MCWT. In 2016, she just said, "I want to be part of the solution," which is kind of why I'm applying as well. I want to be part of the solution, not stand around, complaining about it all day. So she ran for senate and obviously I contributed because she is a friend, and I had a fundraiser for her.

I also donated for Martin Brook, who also is a Democrat -- but Martin, two years ago if ran against in the primary against Andy Levin, our Congressman. He obviously didn't win. And this time he ran for the Bloomfield Township clerk and he won. So I donated to Martin Brook. He's another personal friend. His son went to high school with my girls. And then I donated to Gary Peters this time around -- you know, not \$50 her and there -- here and there because I see -- whatever. I can't; this is my personal side, right? So I want things fixed, and I am not political. I just am not, but I can see how I can help the State of Michigan in this role, helping you all do your jobs and get out there and figure out what the right answers are. I don't -- I'm just not that person, you know, I'm not the

political person. But I got a little more active. That's all I can say, and I know I spent a lot of time on that, Anthony.

I feel like I am right dead center in the middle of everything because of where I was and -- anyway. I'll stop there.

>> Well, I'll just say, you know, thank you for that answer and thank you for being so honest and upfront about it.

These are extraordinary times, and, you know, I, for one, do realize that so thank you.

Are there any follow-ups to that answer from anybody?

>> Go ahead, Anthony.

>> Okay. My next question -- and, you know, you spoke on this a little bit -- but how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and the commissioners; and how would you approach communication and your relationship with the commissioners both on an individual and group-wide level?

>> So you know, I thought about it a lot and read a lot on the Open Meetings Act, the OMA work, and I'm still a little confused on the process. But I spoke to a friend who is a school board member, and the executive director role is, you know, comparable to the superintendent of schools in some ways, although different because the superintendent is in charge of education; and I'm just in charge of making sure you guys are happy. I think the relationship -- A, the relationship needs to be very strong and I need to be on the team, right? So it's the 13 of you and number 14 would be me. That's the way I see it. And so whatever you need is what I'm gonna provide for you. I'm going to try to anticipate your needs so I can bring them to you and say, "Oh, wow, I hadn't thought of that. Let's talk about it," and you guys will decide, obviously. But I mean, I just -- e-mail is -- I love e-mail, and so group e-mails -- if someone e-mails me, I think the process is if Steve Lett e-mailed me with some question or issue, I have an obligation to reply to EVERYONE, not just back to Steve; and we'll have to get clarification on that, right?

But there are rules to making sure that we are open and tracking, everybody is on the same page; and again, you know, just moving along together. So you know, I'm on the team, and I'm here to work for you. And we'll figure out what the rules are on that communication. You know, I don't want to overstep or make mistake. You will have

enough lawsuits on the back end. We don't need one because I'm stupid. We'll work with the State to sort that out, but we will talk a lot.

(Chuckling)

>> Are there any follow-up on that answer?

Okay. Well, that was a good line from "Hamilton." I like that.

>> I don't even know the line from "Hamilton."

>> Oh, well, the line is "I'm not stupid."

>> Oh.

There you go. I didn't even know that; sorry.

>> You were doing REAL well with me until you said you had lifetime member with University of Michigan Alumni.

>> Oh, sorry.

>> Since I graduated from MSU.

>> Okay, well, please don't hold that against me.

>> We won't; we won't.

>> Sorry.

>> You said humor was important so.

>> There you go.

>> Are there any questions that you have of us or are there any final comments that you would like to make?

>> So I -- you know, I wrote up a little closing remarks, and I do have one question at the end. With luck, there may be a little time to answer it. But I'm not going to read this but again, I want to thank you all for stepping up and being the commissioners. I know

you lost two already, and Rebecca is in the chair. And I hope -- it looks like you're going to stick so that's wonderful. They need a good, cohesive team.

And again, I just -- I have -- I'm always thinking 4,000 steps -- you know, three or four steps ahead. I'm very detail-oriented. I will help you guys get the noise out so you can focus on the real decisions. But again, I want to thank you for doing this. It's a big job that you have undertaken and would love to be a part of the team.

I hope I am.

If I'm not, I wish you all good luck because I've learned a lot in the week of, you know, studying for this.

My question, though, is -- and I would love a few answers -- as you begin thinking about this process and the work ahead, what is keeping you up at night; and what can the executive director do to help you from, you know, staying away, worrying for the next year?

>> Well, I don't know that we need 13 answers to your question. I think probably other people can answer, but I think probably what keeps us up at night is a couple of things. One would be what's going to happen with the Census. That seems to be an issue that's going to be ongoing and somewhat unsettled, and I think the timeline and how are we going to meet with people as you have so succinctly stated. You know, we have to meet with communities of interest, find out where they are, and use technology as much as possible; but everybody does not have technology so we're going to figure out a way to get out in the land and talk to people. Anybody else?

Rhonda?

>> I'll go. One thing that keeps me up at night is public perception. Are we portraying ourself to the public the way that we want to be seen? I'm constantly, in everything I do and say, trying to think of that, and it gets a little taxing. I've said it many times before. You can't make everybody happy, but in my mind that's what I'm always worried about, trying to make everybody happy or do the best that we can to make everybody happy.

So that would be my one stressor.

>> Well, as both Rebecca and I know, if we make everybody ticked off, we've done our job.

Anybody else?

>> I think I'll share that I think a lot about the execution of, and doing it with fidelity to make sure we have accurate information and data to take on this enormous task of -- I mean, not that we're literally drawing the lines ourselves but there's a line that goes into that so I think there's a lot of reflection and curiosity, at least for me, that goes into that literal process of our role.

>> Okay.

Anybody else?

All right, well, Janette, we thank you. We thank you for your answers and your insight and the information you have provided to us in advance. Tell Henry he sounds like a very nice cat.

>> He's a nice cat. He's getting old.

>> We will not have an answer today. We won't make a decision today. We will make one shortly, and you will be notified of whatever our decision is; but don't think by Friday you will get an answer because you probably won't.

>> Thank you and again, thanks for the opportunity and best wishes because this is wonderful. I'm so happy that you guys are doing this work.

>> Okay, appreciate it. Thank you very much.

>> Bye-bye.

>> All right, any questions before we move on?

Any comments?

Okay.

Next person is Suann Hammersmith.

Welcome, Miss Hammersmith.

>> Thank you very much. I'm pleased to be here today.

>> Good! We're pleased that you are here today also.

My name is Steve Lett, Commission Chair; and first thing we're going to doing so around and introduce ourselves to you, and I will call upon the people to do so, starting with Doug.

>> My name is Doug Clark, Suann, from Rochester Hills. I welcome you this afternoon.

>> Once again, my name is Steve Lett; and as I said, I'm the chair and hail from Interlochen, Michigan. Would you prefer to use your first name or Ms. Hammersmith?

>> You may certainly call me "Su." I feel like I know everybody. I have sat in on all the meetings so, yeah, I feel like we're friends.

>> Well, Su it will be; and evidently you don't have a life if you have been watching us.

(Laughter)

Richard?

>> Good afternoon.

Richard Weiss from Saginaw. It's nice to meet you.

>> Rhonda.

>> Good afternoon.

Rhonda Lange, Reid City, Michigan. Looking forward to speaking with you.

>> Cynthia.

>> I'm Cynthia Orton in Battle Creek, Michigan, and we're very excited to interview you today.

>> Brittini.

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>> Good morning -- afternoon. My name is Brittini Kellom -- I had to check the time. I am a native Detroit and vice chair of the commission. I welcome you to your interview.

>> Janice.

>> Hi, I'm Janice Vallette in Highland Township. Welcome, Su.

>> M.C.

>> M.C, Lansing, Michigan. Glad you're here.

>> Anthony.

>> Good afternoon, Su. I'm Anthony Eid from Orchard Lake, Michigan. Thank you for been here today and good luck on the -- your interview.

>> Rebecca.

>> Good afternoon, Su. Rebecca Szetela from Canton, Michigan.

Welcome.

>> Dustin.

>> Good afternoon, Su. My name is Dustin Witjes from Ypsilanti, Michigan, and look forward to speaking with you today.

>> Erin.

>> Hello, Su, thank you for meeting with us today. My name is Erin Wagner and hale from Charlotte.

>> Juanita.

Unmute yourself.

>> Juanita, I believe you need to press star 6 on your phone.

>> Press star 6.

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There you go.

Now introduce yourself.

>> Good afternoon, Su. My name is Juanita Curry from Detroit, Michigan.

I welcome you here today.

>> Thank you.

The process today will be -- we have four of our -- three of our commissioners will be ask some questions of you; and after your response, any commission who has a follow-up question based on your response will be allowed to ask it; and at the end you have an opportunity to ask question you have of us or make a final statement, should you wish to do so.

Any questions about the process?

>> Not at all.

>> Great. First will be Dustin.

>> Okay, so the first question we have for you is, why are you interested in this position?

And in the work of the redistricting commission of Michigan, can you speak on it in a more broad kind of sense?

>> Thank you very much, Dustin. When I first saw this posting, I got excited, and I have been looking for a new career and a new challenge for the last three months. And I have not applied for anything else. I've seen things and thought, "Maybe; maybe not." But this one I could get passionate about because I think it's really important to have a life of service; and I can serve this commission and the State of Michigan through this process. To me, that's just really exciting. I'm enthusiastic about the work. I'm enthusiastic about a voice for everyone that everyone has heard, no matter who they are, through this process. And I believe I can bring to you the skills of an executive director, having served in that position for over 30 years with three organizations.

>> Any follow-up?

Okay.

Doug?

>> Suann, can you tell us about a time you had to facilitate a decision or consensus between multiple, different people, organizations, and political parties?

>> Sure. What comes to mind for me is in 2016, our local United Way came to the community foundation where I was the executive director, and they ask us to adopt them into our organization. And those are two distinctly different organizations with different missions, different purposes; and it was quite a challenge. I will tell you that they publicly announced this in June. Their members voted in early July, and we had to launch an annual campaign by the middle of August that year, an annual campaign. That was -- (Chuckling)

-- that was a very tight timeline as one of our volunteers described it. The plane was taking off, and we were still changing the tires. I mean, it really involved a very significant organizational process and engaging volunteers, much communication with our community as to what was happening. There were a few little complications along the way. The United Way worldwide wasn't too keen on one of their affiliates abandoning them so they sent a neighboring community in so their labor unions came and picketed us and we had some very interesting times as we navigated the public communications about, you know, "Hey, we're people who want to work together and do what is best for our community." So in the end we did work together. We did do what was best for the community. We even had United Way board members that weren't on board with what their board voted, so we engaged people in the process, created rules and operations, policies, procedures, grant-making processes, and launch by mid-August this annual campaign, which had a great result. We retained the donors that we expected to retain in the process while we also had utterings -- organization essentially competing with us for the same monies. Long story short, it was pretty continue ten, at the beginning. They just really didn't like what we were doing and United Way worldwide was really upset to be losing their brand in the community. And we felt we were doing what was best for the community, and we did what was best for the community. Our grantmaking increased significantly and increased the percentage of the amounts raised by about 40% that went in grantmaking to the non-profits; and that's our goal, to serve the community and get the money where it can do the most good. So it was -- it's been very successful and I'm pleased that we could to that.

>> I've got a follow-up question for you relative to your role as executive director with United Way. Can you explain in detail your specific job duties?

How you approach those duties?

How you compare this to your perception of the executive director job with us?

>> Sure; that's a load question.

>> It is.

>> Yes. when I started -- my first executive director job was Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of Ohio because I live close to the state shrine. I would come home and my husband said, "What do you do as executive director?"

I answered, "When I figure it out, I'll let you know." So I think I figured it out after 30-plus years.

I serve the community and serve the organization to fulfill the mission of the organization. I'm a partner with the board of directors. I'm there to facilitate their work to provide them with the information, the resources, the data they need in order to make good decisions on behalf of the organization; and in the meantime, I'm in the background with day-to-day work and management, making sure that all the wheels are turning. My board chair told me recently, he said he had never, in 20 years working with him, he had never lost any sleep knowing that I had everything in order for the organization, and I wouldn't let anything slip through the cracks. So I was honored that he said that about me. It involves all facets of management from public relations to H.R. to budgeting to reporting to grant writing to reporting out on grants. There are -- you're spending many plates and wearing many hats as an executive director. When I started at United Way, I had admin assistant and accountant; and when I started at the Lenawee Community Foundation as the first executive director, founding executive director to I had no staff -- no secretarial or support staff. I did everything. So I built that organization from the ground up, and it's.

Very successful and because I think of the trust in those organizations, I was able to partner with people to raise over \$55 million in Lenawee county, Michigan; which is a small community.

>> All right. Can you identify what you feel your strengths are as executive director?

>> I am very organized and Excel spreadsheets are my friend and engage people. We have done a lot of community engagement work. I partner with donors. Donors

come to us and ask how they can build a better community, and we partnered with many, many donors to do that. So I think I'm a consensus-builder; I'm a facilitator; I'm a board supporter. And I understand the day-to-day work that needs to be done to, you know, make everything happen.

>> Thank you, Suann. I'll turn it over to you, Steve.

>> Any follow-up from anybody on that, based on that response?

Okay, Dustin.

>> Okay. One thing that we're interested in is how you engage in strategic planning. What processes have you found useful and where would you start with the work of the commission?

>> Well, I was very fortunate about 20 years ago to take a course called the planned change interchill, and that was a very interesting strategic planning process led by the son of the person who really created the field of organizational development. Both were professors at U of M -- sorry, Steve -- I said that word again, but I like MSSU, too. So we took a nine-month course and four leaders from the community took this together as a team, and then we went out as a team to engage in strategic planning for various organizations in the community.

One of the first was a city that wanted to bring all the people together that were decision-makers so it was a city manager, their counsel, and places like the D DDA and planning commission because they did their jobs in silos, and he felt it was important they start communicating to each other.

So prior to the meeting, one of the council member and city manager got in a big argument about the city manager having ulterior motive and bringing all together and all of a sudden one of them was saying "Let's take this outside." And it was like, "Oh, my goodness. This is my first experience." So they eventually came back. There was no blood. We had a great process. People did participate. People did work with each other, and I guess the happy ending was a couple years later was invited back to do the same process all over again with some new people that had been involved. So I have been involved in strategic planning with many, many organizations from the sheriff's department to other cities and many, many non-profits.

Another place where I think planning was really critically important for our state where I've had some fringe involvement is the Council of Michigan Foundations, of which I'm a

member, raised \$4.7 million to make the Census a key focus of the philanthropic community in our state to get people to respond to the Census. They partnered with the Michigan Non-Profit Association who carried out the process and the plan, and engaged where this work flowed in our community and getting people to the table to fill out the Census. I believe this is a great learning experience and one that can be utilized to engage communities of interest as we reach out to communities and try to get their input and their involvement to make sure this process is fair.

In addition to these examples, then, you know, it's critically important to create a workplan. When I left my job in the summer, I gave a specific road map to my successor. He had extensive spreadsheets of everything that had.

Done, where to find documents, what was important; what he needed to do next; which committee was working on what so he had a very clear road map as to where the organization was going and how to start for what he needed to do with strategic planning. Certainly we'll look at where we are and want to create norms for working together. We may want to create rules of operation for working together so we fully understand the process we're going to engage in; and then my job will bring processes, procedures, ideas, resources to the table to help you do your work.

>> Any follow-up questions based on that response?

>> Yeah.

I've got one for you, Suann. You indicated you use Excel as a tool for planning. What are the other tools that you had experience with and planning and used?

>> I think the best tool is communication. I mean, strategic planning is about working together. It's communication and being transparent and open and bringing people to the table that will express their thoughts, giving everybody a voice at the table so as far as specific software, No.

I use Word and Excel primarily to do that work; but the real work is in engaging people in the process so that everybody has a voice.

>> So tools such as Microsoft Project, you don't use?

>> I have not use Project; no, I have not but am willing to learn. I'm a quick learner.

>> I'm curious on what tools you used in your work. Okay. Thank you.

>> Okay, any other follow-ups?

Anthony, I think we're up to you.

>> Okay. So Ss, I have two questions for you today. The first being is do you have a political party affiliation, and have you made political party contributions in the past?

>> Okay. Well, I have to admit I really don't know the answer to the first question as far as affiliation. I may have registered for a party 40 year ago when I registered to vote, but in Michigan, at my current address; but honestly I don't know if I'm registered as a Democrat or a Republican or independent; and I will tell you I vote for the candidate who I feel can do the best job so I understand partisanship, but I also understand this is a non-partisan position and I will tell you in the fundraising world for non-profits you cannot be partisan and raise money because if you affiliate yourself with one of the parties, person from the other party will not come along and be engaged with your organization so I have always had to be non-partisan throughout my career, and I would fully expect to be non-partisan in this position and guide dish would lead by example.

And I have not made any political contributions.

>> Any follow-up questions on that?

Okay.

I didn't skip you, did I, Dustin?

Okay.

>> My final question is: how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and the Commissioners; and with that, how do you plan to approach communication with us both on an individual level and at a group level?

>> My job as an executive director would be to give you whatever you need in order to be successful in your job. So that is bringing the resources to the table; bringing my expertise and my experience to the table; bringing the consultants to you if that's what you feel you need -- and we will. My job is to serve you and to carry out those things that you would like me to do in order to serve you. I will help you with processes and procedures and work plans and whatever you need in order to be successful. My communication will be open and transparent. That's who I am.

I have not had past experience with the Open Meetings Act. I have read extensively on what it is and I have listened to Mike Brady say, you know, any deliberation or decisions need to be made as a public body so I understand that, and I will work very hard to fulfill that role and make sure that everything is open and transparent. That's who we am anyway. That's who I am anyway. As a non-profit, I would say we didn't have any law so we had to work harder at being open and transparent with our community. We had to communicate with our community and let them know what we were doing because we didn't have open meetings so we really made a conscientious effort to inform our community of who we were and what we were doing and then in some respects think that's harder than an Open Meetings Act where anybody can tune in and just see what is happening.

>> Any follow-up questions based on these answers, to any of the answers?

Rhonda?

>> Just real quick, I was skipping over your resume again -- so you don't have any government experience, per se, correct?

>> I have never worked for government.

I have voted. I have participated in government. I have encouraged people to vote and encouraged people to complete the Census. We did an extensive social media campaign for people to complete the Census. You know, I believe in the work of government and believe I certainly could be non-partisan because I've not.

Visible in any respect for any political party.

>> Okay, anything else from anybody?

Well, I looked at your resume, and I see you have a relationship with Western Michigan.

>> Am I in trouble again?

>> Oh, no. I went to Cooley Law School and they're affiliated with Western but they will kick us out so I don't know where we will go now.

>> Oh, no.

>> At any rate, do you have any questions of us; and if not, do you have a final statement you would like to make?

>> Well, I certainly appreciate the work you're doing, and I thank you for this bold step of being part of this commission. This is REALLY, really important work for the State of Michigan for our citizens. It's incredibly important, and I certainly would be so honored to be part of your work, helping you as a commission and helping citizens of Michigan be a part of the process, being a part of the solution for redistricting that hasn't maybe gone so well in the past, and I would love to work with you to create a fair and non-partisan process to make our state so much better. I love the Great State of Michigan and have been a resident all my life. I would be committed 100%. You will find no one with a better work ethic than I have, and I believe I have the skills, the experience, to help you with your work and would be so honored to do so. So thank you, and I guess my last question might be: when can I start?

Just kidding.

>> We don't know.

>> Okay.

>> It won't be today or tomorrow. We don't anticipate making a decision on a final candidate today. We will take our time, though it won't be a long time; and we will notify all of the candidates of what our decision is. So I wouldn't say -- don't be sitting on your mailbox this Friday to expect a notification one way or another, but we do appreciate you taking your time and coming to speak with us today, and we very much appreciate that.

With that, I thank you; and good luck.

>> Thank you, everyone.

Bye now.

>> Okay, I think we are up to Anna Seibold.

>> I just wanted to -- do we ask the last two candidates we do about the first two about the level of transparency? I just wanted to make sure because, Steve, I think you asked that as the last question but I don't remember hearing that --

>> I know I did not ask that again.

>> Okay.

>> That was kind of a follow-up I did, depending on what their answers were.

>> Okay.

>> I think she certainly -- I guess my opinion is in her response under foundation that she had to be transparent without an Open Meetings Act command that she made every effort to do that.

Okay. Amna -- is it Amna?

>> It is Amna.

>> Pronounced "See-bold" or "Sigh" bold"?

>> Both of my names are pretty tough so just "Amna" are good and Commissioner Lett, I have watched the introduction and more importantly like several candidates, I watch with every minute of the meetings and feel like I know all the commissioners and since you are under some time constraints, I am fine with not having them go through and identify themselves; I will just say hello to all and really, I feel like I know you.

>> Well, I'll make the same comment I made with the last person. You need a life. If all you're doing is sitting around, watching us, you need a life.

>> No, if you're passionate about this -- I mean, I have had nothing but joy in learning about the process and learning about you. This has been great. Yeah.

>> You're getting in deeper.

(Laughter)

>> I guess I do need a like, but this is the life I want.

>> All right. Okay, we'll skip the introductions if that's what you want to do. First up, I assume, then, you heard my introduction of how we do this.

>> I have, indeed.

>> Okay.

>> Well, I don't need to listen to myself talk. Dustin, you're up.

>> Hold on a second; I got tracked because we're not doing the introductions.

>> I skipped ahead.

(Laughter)

Oh, Dustin, we lost your voice.

>> Okay. I should be back now.

Yeah.

Okay. So our first question is, why are you interested in this position and the work of the redistricting commission of Michigan in a more broader sense?

>> Okay. Well, first of all, thank you all for bringing me to the final six. I'm really very proud and encouraged. I was very excited to hear that I was going to be interviewed, but I'm excited about this for exactly the same reasons you are, because I listened to you all talk about your passion for this. When I heard about this whole commission being created, when I learned about the ballot initiative, I was so excited because for so long we had a crummy process in Michigan; and Michigan is not alone, but we ended up with absolutely a gerrymandered districts and weren't serving the citizens. So I'm excited to be part of it because it's right thing to do, and I want to see this go through to fruition and be proud of the work. You all will turn around and for the next ten years will be pointing to that and saying, "THAT is the good work that I did." You are absolutely going to be proud of it, and I would like to also help you in that role. You're the decisionmakers; I want to be there to help you be successful. Now, I will also say that when I heard about this role, I had four people call me pretty late in the process because I hadn't seen it posted. Two of them were Republicans; two of them were Democrats, and they all said "You need to run for this. You would be great." So that is another reason why I put my hat in.

>> Any follow-up from any of the commissioners on that answer?

Okay, Doug?

>> I'm Doug Clark. Can you tell us about a time you had to consolidate a decision between multiple organizations and political parties?

>> Yes. I have a great example. When I was first thinking of this position, I was thinking of a particular meeting -- I headed meetings, but when I first became mayor, there was a contentious issue in our community. There was a loud group that really wanted to have an historic district. We have as many cities around the state do, a lot of older homes are being purchased, torn down, and new homes built up; and that was bothering people. When you look at the law behind it, really the only way to affect that is if you create an historic district and have more control over what people do with their homes and property. So there was a lot of pressure for people saying, "We need to have an historic district." As mayor, I said we need more information so I put together a subcommittee and asked them to take six to 12 months, do the research much like what you're doing here, bring in people with knowledge, do your research, then come back and make your recommendation as to what you would like to see the city do and why. So doing that work, we heard a LOT of discussion and social media, people talking about it and we're like, "Trust me, we'll have a big meeting to talk about this."

So when they were done with reports, I asked two things. "I would like to hear the pros and cons so I would like to have the people in favor on this commission, in favor of the historic district, please present why; and the people that are not in favor of it, please present why." And then we will have conversations with the rest of the community. Usually on city commission you're lucky to get 15 people. We knew this would be a big meeting. As we went into the meeting, I had the city manager and city attorney say this will be a mess and I said it will not be a mess, and this will be invigorating and help us reach a decision so when we started the meeting, I explained we're going to hear both sides and everyone can come to the microphone. They had two minutes. They set up a clock so you can see the clock and had to finish within two minutes. I said to them, "Please, stick within your two minutes because I will have to cut you off, and I really don't want to do that. Make me look mean." "Please, no jeering or cheering. I don't want applause. I just want you to state their opinions and get them out.." It was a long meeting and allowed anyone to speak who was interested in talking. I think going into this meeting most commissioners felt like we were going to have an historic district because that was all of the input that we have.

Getting was strongly in that direction. After hearing from the whole community, it was easily 3-1 against having an historic district. VERY, very passionately no. And that is what we ended up voting; but what I was most proud about was how the whole community -- even though I knew there were strong emotions, how they conducted

themselves during the meeting, and we were able to hear all sides. So I think that's a good example of how you work together and make sure all the voices are heard and bring consensus. And the few commissioners that were going to vote for it said to me this was helpful. I hadn't thought about all these other sides, and they changed their vote.

>> That is a good example. A big part of our work will be public meetings.

>> Yes.

>> As we move forward. We're obligated to have so many. I look at your resume, and one of the items you indicated -- you work for mayors to put forward something for the county relative to transportation. Did you organize that? Did you facilitate or were you just a member of that?

>> So we all sat on the Board of the Rapid, which is the mass transit here in the Kent County area. These were the mayors that were involved and during deliberations were talking about going forward to vote, go to vote for the public to get the funding restored; and it had always been -- if I remember correctly, I think it was three-year increments. Every three years they go back and I brought up to the area of mayors, I said let's talk about that. How much money do we spend every three years, advertising this and trying to get community buy-in? If we want community buy-in, our mass transit is so important to so many of our communities. Let's put something in place to make us feel more stable by for a longer period of time and I think we should extend the length for this ballot initiative. We kind of talked around 20 years, 15 years, 10 years, 5 years; and we ended up putting -- I think the final was 12 years? And so there was that period of time we wouldn't have to go back. The voters had shown they wanted that so let's put that on the ballot. It's interesting; when I got off the board of the rapid, a couple of the of the board members pointed that out because they were impressed by the fact, I was able to bring that forward, have the idea, and get everyone to coalesce around it.

>> I see.

>> And I did absolutely always work with the area mayors. I know them all, Republicans and Democrats; and we work together very smoothly.

>> Yeah, that was going to be my other question.

I'm assuming that they weren't all Democrat or Republican mayors.

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>> No; both.

>> Okay.

When you work, you become the focal point of organizing things with them, or is there another individual?

>> No, I think it depends on what is going on. I think because, you know, the big dogs always kind of, you know, they had it -- so Mayor Police, who we really admire and respect, Mayor Bliss would bring us together and there were things to suggest. We sat together on this mass transit board so there was monthly or bimonthly would have an opportunity to meet with each other because issues came up -- it depends on the issue who would bring us together.

>> Okay, thank you. I'll turn it back to you, Steve.

>> Any follow-up questions from those responses from any of the commissioners?

All right, Dustin.

>> Something is not working right here.

>> Now you're working.

>> We're on question four, right? Wouldn't this be Anthony?

>> Okay, Anthony.

>> Okay. So Amna, I have two questions for you today. The first is what is your political party affiliation, and have you made any political party contributions in the past?

>> Okay. So let's just get the elephant in the room here.

(Chuckling)

Let's just talk about that. So apparently, I am the lightning rod. You have seen the letters that have come in, and I absolutely looked online this morning to see what all had been put in there. And those letters all arose from one person who, for a very long time, has not liked me; and yesterday afternoon he put out a call and asked people to write those letters. So this is very interestingly the first time of many that you are going to be

attempted to be swayed by social media -- swayed by social media, and that is ABSOLUTELY what is happening here. So in those letters, they call me a very partisan mayor Republican. Have I contributed to Republicans? Yes, I have. Have I contributed to Democrats? Yes, I have. Have I contributed to Republican and Democratic organizations? Yes, I have. Because just as -- and, of course, you know, I listen to the previous candidates. Just as some of them have said, people have history. People have background. It's how you operate when you are in a job, and when I was mayor, I absolutely operated as a non-partisan mayor; and the people that I appointed came from all parties and often didn't know what party they were from.

Now, the irony here is that the very first appointment I ever did was for a City Commission seat. Normally you're elected but had an open seat when I became mayor. The person I appoint was a very strong Democrat and had several people say to me, "Well, do you want to have somebody that's so strongly in one direction or the other?"

And I said, "I just want people who will do a good job and he's really interested in this so, yeah, we'll do that."

The two sometimes I actually appointed people in the commission chair -- and that's the most important appointment -- they both happen to be Democrats. People I pointed to the subcommittees I would say equal parts Republican or Democrat if I had to guess and independents because that's what our community is made up of, and I was just looking for people to do the good work.

As far as issues go, as some of the other candidates have said to you earlier on these interviews, I feel much the same way. There are some things that I'm a fiscal conservative. As someone said, I like to watch my pennies. Absolutely.

I'm a social liberal. I will say I had someone approach me and ask me to run for the state legislature as a Republican and I said, "Well, that's amazing," because I couldn't get elected as a Republican. And I said no. And I proceeded to tell them things that I believe and they said, "You could never be he elected as a Republican." I said, "I know." So because I have views on both sides. So this plethora -- I just want you to be cognizant of the fact it did arise out of one person in particular. It may make it that you feel uncomfortable keeping me in the running, and I understand that; but what I am hoping is that you ask yourself, before you saw this, would I have been the person that you would have selected? And if so, I hope you will go beyond what social media is trying to do, and they're trying to eliminate someone from your choices. You guys have been doing a GREAT job in staying very independent and being thoughtful. I even respected the fact that this morning the very first thing you did is because of the e-mails

that came in, you said, "We need to address this with everyone." So I really, really appreciate that.

Is that too long of an answer? But that's the truth.

>> If that is your answer, that's not too long.

>> Okay.

>> Any follow-up with that answer? Rhonda?

>> I appreciate the answer. So just to put it out there, your political affiliation would be independent? Is that correct?

>> If you ask me -- the gentleman who wrote in would say a Republican; if you ask some of my Republican friends they would say I'm a Democrat. So --

>> I'm asking you.

>> One of the interesting things that this gentleman wrote was he apparently, he has been keeping track of the signs I've had in my front yard, which is amazing; and he has seen a lot of Republican signs in my front yard. This tells you how focused this individual is on what is Amna and her life. So I have supported Republican candidates. I did have two signs in my yard this go-around in the past and had some Democratic signs. So, you know, it depends. It depends on the race and really, the last four years have turned so many things upside down. I am all for the best person, and my kids have heard me say this: I'm all for the person doing things for the right reason that has high integrity and are doing things for the betterment of our country and city, our state, whatever they're running for.

>> Thank you.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Okay. Have we covered all of our questions?

>> I got one more.

>> Okay.

>> The final question is -- and you have spoken a little bit about this but if you want to elaborate more on it -- how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and commissioners; and more specifically, how do you approach communicating with us both on an individual and as a group?

>> So I'm very familiar with the Open Meetings Act and very happy that your next hire is going to hire an attorney that will help all of us navigate that smoothly. So whatever communication I have, it will be in conjunction with the Open Meetings Act. In my history, there are certain regulations that you need to follow as far as if you need to talk to somebody on a commission, how many people need, do you need to be present if you're making a decision or discussing something openly. So I will absolutely follow the Open Meeting Act. I want to continue to get to know someone outside of a Zoom meeting and that's the role of executive director, to do that background work so YOU can be the decision-maker. You can make the decisions with the best information going forward and it's -- you know, when I first got on our Planning Commission 20 years ago and I thought, "Man, I don't know anything about street construction or house building." And once I got on the commission, they said, no, no, no; we provide that information for you. You don't have to become a subject matter expert. We provide that to you. We spoon feed you, and that's what you as Commissioners, need to have; so your executive director needs to be able to get you the information that you need and work in conjunction with you to do so.

One of the things that I did is I prepared for this meeting is I spoke with Daniel Claypool, executive director in California; and his information really was so helpful. I mean, it was really provided the insight I needed to say, this is something I would be good at, and it is; because it's cute. I will read from my notes a little bit because he had some keen insights. One of the thing he said is, "No matter how much time you think you have, there isn't enough time." It's up to the executive director to keep moving that forward and keep the team moving forward and keep them on schedule.

Another thing he said is the executive director, bad news. I would never lie to you. I would keep it moving forward because they -- as the executive director, I would work with you to create that timeline. I mean, that's the very first thing that has to be done, right? Get everyone to do the strategic planning to get an agreement on the timeline and what needs to be done, put it in a calendar, make it visual, get agreement, and then make sure that there are enough meetings and enough time and enough opportunities to stay on schedule because it's only going to get busier and not less busy. And as he said, no matter what, you're already behind.

>> Okay. Any follow-up questions or observations based on that answer?

Well, hearing none, we thank you for being here and do you have any questions of us or any final comments?

>> I do.

What are you, as commissioners, most concerned about? Because that would help me as the executive director help you reach your goals.

>> Anybody?

M.C., what are you most concerned about?

>> Good question. I'm not sure. I feel really good about us, honestly.

>> Rebecca?

>> Yeah, I was going to say I really am most concerned about someone who will run an independent, clean process because we are already expecting legal challenges to anything we do --

>> Absolutely.

>> -- as an attorney, I don't want anyone giving ammunition to either side and the more improper things are done, the harder it becomes for people to recognize our work, recognize what we're freeing to do, and to respect it; so that's my biggest concern. I want someone who will run straight and narrow and not engage in any monkey business.

>> Yeah. Yeah.

I -- and I agree wholeheartedly. I know that it's probably going to be difficult for you to see beyond what was submitted to you today, but absolutely. I am the person that would do that. I would bend over backwards to make sure that all of the work is beyond approach, even though, as California and Arizona say, there's still will be lawsuits, but as long as it's based in fact and they understand how you made your decisions, you know, it will be good. This is going to be such a good process. This will be SO good with our outcomes. It's like a big project management. It's like a big project that has to be managed, and I have a lot of experience in that, and I absolutely could bring you home.

>> Anthony?

>> I would say my biggest worry is, you know, making sure at the end of this that the map we have come up with is indeed evidence and data-based and as unbiased as possible. You know, we have said earlier I don't think we will make everybody happy. And we are gonna come under some public scrutiny eventually, no matter -- you know, no matter how our map ends up. As long as we do the best practices and what the evidence points us to without having bias, I feel confident we can achieve that goal.

>> And I think your deliberations so far have really shown that. If you have really thoughtful conversations, I -- even when it came to choosing the chair and co-chair, really thoughtful, great decision that you came up with, and I think you're headed in the right track and with the executive director I think will provide the stability for you to know that you have the backup that you need and the staff that you need; and a lot of experience in human resources, hiring people, getting people on board, getting them trained and all that and budgeting and more.

>> Okay. Thank you for being here today. We appreciate your candor. Hopefully you won't -- I guess -- I hope you won't feel that we're going to place undue, uh, undue credit to this person that you're talking act that's -- using social media. However, it's a fact of life nowadays, unfortunately.

>> Absolutely, absolutely. Yep.

>> We will not have a decision today. We will take our time in choosing who we feel will be the best person so don't sit on your mailbox Friday and expect an answer. However, we will, in fact, let everybody know that participated in our interviews as to what the result is. Again, once again, we thank you and good luck and have a rest of a good week.

>> Thank you, and --

>> Whoops. Okay. Next is Vicki DeVould. Any comments before we get to Vicki? In case you haven't been keeping tracks, we're running just about 30 minutes a person now.

>> And everyone, just a quick note on time: I said this earlier, but just to emphasize, we do have until 2:00 with the translators and others so once you finish up this interview, you will still have some time to figure out your next steps before the end of the meeting.

>> Everybody set? We can bring Vicki in. Ah, there you are. Vicki. Please unmute yourself. Ta-da!

>> Hi, how are you?

>> We're fine. How are you?

>> Great! Hello, everyone!

>> Hi!

>> Have you.

Watching us?

>> I came in about maybe 40 minutes ago or so, 30 minutes ago, Yes.

>> Well, we've introduced ourselves each time with the exception of the last person who said, "I already know you and watched your introductions." Have you watched our introductions?

>> I have and I'm okay with those. Thank you.

>> Do you want to be called Vicki or Ms. DeVould? How would you prefer to be recognized?

>> "Vicki" is okay.

Thank you.

>> Feel free to use our first names if you have to or any other name you feel appropriate for us.

We will let you know a little bit about the process. We have four people or three people designated as questioners, and after each of your responses, if we -- if any of the commissioners have a follow-up question based upon your response, we'll ask those.

So that is kind of the broad strokes about how this process will continue. Any questions about the process?

>> No.

Thank you again for explaining it.

>> All right. Okay. First up on our hip parade is Dustin.

>> Good afternoon, Vicki.

>> Hello.

>> Broadly speaking, why are you interested in this position and the work of the independent citizens redistricting commission in Michigan?

>> Okay. I've always believed that services related work in the most, is the most rewarding. Knowing that my job is a part of a larger initiative to maintain an improved public life in the public sector keeps me motivated and happy. I've also apply for this particular position because it fits really well with some of my past board experience, I've had working within a board arena.

>> Okay, any follow-up on that response? Rhonda?

>> What part of the redistricting commission itself, the whole process, are you excited about? Is there something particular about the whole redistricting that made you want to apply for this?

>> It's just being a part of something bigger, being a part of a challenge, just being aware of the things that is going on within the local communities and knowing that -- you know, this is a need, this is a need that everyone within the communities, the constituents within the communities, should be excited about and just revamping and redoing the mapping lines within the community. So I'm just happy to apply for this and do be a part of something bigger that is going to benefit everyone.

>> Okay, any other follow-ups?

Okay. Doug?

>> Good afternoon, Vicki.

>> Hi!

>> Can you tell us about a time you have to facilitate a decision or cone us is among many different people and organization and political parties?

>> So working on a board, I was a part of the KSP board for about 12 years, and I played various roles on that board -- president, vice-president, and grievance chair; so it was a time when we had some different complaints from our staff regarding some behavioral issues and some career development issues. So our board stayed up many nights, working on these complaints and trying to come to a continue sis tens of how we will change some of the contract language within the contracts; and so what we had to do is we had to go out into the buildings and speak with the different staff members and also try to write down the data from them and come back together regarding the complaints and what can we change in the contract; and of course, when we're dealing with contracts, we had to do a lot of negotiations with the other party. But we wanted to include our staff because we wanted to get some input from them -- you know, --

>> Vicki, you muted yourself. There you go.

>> Oh, sorry about that. Is the contract language, was it too lenient? Was it too hard to understand? Everybody has their different interpretations of a contract, and so by us going into the buildings and speaking the staff that gave us better decision-making skims and prompts than when we got together so we could come to a consensus on what contract language to change, where to start in the contract to change it, and then how we were going to negotiate that contract change of language with the other party.

>> Given the example you just talked about, did you facilitate that whole process, or was your just a member of the team that work with on it?

>> I was the president at that time so I played a big part in facilitating the process and the things that we needed to put together. So yes, and starting the initial facilitation; but again, I have to say that we, as a board worked together. We came together and we decided, you know, who was going to go in this building and who was going to, you know, go into the secondary building. We have a lot of building within the school environment, and so we have to split them up and go in and speak with the staff so we can come back together as a whole and figure out the contract language and where we're going to change it at. And it was a very tedious job and also, we had to stay long nights together but did it and were able to negotiate with the other party.

>> Has any of your experience dealt with political parties or just the organizations you worked with?

>> Not necessarily political parties, no. I have, of course, supported different political parties, but it's been within a government environment, which is the schools sector.

>> Okay. On your resume, under highlight achievements, you indicate working as a personal executive facilitator. Can you explain in detail your role as that as that personal executive facilitator?

>> Absolutely. Many of my jobs that I've worked in within a different organization was similar to the executive director role. Within the nursing environment, I was the facilitator right underneath administrator so we were working very diligently together to support the nurses and the patients or the residents in the nursing home. So we -- I facilitated many meetings together with the staff, the lead nursing, and the marketing director as well as the kitchen staff as well, too -- so we did a lot of training, facilitated training, professional development, as well as being a part of professional development within the school environment as well for our staff. We needed to train our staff on with the computer literacy and put some professional development for our staff together at this time.

>> Okay, and one last question.

>> Sure.

>> On your resume again, on the objective session you indicate you're skilled at building strong, working relationships. Could you talk about those skills?

>> Sure. Within -- both of those environments that I've just explained, I feel that being a part of a team is the greater cause, it's the greater need within the team case so building teams and being supportive, also having the correct data at hand when we are speaking and just being able to support each other and being a rock for each other. So team-building and working in a team environment, I feel, is great in any organization. We have to teach our staff, and we have to be role models for our staff and making sure they can collaborate with each other and if there's any issues at hand we have to show them and help them how to resolve them. So we're here to promote a service. We're here to help others and when you're in a nursing home environment, the others are the patients. In the school sector, the student and the families are the clients. So the staff have to be able to work together and in the leadership within those organizations have to be able to come together as a team and model that professionalism to the staff.

>> Thank you, Vicki. I'll turn it over to you, Steve.

>> Thank you.

>> I want to get rondo D.A. in there because she's trying to get this question.

>> My question is very quick and it's just for clarification because I do come from a small town and in a subcommittee -- I assumed; and I don't like to assume because you know the saying -- what does KPS stand for? I'm sorry; you're muted again.

>> I'm sorry about that. Technology. KPS is Kalamazoo Public Schools.

>> That's what I thought and just wanted to clarify.

>> No problem. Thank you for asking.

>> Any other follow-ups from anybody based on that response? Okay.

Dustin, we're back to you.

>> Okay, Vicki, one thing that we're interested in is how you engage in strategic planning. What processes have you found useful and where would you start with the work of the commission?

>> All right. Strategic planning, to me, is a process. It's considered a process. It's strategy or direction and, you know, focusing on the direction at hand and where we're trying to go with the resources to come to an end goal. I feel that within the strategic process I will work with each board member. I will create a list. I am very systemic as well, and I'm very proficient in Word and Excel so I will work with each board member, be an attentive listener, create goals and create the outcome within the spreadsheets and in making sure that we meet those goals.

I believe in using the S.T.A.R. talk about it, defining what the task is; reinforcing the task; making sure the goals are there; and are reachable so when we do set our goals, we want to make sure we have reachable goals to achieve. So just the strategic process really starts within us, within the board, and the executive director and just making sure that process runs smoothly and is making sure that we are attentive and on time and on task to the goal that we are trying to accomplish.

>> Okay. Any follow-up to that response?

All right.

Anthony.

>> Hello. Good afternoon.

>> Hi.

>> I have two questions for you today.

The first --

>> Okay, thank you.

>> Anytime. The first being, do you have a political party affiliation; and have you made any political party contributions in the past?

>> Okay. Very interesting question.

So I am a Democrat. However, I have done my research so when I get ready to vote, of course, at the polls, I don't just vote all Democratic. I do my research on the individuals; and yes, I have voted for some Republicans because I feel that they were the person for the job. And then in return I have voted for some Democrats as well because again if I've done research and feel they're the right person for that job.

I have been supportive of the city clerks. I have been supportive of the county commissioner, one in particular here in Kalamazoo, and I'm very supportive of the city commissioners as well. So I have helped out with different campaigns and again, one of the board members of the Kalamazoo Public Zooms, I'm supportive of him in that area, too.

>> Wonderful.

Is there any follow-up from anybody?

>> Rhonda?

>> When you say "supportive," does that mean you made contributions?

Like somebody running or what have you?

>> Yes. a couple of those that I just named or listed, yes, I have made different -- you know, small contributions; but mostly on just the campaigning side, maybe making some phone calls -- calls or sending blast e-mails out just to be very supportive in what area I can help them in.

>> Okay -- can I ask party affiliation? I know it's an uncomfortable question. We put everybody on the same field.

>> I don't know if I answered it earlier. The party affiliation is Democratic, but I, again, kind of feel a little towards the non-partisan side as well because when I vote, I do vote for like I said, the Republican that's best for the job, and fending I voted for some Democrats all on the same ticket before.

>> I apologize, Vicki -- that question as far as the party, the contributions, was it to a particular party where the people you contributed to in both parties? Because you said you supported different candidates. Was it -- you know, multiple parties?

>> Okay.

>> That is what I was asking.

>> Oh, okay. Thank you for the clarification. One of them was in the Republican, and then one of them was over there in the Democrats, and the one on the school board was more nonpartisan.

>> Thank you.

>> You're welcome.

>> Dustin.

>> Vicki, you mentioned that you did like a lot of like e-mail campaigns and door-to-door knocking.

Would you say your contributions were more voluntary basis or more financial; or were there any financial contributions, out of curiosity?

>> Sure, no problem. The financial contributions were small. So I did a lot of voluntary; I just didn't want to say I never did any financial contributions. I wanted to be

honest. I did. Very small. But it was mostly of the volunteer part because I have the administrative background so I try to help in writing, you know, letters or like you said, door-to-door or e-mail because I have that administrative background to help them out in.

>> Thank you.

>> Any other follow-ups for Vicki on that response?

Okay, any other follow-ups on any of the questions?

>> I got one more.

>> Okay, go ahead.

>> Okay. So how do you envision the relationship between the executive director and us as commissioners; and with that, how would you approach communicating with us both on an individual basis and as a group?

>> I envision the relationship between the executive director and the commissioners to be open; to be honest; transparent; solid communication; both ends being great listeners; attentive listeners; on time; ready to work; ready to complete the task at hand; following the Open Meetings Act, of course; and just making sure that we are being respectful towards one another with the opinions and views and thoughts that we have that we're going to bring to the table. But at the same time, just also -- you know, really see the executive director being the backbone, putting things together, making sure everyone is on time, making sure everyone is completing all projects in a timely manner, and just making sure everyone stays on task. So kind of the enforcer behind it, which you guys will be more of the brainstorming and putting the things together, the data together; and executive director -- I will use a lot of quantitative charts. I like using charts in Excel. I like putting charts together, putting the information in the charts, and then having a goals section there of what is the finalization; where is the goal; what are we trying to get to; and then a time frame section within the chart. I think quantitative charts are very easy for me to use and it's very self-explanatory and it's easy to understand when you are putting things in charts and you can see it is better. You can visualize it better, and you have a target of goal and end goal and a time frame there of what needs to be done.

>> Okay, any follow-up from any of the commissioners?

On that response?

And again, any follow-up on any of Vicki's responses that the commissioners would like to ask at this too many?

Okay.

Are there any questions that you have? First, we'd like to thank you for being here today and we appreciate your taking your time, and meeting with us; and are there any questions that you would have of us and any final comments that you would like to make?

>> A couple of questions from you guys. What is going to be your immediate need right now from the executive director?

>> Anybody?

>> To hire one.

(Laughter)

>> I would see it as getting involved in developing the strategic plan and the detailed plan on what we've got to do to go forward.

>> Thank you.

>> I would see -- one of the immediate needs are staffing. Obviously, we're at the stage of hiring an executive director and a couple of other positions that we've advertised for we'll be dealing with upcoming. We certainly don't expect you to be the typist in this game plan so figuring out what the staff will be. We need to have, set is up some -- we need to set is up some web pin for, that's dealing with -- webinars dealing with Census mapping, communities of interest, etc., all the nitty-gritty that will be coming up.

>> Oh, thank you.

>> Those are, you know, basically, whoever the executive director, will sit on and say, "What do we need to do? I'm already behind." That's the way we feel so you shouldn't be any different.

(Laughter)

>> All right, thank you. Thank you for that clarification.

And then my last question is, what characteristics are you looking to see in the executive director?

>> Anybody?

>> I'm looking for somebody that communicates well, someone that can coordinate among multiple different parts of the organization, somebody that can navigate a Michigan State Government if necessary. That's basically what I'm thinking at this point.

>> Rhonda.

(Laughter)

>> On the personal side, obviously honesty, integrity, transparency, and somebody who has a deferent attention to detail because there will probably be things coming at them from every which way, and they need to be well organized and detail- oriented to take care of every little aspect that will need to be done.

>> Vicki, I'll also say someone --

>> Thank you both.

>> Oh, sorry. Sometimes the sound is away.

Someone that is almost like a steady stream in that they are not easily frazzled Sosa little bit of a tough skin but the ability to kind of slow time because we all come with different levels of experience.

>> Right.

>> We will have to be doing a lot of the hive work and the executive director is going to have to have a pulse of what is going on with the commission but also be able to get the work done more externally, if that makes sense.

>> That makes sense, thank you.

>> That to me is very necessary.

>> Thank you.

>> Okay, anybody else? Any final comments you would like to leave us with?

>> I appreciate you taking the time out to interview me. I am excited. I feel that I would be a great fit because of my background of already working with board for maybe the past 12 years, working in the public sector for the last 20 years. I am a great communicator. I'm an effective listener, and always very detailed and work hard at what I'm doing and trying to make sure to complete all tasks and to make sure everybody else is doing their part in their job as well. So again, thank you. I am honored to apply for this job and to be selected as a finalist. Thank you, everyone.

>> Well, we thank you for participating and to let you know what the process will be from this point, we will not be making a decision today. We will be thinking over the interviewees and what they have said, and so don't sit on your mailbox Friday and anticipate a letter. You're probably not going to get one.

But we will let you know as we have told everybody the decision that we ultimately make; so you can expect a response. We thank you, and have a pleasant week. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Okay, it's 1:22; and that was our last interview. We have some time to discuss what has taken place thus far.

>> -- still present -- it's live either way, but -- oh, okay. They just left the meeting.

>> Okay, and at this point we've.

At it so let's take -- we've got time. Let's take a break until 1:30. That's seven minutes.

>> We're in the home stretch. Anybody else feeling really like, holy molies I'm in front of a screen. Oh, my gosh!

>> I'm thinking I need to get a better chair for these long ones because at this point, my pack is yelling!

>> Yeah. Oh, gosh, I'm sorry to hear that. Yeah.

My spouse, she got me one of these -- it's a little -- it's like a pillow for this very thing. It's called a Purple pillow or something like that -- yeah, the purple.

>> Nice. Nice.

>> So if it helps you, like I'd love to give it to you.

>> Well, Ron, that's one way to keep away the uncomfortable.

>> The only bad thing is I do a lot of this during the meeting.

>> Yeah.

>> (Imitating sound)

>> Yep.

>> Just can't wait to get old so the aches and pain become something I'm used to.

(Laughter)

>> You know, I blame mine on the military. I do. I was in my 20s when I was in there, and the first episode of back issue I was 21 years old so. A lot of marching boots and doing P.T. in boots that are not comfortable and a lot of heavy lifting. It will do it to you.

>> I can't get my video to start for some reason.

I can see everyone else.

>> And we can hear you, Doug.

>> Yeah.

>> There we are.

>> Sorry if my microphone was cutting in and out; there's like 19 different settings on this bad boy and can pick up sound sideways and backward and I think I turned it off to not pick up my voice from the front.

>> Sounds high tech, Dustin. Hey, how's your starter doing? Have you had a chance to do anything with the starter?

>> Yep. I also took half of it and made one for my mom and she's been using it, too; but I have done the sower dough crackers. Those are delicious.

>> I like those, too.

>> Can you guys hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Yeah.

>> Okay, great, because my computer does not have audio on it. I have to go through my phone.

>> Well, we will take care of that sooner or later.

>> I hope so. When are we supposed to be getting those computers?

>> I just approved the purchase yesterday and of course Sally, that will go through -- so I would imagine --

>> A couple weeks.

>> Yeah, you know, ten days, somewhere in that neighborhood.

>> Okay.

>> The phone just came to my house here right now, today. I just opened it up.

>> Mine is coming by FedEx today too.

>> Got it by phone today? Okay.

>> Mine is posed to come tomorrow.

>> I don't know if I got tracking information.

(Laughing)

>> I got something today; I don't know if it's my phone. Just came.

>> I didn't get any tracking information. It just showed up.

>> Well, I have -- I'm signed up for the FedEx Delivery Manager so I get notifications before packages come whether it's UPS or FedEx or Postal Service so I got a text, but that's just because I signed up for that.

>> Yeah, I'm the same way.

>> We may all be here.

>> Yes, everyone is here.

>> If you're not here, raise your hand.

>> Erin had to step out.

>> Yeah.

>> Okay. All right, we've interviewed six people. I personally thought the interviewees were -- did a nice job on the whole. Everybody did a good job. I was duly impressed. You know, some did better than others, but, you know, that's what makes the world go round.

>> I think it went well.

>> We have -- Cynthia? You're waving at me.

>> I just wanted to thank the subcommittee that whittle it down for us. I think you did a great job. Those were great candidates.

>> I agree.

>> We should have let them go the rest of the way and whittle it down to one and we wouldn't have any problem.

(Laughter)

>> I think you guys did great, too.

>> Yeah, that's not an easy job.

Do not envy all the work that took.

>> How do we want to move forward with in? We do have -- we certainly have some time right now; or we can wait and contemplate and go over our notes and go back over the CVs and resume that were sent in. I know the mayor, I'll call her -- I did not -- since I was having some computer trouble, I did not see these messages she's talking about from this one person so I want to go back and look at those. But I'm sure --

(Phone ringing in the background)

hold on.

I'm certainly open to whatever suggestions there are.

>> Yeah.

Can I call on you all?

>> Go ahead.

>> I think, you know, maybe you would be beneficial to discuss initial impressions but then still go back and review because, you know, people present one way on paper and there's just a lot to think about, and I want us all to have input on that; so I think utilizing this time to share, like I said, impressions and then maybe we can think about narrowing it down to a few people when we go back and review. But then I want to hear Rhonda, Dustin, and anyone else who want to share. So Rhonda, you're up.

>> Okay, I agree with you, Brittini. I think it would be best if we start to review, you know, highlights, lowlights, things we found positive and not with each candidate, right while it's fresh in our mind since we just finished it up because if we wait a week or so, it

-- it will be gone. And I saw all of us taking notes, I think, so I think we would be better off starting right away while it's fresh.

>> Yeah, Dustin.

>> Yeah, I also agree. However, with that said, being part of the subcommittee in having reviewed all the resumes, everyone's resume was basically stuck in my mind for these interviews; and I did take some extensive -- and I mean, extensive moments on everybody. I was typing away the WHOEL time, and I already have a top two.

>> Me, too.

(Laughing)

>> I mean, I have it; I don't necessarily know if I should share them right now because everyone else may, you know, want to look at things a little more in detail; but I actually have everyone ranked one through six.

If you want to know, I will be happy to share; but like I said, everyone can have their own thoughts.

>> I think I have a top three myself.

>> Anthony, you're on mute.

>> First, I want to -- can you hear me now?

>> Yeah.

>> Cool. First of all, I want to thank all six interviewees that came be interviewed with us today. This is going to be a hard decision for sure, and I think personally I think we would be okay probably with any of the six that we interviewed; but with that said, I do have three as well that kind of stood out to me.

I like Rhonda's idea of taking time to, like, go back and, you know, further deliberate; but I wonder if maybe we all want to go and just real, I say our initial impressions, if that would be a good idea of that.

>> Let me just say, while we're deliberating and talking about naming or not naming people, realize that probably all of them are watching us.

>> That's right.

>> Of course.

>> Yeah.

>> And I guess my personal preference is while I'm sure everybody has who they think are in the top three, the top two, the top one, the top four -- however you want to say it -- I would think that we would be better served NOT to do that at this stage, just out of courtesy to the individuals.

>> I agree.

>> And to give us an opportunity to go back and look over -- you know, I want to review my notes, like I said. I want to review these resumes and CVs and the other stuff that we -- I can tell you I did not get an opportunity to look at the stuff that came in last night. As I said, my printer was going crazy. So, you know, I will certainly bend to the commission if that is what everybody wants to do. That's my observation.

Doug?

>> Our next scheduled meeting won't be until December 4 so that's two weeks out.

So that going back to Rhonda's point. You know, not putting it off for so long.

>> I also think -- oh.

>> Who wants to talk?

You look like you were first. Go ahead.

>> Yeah, but then I know it was Rhonda and Juanita at the same time. I hear what you're saying and would like to think I am a fairly compassionate and empathetic person, as well as professional. I DO, though, think there are moments in life that it's just, this is kind of the way it is. This is already an unusual process to be interviewed live and then to hear of, you know, hear the person in front of you interview unless you're in a group interview setting for something; and I think it's also perfectly normal, you know, I think we're all professionals to debrief after something like that. I just worry with a stretch of two weeks that we won't get a chance to bond -- meaning discuss as a

commission -- what our initial impressions were; and I think the benefit much like we had the subcommittee, is some information we can always go back so you can always review; but I think some information in hearing, you know, our fellow commissioners' opinions will help us to consider and add light to maybe some things we weren't exposed to -- and of course go back and read on your own. But I think this is a great benefit to a shared discussion. Rhonda and Dustin and Juanita.

>> I will let Juanita go because we haven't heard too much from her today and I've talked a lot.

>> Okay.

>> I think I was only going to say -- I almost forgot my thought -- I was only going to say that perhaps, someone said we're not go to meet until when?

>> December 4.

>> December 4, yeah.

>> Okay. I thought we were having a meeting tomorrow, or is it just my group?

>> Yeah.

>> Well, December -- the next meeting for the full group, according to my schedule, is December 3, full commission meeting, review final schedule interviews.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Okay, okay.

Well, we probably need to do something about the voting that -- today about something towards it that we can kind of narrow that down to maybe less than three or four. We probably need to narrow it.

>> Yeah.

>> And then just -- you know, because we got to get busy. And someone is -- it's like I got a stack of papers for the communication. Who's working with me on that tomorrow?

Okay, we got a stack this big that came in yesterday.

>> Yeah.

>> And I mean, I stayed up all night working with that and I was like, you know, so we can't get too stuck on some of this stuff.

I was listening today to everybody.

You all did real good in asking questions and whatever, and the candidates were all fine; but I had a couple that I thought was extremely rounded in what they could do for us.

>> Rhonda, you're up and then Janice.

>> I was just reiterating the point about, you know, your first impressions and having it fresh if in your mind. We go two weeks, it's gonna fade if even when I -- we did the first subcommittee, I had to go over those resumes multiple times after that because they do all blend together so I mean, we're getting down to about 15 minutes left.

>> I was going to say --

>> We need to start discussing.

>> Janice.

>> Well, also it says on the third we're supposed to be onboarding the executive director. Doesn't that mean we should have them figured out by then?

If we're onboarding them?

>> Are we talking about making a decision to hire an executive director in the next 15 minutes?

>> That's what I'm talk about.

(Laughing)

>> According to our schedule on the third, we're onboarding the executive director.

>> I understand that. But I can tell you right now I am REALLY uncomfortable with making a decision on this person in the next 15 minutes.

>> Well, I agree; and that's why I said I think we need to meet and need to talk as a group, you know, maybe you saw something in somebody that somebody else didn't. You know, your impression might be different, you know, or maybe, you know, so I really think that maybe we should have a different -- another meeting in between then and that.

>> Sally has come on with her wonderful appearances is gonna help us out. Aren't you?

>> Everybody, yeah.

So just on the subject of the schedule, wanted to provide some clarity. I mean, sort of draft agenda items we drafted, you know, back in September and then in October -- those are fluid. We are obviously planning on the dates that you all have already planned on and, you know, we're making sure we have the translators and everything for them. If you all need to do another meeting between now and then, that is something we can figure out if we can pull it off in terms of the behind-the-scenes stuff; but you have the autonomy to call another meeting if you need one. That said, you've got 15 minutes now, and so I would recommend using this time to figure out what you want your next meeting to look like and then maybe you can talk about, you know, if December 3 is acceptable for that or not. For example, if you were to do, you know, follow-up interviews with some people or wanted to like meet again and discuss all six again or whatever it might be. So that's how I recommend spending the last 15 minutes and the Department of State is here to assist and be helpful and if you need another meeting, we can figure out how to make that work.

>> Well, I would propose that we have another meeting and looking at the calendar, and quite frankly, that may be tough with Thanksgiving in here.

>> I think we need to just -- you know, hmm.

>> Let me say that will then give us enough time to look that over and have a discussion. But -- I propose another meeting between now and the third.

>> I agree.

>> Can I put my last two cents? And then I'll go with what the group says. We had these schedules. We knew the subcommittee. We were reviewing two committee meetings. We were reviewing these. We had a meeting where we narrowed it down to six where everybody should have done diligence and went over those six as resumes and now, we knew we were coming in here today to do the interviews to discuss those six. I mean, this just my personal opinion, but I don't want to keep pushing things back for our timeline. We have had a set schedule, and that is show I've prepared myself for all of these meetings. I'm not throwing flack at everybody; I feel like we're working backward rather than forward.

>> MC.

>> I'm twinkling with Rhonda.

I'm ready.

>> Who's next? Cynthia.

>> Cynthia.

>> So I think that we will need another meeting. I mean, we're not all ready to make a decision today even if we have thoughts. I would like a little more time to re-go over things now that we have seen them in person; but I wonder, can we just give a little bit of our committee meeting time tomorrow for us to come together again, even though -- I mean, we're going to need time as well, but I wonder if that's one way to accomplish it and it will still be kind of fresh.

>> I guess that's up to the -- what are the committee -- general counsel and communications director. You guys are meeting from 12:00 --

>> Yeah, we've got two hours for each.

>> Yeah.

We need around 12:30.

>> There isn't a whole lot of time to get that done.

>> I would like to make a motion real quick, guy, because we don't have a lot of time. I don't want to interrupt anybody but want to motion for the Department of State to try to

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get us another meeting between now and our next meeting, if possible; and attached to this motion I would also like to say, let's spend the next 15 minutes just getting our quick first impressions of these candidates to help us go forward.

>> Is there a second?

>> Second.

>> Any discussion?

All in favor say "aye."

>> Aye.

>> All opposed, same sign.

Okay, Sally, we want to try to schedule another meeting between now and the third.

Keep us posted.

>> Will do.

>> Thank you.

>> So on that real quick --

>> Who is talking?

>> Dustin.

>> It's Dustin, by the way.

>> Oh.

>> So I do have a full-time job and me on the whim to say to my boss, "Hey, I need this day off," doesn't really work all that well for the most part; is there any way that a weekend could potentially work here, either this or next?

Or even maybe even next Friday since everyone is in anyway and hopefully not go out shopping?

(Laughter)

>> I see Sally shaking her head vigorously no.

(Overlapping conversation)

>> Sally, just give date, and we do it that way and we still haven't gotten into the discussion.

>> Yeah. Commissioners, I can ask of your availability, and the Department of State, knowing you want to call a meeting between now and December 3, can find the time and notice the meeting and let you know based on your availability.

Does that work?

>> Yeah.

>> Sure.

>> Okay.

>> Okay, you got 12 minutes to talk about your first impressions.

Who's up first?

Rebecca.

>> I was going to say, do we want to be systemic and go down based on interview times like start with Brandon, let everybody offer their feedback -- move to Sherrill, then Janette?

Does that make sense?

>> That's fine.

>> That's good.

>> Whatever the group likes.

>> I would say everyone there go and give their top two or three people instead.

>> Would you rather do that, Dustin?

>> That would be me and would be faster, in my opinion.

>> Okay. All right, well, you want good option A or option B?

(Laughter)

>> You want me to call people? I'll call on you and you can give your --

>> Yeah, that works. This is just off of my jean. I will start with Rhonda and will leave myself and Steve to go last. Rhonda.

>> We're just going from first impressions of somebody we thought did very well, correct?

>> Yeah, these are your top two to three.

>> One of my top ones is Suann Hammersmith. For the notes I have, positive is her experience. You cannot argue with 30 year of executive director experience. And for just three jobs. So that gives it a lot of longevity and obviously if she had three jobs where she was E.D. for 30 years, she did a good job and they except her.

I -- she was -- seemed to be open and transparent. She's had experience with the community engagement, as she said, so I thought that was a plus. She's -- no political affiliation, no contributions made. So as far as public view, I think that might be good thing.

So those are just a few of the things, if anybody else would like to add about her.

>> Do you have a second or just she just the one standing out to you?

>> Like I said, she was my top and there were a couple of toss-ups so I -- I would just like to get everybody else to have a chance if they had somebody, they were more interested in.

>> Okay, Doug?

>> Nine minutes.

>> Doug, you're next.

>> Okay. I have -- my top three -- my first one was Amna. I thought that she brought forward the most organization or could bring forward the most organization. However, I'm a little concerned about the public opinion aspect of that.

Secondly, I had Brandon. I thought Brandon had good experience, great communicate to in my mind, well-prepared.

And like Rhonda, Suann was my other choice.

>> And M.C.?

>> So I was going off the idea that we need a public servant and that we want sort of - that we will have a steady stream of lots of complexity that has to be and we need somebody that pays attention to detail and can navigate the State of Michigan who understands there's another, let's say, body; but Michigan is unique that those bodies might not fit our state and that we have this Open Meetings Act has been THE number one thing that we, together, have now tried to navigate in how we do our work. And the ONLY person I heard who has real, live experience currently is Dr. Mitchell. And what I mean is she -- and what I also recognize is that every -- each person had sort of an excitement that made me a little bit like, I like Dr. Mitchell piece presence, meaning there was a calmness in her delivery and she took up the full half hour without sort of bumping. And I just felt all of a sudden, a smooth, steady pace and like I said, Dr. Mitchell is the ONYLY candidate I see -- I'm willing to listen to others -- but, you know, I -- I feel like she answered every question in ways and like I said, the criteria I've heard some of you all say out loud, I'm just -- yeah.

She's the number one candidate for me.

>> Juanita.

>> Well, I thought that Brandon Brice was excellent, very rounded.

He knew a lot about government and he had.

Around. He's worked in a lot of just a lot of different things that we are about, if I can make it short like that. And also Sheryl Mitchell, I enjoyed, too. I gave her a three and

gave him a four. They are my top two choices. If we could interview those back or do something, that would be good.

That's just my opinion.

I enjoyed both of them.

>> I'm sorry, Juanita.

>> Mr. Bryce seems like a go-getter and Dr. Sheryl -- both seem very informed but he seemed like he's ready to go and Dr. Sheryl seems laid-back but very knowledgeable.

>> Dustin.

>> I like both of them.

>> Okay. Mine is a little different.

My number one pick is Janette.

She actually took initiative to go start doing things as if she had the job already.

She conducted her own research; she answered all the questions great, and her resume is actually outstanding; and she just like us -- we got put into this thing without really knowing what the heck we were all doing; and look at us now. she showed the ability that she actually really wants the job by putting in the 60-day plan. No one else had done anything like that and no one asked her to do that as part of the process and she took it upon herself to do those things.

With that being said, the second person would be Su Hammersmith just in regards to her experience, and that is -- that's basically what western has said about her is what I would agree on.

And then I do want to make my comment known -- I will NOT be able to look past the negative public comment from Amna, to be honest.

She was a great interviewer; she answered all the questions the way we wanted to; she was honest about the fact there were social media posts being put out; but when that happened, I looked through the e-mails sent to us in regard to that and will not be able to look past them.

>> I will see your hand, Rhonda, but I keep going or we'll never make it.

>> You got four minutes.

>> Yeah.

Rebecca. We need to go rapid fire.

>> All right, rapid fire.

So my top were Suann and Dr. Mitchell. I think Suann's experience is incredible and very well presented and seemed very organized. My only concern she has more of a non-profit background versus government, whereas Dr. Mitchell has the government background. Both are equal. I don't know how you balance that out; maybe we want someone with non-profit. Janette would be my third choice and then with respect to Amna -- not only did I read citizen comments but did web digging -- it's not just the web comments. There's 13 out of the 15 people who worked with her in city government, whether it was city commissioners, public school boards, opposed her election in 2019. That's public information you can look at yourself so I would not be able to get behind her if we work with her and didn't want to work with her again -- that's a big issue. And with Brandon, I think he came off as very competent but concerned about his affiliation with the Patriot Radio Station. It's a conservative Republican-based radio station and he is a commentator on that and although he came off seeming like he's very independent, I'm concerned about the impression of the view in the public of that affiliation.

>> Thank you, Rebecca. Janice?

>> (Indiscernible)

Be quiet!

(Laughter)

>> Janice? Do you want to add comment?

>> Sure. I can tell you that my first -- my top choices are Dr. Mitchell and Su. It's basically for all the reasons that everybody else said.

>> Okay.

>> Those are my top choices.

>> Okay. Cynthia.

>> So I won't give reasons because they have all been said but would like to say I would feel comfortable with most of these people. My top three: Janette and Su and Brandon.

>> Okay. Anthony.

>> So I have quite a bit of notes we can discuss at a later time, but just real quick, my three that stood out to me most were Janette, Brandon, and Amna.

I'm also concerned about the public comment. However, I think that if we just go based on resume and qualifications, she's probably the most qualified and the best equipped to do the job; however, you know, we all might have different opinions on that so we may need to talk about it more.

With Janette, I agree with what Dustin said. She put together a plan and put together. And Brandon Brice also did a good job but may not be as -- he may not have as much experience as the other two but just something about him makes me think I could enjoy working with him.

>> Richard.

>> I'll make this quick: Brandon and Su.

>> Steve.

>> I'm reserving my comments.

From the get-go, I said I wanted to look at other things.

>> Okay. I will quickly say my top choices were Dr. Mitchell and Su.

Dr. Mitchell to me edged Su a little bit because I found even throe these were great selections found a lot of the candidates' responses to be evasive, particularly around party affiliation and funding. Dr. Mitchell, to me, answered that question head-on with no hesitation, whereas Su I found, um, that not just with her but there were a couple of

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times where we had to go back and re-ask that question in a different way to get the answer. So I found that to be a little troubling. I share thoughts on Amna -- I have strong reactions to that as well as strong reactions to Janette. I felt just the experience was not there and that plan is something we could easily ask another E.D. to do and execute for us.

So I did not think that made that to be a stick-out quality for her.

>> Okay.

That brings us to 2:00 and the end of our meeting. I make a motion we adjourn. Is there a second, Brittini?

>> Second.

>> All in favor, say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Okay, we will circulate potential dates and will try to set is up another meeting. Until then, everybody, have a nice weekend. Good-bye.