

ICRC

01/14/21 Meeting

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>> Steve Lett: Good morning. As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting to order of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

And let me adjust my screen a little first. There.

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For purposes of public watching and the public record I will turn to Sally of the Department of State to take note of the commissioners present. Sally.

>> Sally: Good morning.

Commissioners, when I call on your name, please unmute yourself and indicate that you are attending the meeting remotely and from what city or county you are attending it remotely from.

Doug Clark.

>> Doug: Present, I'm attending the meeting remotely, and I'm currently located at Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> Juanita Curry.

>> Juanita: Hi. I am Juanita Curry and I'm attending the meeting from Wayne County remotely.

- >> Anthony Eid.
 - >> Anthony Eid, remotely present from Oakland county.
 - >> Brittini Kellom.
 - >> Brittini Kellom present, and I'm here remotely from Wayne County. Sorry, I'm having camera issues and multitasking.
 - >> Thanks Brittini. Rhonda Lange.
 - >> Rhonda: Here, attending the meeting remotely from Reed City.
 - >> Steve Lett.
 - >> Steve: Here and I'm attending remotely from Lee County, Florida.
 - >> Cynthia Orton?
 - >> Cynthia: Present, and I am attending remotely from Battle Creek, Michigan.
 - >> MC Rothhorn.
 - >> MC: Present. I'm attending remotely from Lansing, Michigan, Ingham County.
 - >> Rebecca Szetela.
 - >> Rebecca: Present and I am attending remotely from Wayne County, Michigan.
 - >> Janice Vallette.
 - >> Janice: Present and I'm attending the meeting remotely from Hyland, Michigan.
 - >> Erin Wagner.
 - >> Erin: Present attending remotely from Charlotte, Michigan.
 - >> Richard Weiss.
 - >> Richard: Present, and I'm attending remotely and I'm attending from Saginaw county.
 - >> Dustin Witjes.
 - >> Dustin: I'm present and I'm attending from Howell, Michigan.
 - >> Sally: All commissioners are present.
 - >> Steve: Thank you, Sally. All commissioners being present, we do have a quorum and can continue with our business.
- It is my understanding, well, we do have an agenda. Everybody should have received it yesterday. Are there any additions or deletions or corrections to the agenda that anybody would like to make?
- Seeing none, if you would adopt the agenda as presented raise your hand.
- [Hands raised]
- The agenda is adopted.
- The minutes from Tuesday, January 12th have been sent out. If there are any additions, deletions or corrections to be made, we would entertain those now.
- >> Rebecca: The copy that I have, I don't know if a later one was sent out, but it obviously has a reviewing bar on the right side where it says not highlighted, if we could take that off so we don't have that reviewing bar so it will fill the full page.
 - >> Steve: I don't know, okay, that is fine with me. Who puts these together?
Sally?

>> Sue: Cathleen on the MDOS staff does the minutes. I made some edits and evidently, I didn't accept one last change when -- before I saved them, so I apologize for that. Next time you will get the full deal.

>> Steve: All right, just to have -- make that correction and send out new ones to everybody, please. Anything else?

Great. If there are none, with that correction going to be made to eliminate that extraneous formatted, not highlighted note, if you could approve these minutes raise your hand.

[Hands raised]

Any opposed?

Same sign. They are approved.

Okay, we have it's my understanding some public comment this morning, two I believe that I've been informed. A few notes about public comment for anyone just joining us because this is a virtual meeting members of the public have to sign up in advance to address the commission. The Department of State will unmute each member of the public for up to two minutes on a first come first serve basis. This means that members of the public will be called on 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. At the conclusion of both of these comments periods we will conclude the public comment. If you would like to submit thoughts to the commission or participate in public comment at an upcoming session of the commission, you can e-mail our office at redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will provide your written thoughts to the commission, public comment sign up links are also posted on redistricting Michigan social media pages, on Facebook and Twitter at redistricting MI. Now, I would recognize Sally Marsh from the Michigan Department of State director of special projects who will call on members of the public to address the commission. Sally, take it away.

>> Sally: Individuals who signed up and would like to provide public commentary will be able to do so. To those participating just a few technical notes after I call your name, your screen will change and you will rejoin the meeting as a presenter. Then you will need to turn your sound and video on before you make live public comments. And once you begin you will have two minutes, I'll time you and I will come back on and let you know your time has expired. And if you have audio issues or technical issues we will move on to the next person and then come back to you. So don't worry, you will have some time to trouble shoot if necessary. So the first member of the public for public comment is Anthony Hsu I hope I did not miss pronounce your last name. Just give us a moment to get you over.

>> Hi there. Thank you very much for inviting me I'm an emergency physician. I work both in Ann Arbor and Livingston county so I have the perspective of managing and

taking care of sick patients from across the economic spectrum and political spectrum. I'd like to say that in the 40 plus years of my life I've seen multiple Government systems and the one that currently that we are living in is becoming more and more unstable gradually. It's unsustainable. How do we heal the country and bring it back so that people shake hands and give each other hugs beyond the pandemic, beyond the vaccine we have to be able to talk at a level to each other that we can understand and emphasize. So our leaders also have to be those that we can understand and appreciate. And appreciate us in return so that we can have faith in our representatives.

What does that mean?

That means we need to move towards the middle. How do we do that?

When we do redistricting, we are going to have to skate to where the puck will be. We know that with the census the demographics are changing. We have to skate to where the populations, the age as well as the ethnicities of the people that will be representing us will be in the middle if possible. The current trends of continuing to have bipolar divided Government will make it difficult to govern and an unstable Government one where violence, the rule of the gun rather than the rule of law. Please consider when you draw your lines to have a balance of both urban and rural with preferably a predominance of suburban to help balance the needs of all the people on both Sides of the political spectrum so that we can talk to each other, shake hands and interact as a community once again. Thank you very much.

>> Steve: Thank you, Dr. Hsu we appreciate your comments and certainly we will keep those in mind as we move forward.

Sally our next participant.

>> Sally: That concludes live public comment this morning. The other participant has not logged on.

>> Steve: Okay, correspondence. Sue?

Do we have correspondence?

>> Sue: We do not have any correspondence this morning. However I wonder if we wanted to keep this as a standing item on the agenda in case there is any. It was utilized in one of our previous meetings to follow-up with some of the public comment we received so that is an option also to do in this space. And then I was thinking maybe an opportunity for us to offer the answer to a frequently answered question because we are getting a lot of the same questions in public comment. And I know MC has talked many times about public education and how do we help get the public up to speed on what we are doing and what the Constitution says we are supposed to be doing. So I'm wondering with the guidance of our outreach our communications and outreach director who will be on staff soon possibly he could help have a different commissioner each meeting for an answer to an FAQ that would be an ongoing education space.

>> Steve: Well, I think I know I made comment at our last meeting regarding some letters and I personally think it's a good idea and we know talking to Arizona and California we will be getting a deluge of e-mails, letters, et cetera. I know they classified them in a category so we can anticipate doing that. Is everybody good with this agenda item as something permanent?

Okay, obviously we are not going to have public comment or correspondence every time, at least initially. I would guess that we are going to be more frequent as we go along.

Executive director report, Sue?

>> Sue: Okay good morning everyone. Oops Rhonda did you have your hand raised?

>> Rhonda: I was just going to ask is that something that we have to do a motion on or can we just add it?

I just want to make sure for the order that we are supposed to do because I'm great with that. I think it's a wonderful idea but I did not know if we had to do a motion on it and vote on it or if it's something, we can just add so I'm just asking.

>> Steve: Well we approved the agenda each time so if there is a time when we don't want to keep it as part of our permanent agenda, we can move to take it off so I don't see that it needs to be approved in that manner. However, having made that comment and having been chastised previously in an e-mail from somebody, all of those who would keep correspondence on the permanent agenda raise your hand. Any opposed same sign. Thank you. And I'm being informed that my Internet connection is unstable. And that means that somebody is going to mute me from time to time so if I start talking and you don't hear me say hey you are muted and I will unmute myself. Thank you.

>> Sally: Chairman I will add we are going to call you and merge your audio so that the audio is coming through your phone so that even if your Internet connection is spotty and your picture may freeze a little bit the commission will still be able to hear you without an issue so we will do that behind the scenes.

>> Steve: So that was you calling me I take it. Go ahead Sue.

>> Sue: All right, so my report this morning is quite brief, but again I just want to thank the commissioners for your continuing work and the Michigan department of staff who works so diligently behind the scenes. I'm looking forward to our continuing discussion today regarding the communications and outreach director position. We had a question last meeting about the Zoom reminders that come an hour before the meeting and why the print is so tiny. And Sarah did indicate those are auto generated. You can click on that tiny print and it does work. So just try clicking until you reach it and you will have it. It's really, I think it's really beneficial to have that e-mail right before the meeting so we don't have to dig through all our e-mails to find the previous notification.

The e-mails, third, the e-mails to the general counsel applicants who were not selected were sent out and I thank Sarah for doing that on behalf of the commission.

I want you to know that I've always had an open-door policy. This is a different time so I guess I will say an open e-mail or phone call or a chat. Please feel free to reach out to me any time you have a question. Any time that I can be helpful, any time you have a comment about something we should or shouldn't do I appreciate those. And appreciate the connections so know that at any time you can reach out to me.

And then lastly, we had talked about having kind of a getting to know you or an ice breaker moment at our meetings. I don't want to surprise you with anything that might be something that requires some thought, so if that is the case and I'm asking a question that might require some thought, I will put that on the agenda. But this morning I have a very easy one for you and that question is what is your most productive time of day?

I heard a few comments before the meeting. So I think it fits really well today. And I'll just call on people to make it easier. So let's go Cynthia Orton what is your most productive time of day?

>> Cynthia: I can't get control of my mouse. I would have to say very early in the morning is my most productive time of day.

>> Sue: All right how about MC.

>> MC: I'm generally a morning person and I'm not using alarm these days and sometimes I sleep until 6:00 or 7:00.

>> Sue: Wow, Rebecca what is your most productive time of day?

>> Rebecca: Definitely morning I'm a morning person and insomniac and morning means 3:00 in the morning doing stuff.

>> Sue: I will follow Rhonda on that.

>> Rhonda: I agree with Rebecca that 3:00 a.m. thing that is my life every day. So and the insomnia so we have something in common there.

>> Sue: Okay how about Janice?

>> Janice: I'd have to say morning.

>> Sue: Okay, and Erin?

>> Erin: I prefer the mornings as well.

>> Sue: Richard?

>> Richard: I guess I would say probably sometime after 10:00 and through the day.

>> Sue: Okay, how about Dustin?

>> Dustin: Yeah, I feel I'm most productive early in the morning, that was Doug.

>> Sue: Thank you, Doug. Dustin how about you.

>> Dustin: I will be the contrarian and say it's afternoon.

>> Sue: Everybody has their most productive time. How about Juanita?

>> Juanita: .

>> Sue: Can you unmute your microphone?

>> Juanita: Yes, sometimes I get insomnia like Rebecca and Rhonda. But I generally like mornings and then sometimes I like today I would like after 10:00 but I'm good.

>> Sue: Okay we are happy you are with us. Anthony what is your most productive time of day?

>> Anthony: I'm an evening person 7:00 p.m. to midnight is when I'm most productive.

>> Sue: Okay thank you, Steve?

>> Steve: Well since everybody is a morning person, I'm going to say about 2:00, that's when I take my nap.

>> Sue: And you're most productive when you're napping.

>> Steve: Hey you guys that are young you will figure it out.

>> Sue: Okay, well thanks everybody. Did I catch everybody I did not miss anybody. Brittini did I miss you?

I did miss you, Brittini.

>> Brittini: I am having -- can you repeat the question? Because I keep looking befuddled because it's an Internet thing so just can you repeat -- I'm having.

>> Sure: Sure what is your most productive time of day.

>> Brittini: A time of day that is not good to be up. I really like late hours. I've been that way all the time. Feels like when everyone is sleeping the energy and violations are higher and I can get real productive. I've never been a morning person.

>> Sue: Okay, all right, now is there anybody I missed? I want to make sure I caught everybody.

>> Okay thank you very much I will take that into consideration and as I e-mail you Anthony I may e-mail you at midnight or Brittini, others I won't, I don't want to wake anybody up.

>> Brittini: I have a really busy schedule so it's like whenever.

>> Sue: Thanks everyone. That concludes my report. If you have any questions of me, please ask.

>> Anthony: Sue when are you the most productive?

>> Sue: I'm a morning person and like to get up and at 'em and others are quiet and not sending you a lot of e-mails and that, I do prefer the morning. Do you want to hear from Julianne as well?

>> Yes, that would be good.

>> Julianne: Good morning everyone yes also I'm very productive in the morning but I will have late night surges I find if I'm in the zone it's easier to just keep going so I too will be e-mailing Rebecca and Rhonda and Juanita at 2:00 in the morning.

>> Sue: All right, thanks, everyone.

>> Steve: Let me ask a question of Sarah. Am I coming through the phone?

>> Sarah: Yes, you are I would recommend you turn down the volume on your computer because we are getting a little bit of feedback.

>> Steve: Okay.

Okay.

I'll work on that. Old business. Update.

>> MC: I think it's the legal counsel report before that.

>> Steve: I thought -- I guess I was -- go ahead Julianne.

>> Julianne: Thank you so much. So I would thank you for the opportunity to provide a snapshot of where I've started in my work. I'm approaching -- I'm approaching things more broadly than the immediate task at hand but what I've currently started is drafting guidance for the commission on section 11 of the constitutional amendment dealing with interactions with the public. Participating in the RFP development with MDOS. I also started analyzing whether the commission will need bylaws, rules of procedure or potentially both. And I've started drafting proposed policies and procedures for your consideration. I've also started identifying additional median long-term priorities that I can discuss with Sue and we can bring to you for your consideration. And I'd just like to echo Sue in that I also operate under an open-door policy. I welcome input and feedback, questions. I'm available by phone and e-mail whatever is most convenient for you. And I'll also be reaching out individually to everyone to make sure they have my cell number and we can move forward.

Thank you, that is my update.

>> Steve: All right, thank you. Now for old business, the Department of State update.

>> Sally: Hi everyone Sally Marsh from department of state here I will be really brief. I just wanted to clarify for any of you who have heard from DTMB about your computer, don't worry about it. We are further clarifying with them, kind of exactly what needs to happen here. And so I expect that by the next meeting we will really have a plan in place and have some -- a clear steps that you all need to take. But just I wanted to make sure if any of you got e-mails that were kind of confusing to you not to worry about it.

And you know I thought I would just provide a little bit of insight of some of the things that are happening behind the scenes logistically with the legislative counsel who as you know actually helps pay your invoices. It was really great that we -- that you all started using resolutions and actually you know resolutions that indicate who -- what the motion was and who signed it and who approved it because they have now started asking for that kind of verification from meetings when you all make decisions and it's a lot easier to verify that what is being done is actually the will of the commission. So and, in fact, they actually asked if past meeting minutes where there were not resolutions if those could be signed or something else to really help kind of solidified exactly what your will as a commission is and what your decisions are. So I just wanted to provide you that insight. I think that new resolution format will be helpful on the back

end and behind the scenes to make sure those logistics go smoothly. So I don't know if you have any questions of me but that's all I got.

>> Steve: Thank you, Sally. I must say using this phone to connect is disconcerting. The next item is communications and outreach director hire. We finished our interviews and had a brief time of discussion previously. Everybody went back and reviewed whatever they were going to review and we are now here, ready to discuss further. Brittini, will you please help us with our discussion?
Thank you.

>> Brittini: Absolutely and don't be discouraged, Steve, tech issues are abound. I think this is the nature of us being virtual so we are here with you.

I will open up the floor for discussions of communications and outreach, the hire for the director and I always like to start by opening up this time to my fellow commissioners. I believe in our last discussion we briefly talked about our top two. In previous hire discussions we still have our top choices but we are thorough in discussing our professional thoughts on all of the information that we have received. So why don't we do the same thing in the spirit of consistency and on my screen, I'm just thank you Anthony, I think on my screen I'm just going to go around and we can share our top choices as well as our thoughts on other candidates as they come up. Who would like to go first?

Oo, this is different, Anthony and then Rhonda.

>> Anthony: All right, so I will start us off. So I used the rating sheet that Sue had given to us to try to kind of rank each candidates you know as I thought on the job they would do. And I kind of had two tiers at the end of this. I had Edward Woods with the highest total and then short very close to him I have Walter Sorg, Sorg, sorry, Walter Sorg and after those two there was a bit of a drop off and third, I had Janet Lebson and fourth I had Bill Froehlich. I first want to say I think any of these four candidates would make great choices. I think they can all do the job. But I think Mr. Woods and Mr. Sorg they probably do the best job. And I know that at the end of our last meeting we all kind of said the same thing. So something we should keep in mind between these to the pros and cons between all of them. Some notes that I had for Mr. Woods was that he brought a certain level of professionalism I really appreciated. He was very well put together. He seemed very prepared. Probably due to the preinterviewing process. He had specific examples of communications and PR campaigns that he had initiated. And kind of used that as evidence to the work that he could do. And I also appreciated that he had specific examples for different types of communication that he would bring to the table. You know, whether that be print media, social media, video media and, you know just all different types. And I also finally think he had a level of empathy that he kind of spoke to when he was talking about the question in regards to communicating with any crisis. And you know I just think if some sort of crisis were to happen, hopefully it

doesn't but if it does, I think he would be an effective communicator of what the commission wanted to do.

As far as Mr. Sorg goes, you know the biggest pro about him he has the most experience. Just as far as, you know, straight up he has done this job and he has done it the most out of any of our applicants. He also was very professional. Something I noted was that the quality of the microphone he was using was, you know, the best out of all of our applicants and that is some of the little things I appreciate when it comes to communication. And like Mr. Woods he also had many specific examples of, you know, different types of campaigns that he had led.

Something that I think kind of set him apart is that he kind of understood the reality of the constraints we are working under such as he spoke to our budget. And he spoke to practical insights of things we might want to consider during COVID-19.

All of which I think are pretty important. So that's what I have for the two of them. And like I said I think either would make great choices but we should think about you know the pros and cons of each.

>> Brittini: Thank you Anthony. Rhonda?

>> Rhonda: I always get so nervous especially when I go after people who speak eloquently. I'm envious of you that do that.

>> Brittini: You will do just fine.

>> Rhonda: I went back through and watched the interviews because I find even when we are doing the interviews as I'm taking notes, I miss a lot of things so I did go back and review it. And I would also like to say there were two that floated to the top for me. However, I do want to give acknowledgment to Mr. Froehlich and Janet Lebson. I think they were both great candidates. I think they had their own unique set of skills and personalities were wonderful but I think with the other two candidates we had they floated to the top more so.

So when I did my rating, I did it as I always do. And I have a few pages here of notes so just bear with me. I write big and I will make it quick.

When I was looking at experience, Mr. Woods I believe he does have a lot of experience with public speaking, town halls, outreach and extensive experience with event planning. He has many contacts from his work that he has done both governmental and organizational groups that could be used for outreach.

Mr. Sorg also has a lot of experience. He's got definitely a lot of experience with journalism, TV, radio. He also has many contacts because of his years of doing his work. When it comes to outreach and engagement for me, in that area I felt Mr. Wood rated higher than Mr. Sorg. It seemed that he has dealt with a lot of controversial type things. With opioid crisis and poverty and so I think in my opinion he went up the ladder for me in that aspect.

I also believe that Mr. Woods showed energy level, a compassion and excitement for the position. Mr. Sorg was definitely knowledgeable. But, again, I feel that the energy level and the compassion showed by Mr. Woods was just higher.

And I also want to say I respect the fact that Mr. Woods pointed out that he did not listen to the previous interviews because he wanted to show us who he was. You know, the quality that he was. I believe that he was able to not lose a step. He stayed on union task in answering questions, which Mr. Sorg did too. But when thrown different questions like I asked Mr. Woods a question that wasn't on the list and he was able to come back and not miss a step with it. Brittini asked Mr. Sorg some questions and I almost felt especially the one about reaching out to device communities and how do you bridge the gap, I think in my opinion it kind of threw him for a loop. So his first comment about reaching out to diverse communities was about being an Uber driver. And I'm like in my mind I'm thinking you have done so much more work than that, that you know bridging the gap in Uber. I just didn't relate the two, so I felt it was one of those comments that you make to fill time for a minute until you get your thoughts about the question. And again my opinion.

Another thing during the interviews that stuck out to me was -- oh, sorry, I heard background -- Mr. Woods made a statement that I really, really appreciated. And the statement was that everyone who wants to participate can do so in the process. And I appreciate that because we are working for every citizen in the State of Michigan. Whereas in contrast Mr. Sorg talked about reaching out to groups that have the strongest interest in the outcome. And you know he talked about Michigan being a state of 10 million citizens and we wouldn't want all of the ten million citizens to be at a town hall. And I guess that is kind of where I differ in opinion wise because if 10 million citizens wanted to participate and give their input then I think it's our job as a committee and our staff's job to make it happen regardless of what we had to do. I made a grammatical error, I'm sorry.

Okay I'm moving on. I'm sorry guys but you know how I am. I felt that both spoke very well. Both are very articulate. But I just felt more of the connection and felt that Mr. Woods was a little more personable for my liking.

I'm going to agree with Anthony, Mr. Woods gave great examples of tools that he has utilized. To reach people he made it a point to talk about people who speak other languages, people with disabilities or people that may not have great understanding due to a disability or educational barriers. And using tools to help simplify meaning so they can understand. I appreciated that. He also hit on some important key words for me. He talked about teamwork. Integrity. Trust. And building trust. And for me those were really some things I wanted to hear. [Background music]

Brittini: Steve, can you mute the phone that is attached to our meeting? Because it's picking up your conversation.

>> Rhonda: Personally when it comes to outreach and in my opinion, I see Mr. Woods garnering more trust with the communities. I can see that happening. I talked about that.

I talked about that.

I'm sorry guys I'm going through my notes.

>> Brittini: It's fine that is what the discussion part is, there is no right or wrong to discuss.

>> Rhonda: So everybody has got a chance. And another thing that stuck out to me with Mr. Sorg was the question when Brittini asked an additional question about what up to date tools have you used. And he talked about how he developed a, quote, functional website. Nothing great but functional. How he did -- made his own campaign material. And did a Facebook page. That's great and all. But in all honesty, I've done the same thing for my business and I'm a super novice. So I was almost hoping to hear things like I don't know. I just expected to be wowed more when it came to tools that were used. I don't know.

Going to public comment, yes, there was no public comment this time. And that is so wonderful on both Sides. I'm so happy to hear it because I always lose so much sleep over the public comment. So wonderful.

Both did have glowing letters of recommendations from people.

I did like Mr. Woods' letter that he provided after the commission to everybody or after the commission. I was reading my notes, sorry again. That he provided after the interview to the commission. You know, it talks about his integrity and there is just something about it, a truthfulness and why he didn't tell people because he wanted to be judged on his merits and I have respect for that.

You know, our other times I always brought up conflicts of interest, et cetera e et cetera after listening to our presentation yesterday. I'm moving on and want to let you know I took it all in I'm good.

Social media the Department of State does give us their footprints, their online footprints and I'm assuming we are given that because they want us to look it up and I have to say and it was mentioned in the meeting I agree everybody has their right to their own opinion and their beliefs. Absolutely. Our constitutional rights you know as a veteran I hold the Constitution very dearly so I don't want anybody to think in any way, shape or form I would want to silence anybody.

Going through the social media that I did, there were things on Mr. Woods' social media, groups, people, what have you that I didn't agree with. And that is fine. That is fine. Because people do have the right of freedom of speech.

Same way with Mr. Sorg's. There were things on there that I didn't agree with. That's fine. I brought this up in our previous discussions because the issue that I end up having is when people make blanket statements about a group. And you can have your freedom of expression any way you want to but when I'm looking at a position where

you're going to be working with a diverse group of different ethnic, political, you know, life directions and outlooks, I think it's important to keep that in mind. And when there is blanket statements, and what I mean by blanket statements is I'm going to just make up a hypothetical. I'm a Realtor so let's say that somebody had a bad situation with a Realtor and they said realtors are the most unethical people I know. That's what I consider a blanket statement because you had one bad experience with one bad person or one bad Realtor doesn't mean all Realtors are, you know, unethical or bad. And I'm just using that as an example so you understand what I mean about blanket statements.

So I'm going to move off from that topic. We discussed a little bit before, I just want everybody to understand where I'm coming from.

Guess what I'm on my last page. I guess what I'm trying to say is when it comes down to the two candidates, although both are very good, both have a lot of experience, I feel I could trust and work with Mr. Woods the best. I feel that I would be comfortable in speaking with him. I respect his professionalism. And I respect the fact that he was very blunt isn't the word, very forward about who he is. He has I can tell by listening to him his integrity means a lot and I can tell that by the letter he sent to us and the way he spoke. Not saying that Mr. Sorg's integrity doesn't because I believe Mr. Sorg's integrity he even made a statement that, you know, his life accomplishments he is not going to have undone but for me, in my opinion, feel that when it comes to working and it comes to the quality of work that needs to be done, I think Mr. Woods would be best. And thank you for letting me stumble through this guys. I know I talk a lot sometimes so I do appreciate everybody listening and that's all I got.

>> Brittini: Thank you so much Rhonda. I'm going to go with Doug and then Richard.

>> Doug: Yeah, let me start by saying that I thought all four of these candidates were qualified to do the job. And I appreciate their enthusiasm towards it. The thing that I did notice among the four is that the two of them floated to the top from my opinion. That would be Edward and Walter. Not to say that Janet or Bill couldn't do the job. But I saw specific things in both Edward and Walter that it kind of steers me towards them.

Basically what Anthony has said and is exactly my opinions. I thought that was very well put together, Anthony.

The other comments I'd like to make is that I -- and I think you may have mentioned this Anthony, I think Walter does have more experience than Edward. But I see some real positives from Edward that really attracted my attention. One I thought he was extremely well prepared. And I thought he was really upbeat. And his personality was something that we would want on the commission to deal with other people. Particularly in a communications role. I think personality factors into that. And he is so upbeat and positive that, that really caught my attention.

However, I mean, Walter is articulate. Edward is just as articulate as Edward. So I don't want to downplay that from Walter at all. Yeah, my opinion is that I think that

Edward would be the better candidate of the two and that is who I would support as well. So let me yield back to you, Brittini.

>> Brittini: Thank you, Doug, and I'm going to pass the mic to Richard.

>> Richard: Thank you, as usual commissioners you have helped me with your opinions on the candidates. But I have one question. Would it be appropriate if since we have two other individuals here that are going to be working with our communications director, would it be appropriate and would they like to comment on their thoughts of the two individuals that we seem to be leaning to and of course that would be our executive director and our general counsel.

>> Brittini: I think that is a relevant question I will leave that to the pleasure of my fellow commissioners including yourself Richard. I think it's also important for like at the end of the day we have to make the decision right as to my knowledge they can't vote. And on who we choose. So you know my standpoint is always for us to be very strong and decisive and to trust the inclination that we are billing as a group which includes, I think for lack of a better word trust. That is my opinion. I'm not against it. I think, let me say this though, because Sue had a previous interview that we didn't hear, I think it would subconsciously there might be influence there. And I know Sue that you are a professional so you could do that. But this is me just weighing all the pros and cons to be completely honest.

>> Richard: I guess that is what I was asking if they would like to or if it was appropriate for them to comment even though we are doing the hiring. Sue?

>> Sue: I'm happy to comment. I would like to hear from all the commissioners first. I don't want to influence the commissioners in any way before you've had your say in this meeting. And I will give you some input when you all have that opportunity and again you can take or leave my input because it is the job of the commission to make the decision.

>> Richard: Maybe after all the commissioners have spoken if you two would like to if that is appropriate if that would be all right.

>> Sue: Thank you.

>> Brittini: Julianne.

>> Julianne: Thank you, Brittini. My only comment would be to confirm that we are not voting.

>> Brittini: Yeah.

>> Julianne: As you indicated Brittini but I do appreciate the question, thank you.

>> Brittini: Thank you, Julianne. Richard did you have some discussion for the good of the order regarding candidate?

>> Richard: Pretty much I go along with Anthony and Rhonda and Doug, the two people as I said yesterday both of them. I kind of think I made a choice, but I kind of want to wait and see what the rest of the commission says before, you know, and then I will vote. Thank you.

>> Brittini: You're welcome. I have some thoughts if you all would like to hear them and then of course I always like to hear each commissioner's thought and even if we are redundant.

I took some time looking at the actual job description that we worked so hard to kind of get a consensus of and I went back and read resumes and thought of the interview. And my top two folks I thought were capable of doing the job would be Mr. Sorg and Edward Woods like I shared previous meeting. I think like everyone has said Janet and Bill can definitely do the job but when I think of the spark and maybe like when hiring there is like a Je ne sais Quoi, I really can't put into words. But these two -- and those are the two for me. And I will say that the things in being open I liked about Walt is he, you know, he definitely had this -- a very high level PR certification. I think the knowledge that he had and the underpinnings of the commission, the commission, excuse me, is you know useful. There is always use for historical knowledge when you are doing a job. It can make you better at it to a certain degree.

I do think though that Mr. Woods edged him out slightly. And it was the rapport. It was the diversity of skill. That's really what was the difference for me. I heard leadership experience with Walt. I heard boots to the ground with Mr. Woods. Someone that does the work, I think of course they pivot to our discretion and our will. But I think Bill is a strong leader where Edward is a strong leader and can execute and give ideas and help Sue and really also immerse us. I also think he has the poise and finesse to be in every community that we possibly could come across. I did some research on both of them just to see, you know, with public relations, radio, community outreach what was out there. There were numerous videos of Mr. Woods being -- talking about community issues, leading discussions about community outreach. And you know they are available to the public literally when I just typed in his name all of these things came up about trainings, he was doing regarding outreach. Field experience when it comes to diverse communities so to keep it short, I really appreciated all four of the candidates giving their time. My top choice though would be Mr. Woods. And I'm going to go to the next screen to see if anyone else has any comments. If not, all right, I mean would you all -- then we open up to Sue and Julianne. Cynthia, yes.

>> Cynthia: I seem to be having unstable Internet so if I freeze or something somebody tell me.

>> Brittini: Okay.

>> Cynthia: So I guess I would just echo a lot of what has been said. I did think that we had really four really good candidates who could all do the job. I went back and watched the interviews. And I -- when we finished the interviews, I had a thought in my mind of who I felt would do the best job for us. And when I rewatched the interviews that was kind of solidified. And so that is Edward Woods. And the others, there were a lot of great pros about the others as well. But what I caught, when I rewatched the

interviews was two words really stood out to me that Edward Woods talked about. He talked about civility and I think that is sorely needed. And we want that for our commission. And integrity.

And not that the others don't find those things important but it really hit me when he said that. And he also talked about our brand, our brand would be his brand and I think we do need to think about that. We need to have a brand for our commission and to help people know what we stand for and what we are trying to do. And I really liked a lot of the ideas that all of them brought forward but the thing that hit me the most was the YouTube idea of education. I really liked that. And so he would be my top pick.

>> Brittini: Thank you so much, Cynthia. Those were thoughtful comments as well. MC, yes, please.

>> MC: I echo and thank you for speaking so well to all of this, all these points commissioners. I think I'm choosing and I think I'm choosing the current experience so I know that we have people who have depth, a great depth of experience but I want the current experience and I think that is where Edward Woods really shown and I guess I'm valuing that because of the pandemic that we have and because of this incredibly difficult position, yeah, where we are going to be needing to reach out with a depth network that is deep but do we do it virtually?

Is it phone calls?

There is such a variety of things and the way that Edward spoke to it helped me like I understood the three levels of social media that he was talking about and the way that we could use them and that educational piece was crucial for me.

And the second thing I wanted to acknowledge that I think hasn't been said yet was just the thank you notes. The amount of follow-up that we received from some of those not all candidates but, yeah, those were significant and I appreciated those and just wanted to acknowledge the YouTube video that Walt Sorg did send I really appreciated. And I definitely get the idea that he has that film and what did he call it?

It's, yeah, TV show production experience. It's just how to use it and the format to deliver it and the ways that we can actually, yeah, craft, help other people craft it is where Edward Woods really shown. So thanks.

>> Brittini: Thank you, MC. I appreciate that. Any other thoughts?

I'm used to waiting 30 seconds to allow people to be polite to each other, gather up courage so I have no problem with silence. Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: I just -- I don't want to put Erin on the spot and if she feels like it and she wasn't here but watched the interviews and I would be interested to hear her thought.

>> Brittini: We didn't hear her voice last time so Erin.

>> Erin: Dealing with COVID I was not part of the Zoom but I watched it on YouTube and texting Cynthia during it. I like everyone else thought we had four strong candidates to serve us during the meeting. I was leaning towards Edward Woods and

Walter Sorg. I think both of them are impeccable candidates. Edward seemed to have a rapport with everyone that maybe Walter didn't but Walter also brought a lot of experience to the table having gone down this road before. And I don't know if anybody else happened to watch the YouTube video that he sent us on the Frandor shopping mall. But I thought he had said that he wrote and I believe directed that. And that was well put together.

So I am comfortable with either of those candidates. I tend to think I don't like going into uncharted waters. Especially if someone has been there before us. So I lean towards Walter because of his voters not politicians experience. But I'm very comfortable with Mr. Woods as well. So I think we have two very strong candidates. And will be satisfied with either one of them.

>> Brittini: Thank you so much and feel free to utilize the chat. It's enough for you to be here and please take rests first.

Anyone else wanting to share?

Or are we itching to vote?

>> Itching to vote.

>> Brittini: Okay, so I think in good fashion I'm going to turn it back over to Steve. Likely we will do the same as we did before of giving top choices and then the crap down with it is what I call it basically, yes Doug.

>> Doug: I believe we will have Sue and Julianne.

>> Brittini: I totally forgot. Thank you for that cue. Sue please and I'm chartered to my heart not my mind, my mind not my heart.

>> Sue: Thanks for the opportunity to share and when I did the first assessment from the first interview, I used 300 point scale like created for the general counsel position. When I was done, they were one point apart those two candidates we are talking about this morning.

I was impressed with both. I thought either could do the job. And the other two candidates were also candidates who could do the job but I think between Walter and Edward, those -- any one of those two would certainly be up and running very, very quickly, which we need as a commission. We need someone who can grab the communications by, you know, and roll with it. Because we are looking towards deadlines and community meetings that we have to hold and we need somebody who can make it happen.

So, again, I'm very comfortable with either one of those candidates. I think both would do the better jobs of the ones that were interviewed. I do think that Walter hit the interview out of the park. I would say Walter interviewed a little better with me one on one. And I think Walter interviewed with the commission, I can tell he put a lot of thought into the processes and what we could and should be doing between the time I interviewed with him and the time he then came to the commission.

So Walt just knows it like the back of his hand. He has lived and breathed it. He does have that depth of experience that is also valuable. So you know I respect the decision of the commission and I'll be happy to work with either one of the people that you believe have risen to the top.

>> Brittini: Thank you, Sue. Julianne.

>> Julianne: My only comments are I appreciate all the thoughtful deliberation the commission put into each of the staff hires. And I enjoyed listening to the interviews and I look forward to working with the individual that you select at this meeting. Thank you.

>> Brittini: Thank you, Julianne.

Now, we can go back and proceed to what I just said, Steve, do you want to lead the discussion?

Or the preface before the vote?

>> Steve: Sure can everybody hear me?

>> Brittini: Yes absolutely.

>> Steve: Good I've been having difficulties with the phone too so but, all right, Sally who is keeping track of our count?

?

We are going to take a roll call vote. Who is keeping track.

>> Sally: I'm happy to call the roll call vote.

>> Steve: I'm assuming we are ready to vote unless somebody tells me differently and I don't know what you have got set up on your end Sally to keep track of who is voting for what, it would be nice I think to develop a form that shows who is voting and obviously we need to keep track of the parties and independents. So I don't know do you have one of those already?

>> Sally: We have several staff who keep track during the vote and make sure that we have the right amount needed.

>> Steve: Okay, do you have a form for that?

>> Sally: Yes.

>> Steve: Good I would like a copy so I can keep track on my end for my records. So probably the other commissioners would also, so if we could send that out that would be nice.

>> Sally: I just want to mention this is one of the things that Julianne did I think in her volunteer hours even before she was hired so we do have a form and thank you, Julianne for creating that.

>> Julianne: Sally if you like I can update it and send it to everyone.

>> Sally: Yes.

>> Steve: We would appreciate that Julianne, thank you. Since my memory is so short, I need help like that.

All right if we are ready to vote Sally would you please call the roll?

And as you -- as your name is called simply say who you're voting for either Ed or Walt. Go ahead Sally.

>> Sally: Just a point of clarification and Julianne this might be a question for you, do they need to do a motion to vote?

I think you need to do a motion for the vote before I'm actually able to take the roll call vote.

>> Julianne: Correct Sally there is currently not a motion on the floor.

>> Steve: I entertain a motion to take a vote on the hiring of the outreach individual and I think Rhonda said she just made that motion. So who is going to second it?

Erin. All in favor of taking a vote at this time raise your hand.

[Hands raised]

Any opposed?

The same sign.

All right, we are ready to vote. I'll explain again how we are going to do it as your name is called, simply say who you're voting for, either Ed or Walt and those will be recorded and we will see where we end up, Sally.

>> Mr. Chair.

>> Julianne: So the motion was to hire the individual. So the commissioner is actually looking at all four names at this point so if they could just state the name of the individual.

>> Brittini: Specify the motion.

>> Julianne: Or clarify or just amend the motion that it's between Mr. Sorg and Mr. Woods.

>> Steve: My understanding the motion is we only talked about two people.

>> Julianne: Okay.

>> Steve: Between Walt and Ed and if it's not clear to everybody we can remake the motion.

>> Anthony: I think we probably should.

>> Rhonda: I want to amend the motion to vote and move we vote between Mr. Sorg and Mr. Woods.

>> Brittini: Thank you, Rhonda.

>> Steve: All in favor of the amended motion to be to vote Mr. Mr. S Sorg and Mr. Woods raise your hand. [Hands raised]

All opposed same sign. Julianne, I see you are unmuted that means you usually have something to say.

>> Julianne: Thank you so much. So I have Rhonda making the amended motion and because I also track the votes, although unofficially and let me say unofficially for Sally. That I have Rhonda making the motion and the second was captured by who? For the amendment.

>> Brittini: Oh, sorry. I second Rhonda's motion the amended motion.

>> Julianne: Thank you Brittini I appreciate it. I have nothing further Mr. Chair you have a motion to vote between Mr. Sorg and Mr. Woods on the table.

>> Steve: I think I lost my voice, I'm back here and hopefully you can hear me. You probably can't. .

>> Sally: We can hear you.

>> Steve: Can you hear me?

>> Sally: Yes, you are on mute. I think you need to turn up your volume, Mr. Chair.

>> Sally: Can you hear us?

>> Brittini: Can you hear us?

I don't think so.

>> Brittini: Steve.

>> Steve: Anybody hear me now?

>> Brittini: Yes.

>> Steve: I can't hear you. Brittini, I can't hear you so did you second the motion?

All right we took the vote. Are we good Julianne?

>> Julianne: Yes, Mr. Chair. You can proceed with the roll call.

>> Steve: We are good.

>> Julianne: Yes.

>> Steve: Start the vote please Sally.

>> Sally: Thank you. Commissioners I will now call your names in alphabetical order by last name. Doug Clark.

>> I vote for Edward.

>> Sally: Juanita Curry.

>> Juanita: I vote for Edward.

>> Sally: Anthony Eid.

>> Edward Woods.

>> Sally: Brittini Kellom.

>> Edward Woods the third.

>> Rhonda Lange?

>> Mr. Woods.

>> Sally: Steve Lett.

>> Steve: I'm back. Mr. Woods.

>> Sally: Cynthia Orton.

>> Cynthia: Edward Woods.

>> Sally: MC Rothhorn.

>> MC: Edward Woods the third.

>> Sally: Rebecca Szetela.

>> Edward Woods.

>> Janice Vallette.

>> Edward Woods.

>> Erin Wagner.

>> I vote for Walt.

>> Richard Weiss.

>> Mr. Woods.

>> Sally: And Dustin Witjes.

>> Dustin: Walter Sorg.

>> Sally: By a vote of 11 to 2 Edward Woods has been selected. .

>> Steve: Thank you, Sally and I would like to thank the -- all of the commissioners especially the subcommittee that reviewed all of the CVs and made their report and to Sue who did further interviews. I think we had exceptional people. I know I did not express an opinion before the vote. I think this vote, I think these two individuals, this was a pick 'em. You couldn't go wrong with either one. And I certainly I will let everybody know that I called Ed Woods yesterday and spoke with him because he sent a letter, I assume everybody got a copy of, telling that he had not informed his board of directors that he was looking at another job other than his chairman share in Eaton county. And as I said before I know ten people on his board. And I know several of them personally. And some of them are very good friends of mine. And I wanted to assure him that I wasn't going to call them and tell them he was looking for another job before we gave him one. And he was appreciative that I wasn't going to call and spill the beans prematurely.

So we need to notify Mr. Woods. And I assume he is watching. Mr. Woods you have been elected by a vote to be our outreach director and we will be contacting you. And I assume Walter is watching. Walter as you have seen, it was very close as far as the comments went. And as I said I think everybody would agree this was a pick 'em decision that we had to make. I wish all our decisions were this easy.

Sue will put out a letter. We have already looked at those types of letters with an offer along with a contract. I think we send that out on the first letter now, Sue.

>> Sue: Last time we did that all as one process but we had two commissioners that volunteered to help field the offer. And to negotiate with the candidate on the salary that would be paid. And then after those discussions, then we created the offer letter and the contract in the same -- at the same time because both contain that salary information.

>> Steve: We will do it the same way and move forward.

So I suppose we should move that, that we make an offer, we negotiate with Mr. Woods on a salary within the range that was put out in our requests. And then bring that back for approval and then send the official letter and contract information to Mr. Woods.

I would make that as a motion. If there is a second, we can take a vote on it.

>> Juanita: I second it.

>> Steve: Juanita seconded it and all in favor of the motion to make the offer and negotiations Erin do you have a question?

>> MC: I do.

>> Steve: Anticipating my vote thing, I'm going to have to switch it up now.

>> Anthony: Steve I have a question or comment.

>> Sure.

>> Anthony: Who is going to volunteer to do the negotiating I think we need to keep cognizant the restraints of our budget. You know, we are probably going eventually going to have to go speak to the legislature about increasing it at some point. And I'd rather that be later than sooner. So whoever is doing the negotiating just please keep that in mind.

>> Steve: Whoever is doing the negotiating do not use up the rest of the budget that we have available at the current time which is over a million dollars. Let's keep it within the range that we indicated to start with. And keeping in mind that we have all determined that Mr. Woods is one excellent candidate. So okay we have a motion on to move forward with making the offer. All in favor raise your hand. [Hands raised] Any opposed?

The same sign.

Okay, that takes care of hiring the outreach director. It's now 10:16 and we've been at it for an hour and 15 minutes let's take a ten minute break.

>> Doug: Steve we need to get the two volunteers identified.

>> Steve: Oh, I guess I was assuming it was going to be the committee.

>> Yeah.

>> Steve: Who is on the committee that wants to do this?

>> I was on the committee but I think we --

>> Juanita: I was on the committee too but I kind of thought Sue was going to handle that.

>> Steve: We always had the committee members.

>> I don't want to do it necessarily.

>> Steve: I deal would be to have the committee and Sue do the negotiating.

>> Juanita: Okay.

>> Steve: I don't want to personally I don't want to eliminate the committee from this process. Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: I was going to say I just heard Cynthia say that she didn't want to do it. And I don't know about Janice.

>> I will do it.

>> Rhonda: Juanita will. I was going to recommend if somebody didn't want to, I can say when we did the executive director Doug has a lot of experience with negotiations because we will be negotiating with Mr. Woods. He did make that clear in his interview.

So you know, if you're not comfortable with negotiations I think Doug did a pretty good job when we did ours. And I just wanted to throw that out there. If somebody is not comfortable doing it.

>> Steve: Janice.

>> Janice: I'm not comfortable. It's something I've never done so if there is someone with more experience, I certainly would like them to do it.

>> Juanita: I really have none but we have to do it I don't mind working with Sue or Doug and Doug so it doesn't matter with me. I just you know I don't have any of the amounts or anything in my notes or even in my phone or anything on my computer.

>> Steve: You had your hand up.

>> Doug: I just wants to say when Rhonda and I did the executive director negotiations I got that all documented in a document that I shared with the people that did the general, yeah, the general counsel negotiation. So we got like a three page document of the steps that we went through. It's available to anybody that is involved.

>> Brittini: I encourage you all to try something new unless it's an absolute no, no, no, I think there is a wealth of knowledge where you all will be supported for sure. Sue you had a hand raised.

>> Sue: Yes, I think in the last process we had one person from the committee and one person that wasn't on the committee. So I'm more than willing to work with anybody and it's good to see different people get involved if they have an interest and are willing to do so.

>> Steve: Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: I'm just wondering if Anthony would be interested.

>> Steve: He is raising his hand so he must be.

>> Anthony: Actually I was going to say I think what it sounds like here is you know we have Juanita who is on the subcommittee who would like to do it. And we have Doug who is more experienced. And I'd be very comfortable with them two heading this and working with Sue. That way we do have someone on the subcommittee and someone can also maybe learn a new skill.

>> Steve: Okay is that a motion Anthony?

>> Anthony: Yes, it is.

>> Steve: Do I have a second?

>> Dustin: Second.

>> Steve: Motion is that Doug and Juanita along with Sue will do the negotiations all in favor raise your hand. [Hands raised]
Any opposed?

The same sign. Thank you.

Doug, Juanita and Sue you have your marching orders. Any questions?
Good, take a break until 10:30.

[Recess]

Sarah are you there.

>> Sarah: Yes, Steve.

>> Steve: How am I coming through now.

>> Sarah: Great it sounds much better.

>> Steve: I don't like iPhones. I know what you were talking about the hide but the hide button disappeared all the sudden.

>> Sarah: All clear now.

>> Steve: Thank you.

[Recess]

>> Erin: So far, they had bad headaches and the whole upper respiratory gig but it's kind of been like flu. It hasn't been that bad so far. So just a long case of flu.

>> Juanita: How long have you had it, Erin?

>> Erin: Honestly, I don't know I was tested on Monday and started getting symptoms on Monday and tested positive then so who knows. And like I was saying before, you know, everybody whenever we were out and about, they were wearing the masks so we have no idea who we picked it up from or anything.

>> Juanita: Oh, so strange how that COVID works and transfers.

>> Doug: Juanita and Sue.

>> Yes.

>> Doug: I'll give you a call after the meeting and get things organized.

>> Juanita: I don't have a clue how you guys do that.

>> Doug: Don't worry about it. We will get through it.

>> Juanita: Okay.

>> Doug: I mailed you over a copy of the job posting.

>> Juanita: Okay.

>> Doug: And one other item.

>> Juanita: All right. Thank you, Doug.

>> Doug: Uh-huh.

>> Juanita: How is everybody else feeling?

Everybody feeling okay?

Good, good, good.

>> Doug: COVID wise, yes, no problem.

>> Juanita: Okay.

>> Rebecca: It's nice to have a little sunshine today at least down in our area.

>> Juanita: With have it too, Rebecca, a little sunshine today.

>> Steve: Is everybody back?

Looks like. All right, next item of business is the big picture timeline which was sent out to everybody. And I'm assuming Sue wherever you went, there you are, this was from you I'm assuming.

>> Sue: I did put that on the agenda. I think we need to start chatting about what might be our highest priorities for the first quarter of this year. I'll get to that page. If you look at that it says September to December, we were supposed to hire staff. I think that is pretty well under control at this point. Adopt internal roles of procedure now we have Julianne on board, she is going to look into that and see what she might propose for the commission. And then to plan the meeting and outreach schedule and strategy. That will rely very heavily on our new communications and outreach director. So I'm a little hesitant to go too far down the path without having these two people in place. And having their strategic goals unfolded into our planning. But in my mind and you can tell me if this makes sense, during the first quarter of 2021 I think as we continue our highest priorities should be those things that Julianne is working on, developing for us that she mentioned this morning. Getting our arms wrapped around the budget and then hiring the consultants. Those to me rise to the top. I would ask for input from the commission if these are our top priorities, if there are other things we should add, things that are more important than another. MC.

>> MC: One thing I would request in addition to those because I think those are important is helping create a framework. And I think with our outreach director I think we are going to need ways for the like our public input. We are getting requests to you know how to draw lines and so forth and we need to somehow create a how do we manage all that?

So we need to have somehow like these, yeah, thinking it through easy ways for the public to interact with us to give us information in a format that allows us to use it right whether it's for, yeah. For maps or for otherwise. And somehow, yeah, the container where it can be accessed by the public so they can also see they have it's been received by us. That feels like another crucial step in order to get the public involved, yeah. As much as they already have been so we can listen to it and use it.

>> Steve: If they send in an e-mail, we've got them. And they are on the public and they can access them and see if they want to do it that way. I think from what I remember in the California and Arizona people telling us the problem is going to be indexing them so that you don't have to look at 500 of the same thing. You can get 500 of the same thing and here is what those 500 say so, yeah. There is going to be that type of work. And at some point in time I think we are going to have to look at finding some office space somewhere. I'm assuming we are not going to have records scattered from Interlochen to Detroit and at some point, we are going to be back in some office situation. And I would suggest that we may want to consider not having an office within the city limits of Lansing or Detroit because they have city income tax. And I don't prefer to pay them. Anybody wants to pay them can raise their hand and we will let you move to Lansing or Detroit. Stacy raised her hand but she is an interpreter and I don't think she meant to do that. Okay.

>> Sue: Rhonda has her hand raised.

>> Steve: Anthony.

>> Rhonda: Thank you on the office points, I know there is a possibility that we may have to have an office eventually. But I think that is really going to rely on this COVID and how it keeps going and if we don't need an office because we are getting so far into it, I say save the cost personally. If we can have a centralized location like where all the documents go to Sue's location why not save the commission the money since we are already almost six months into it. It's just a thought that I have. As far as the financial aspect of it.

>> Steve: Thank you. Who else had their hand up?

Well Juanita, Juanita.

>> Juanita: I kind of agree with Rhonda. If we can send everything to Sue and that would save some money, so that sounds good, Rhonda.

>> Steve: Well keep in mind that there are going to be here than three people working for us.

>> Juanita: Oh, yeah, that is true that is true.

>> Steve: I don't think Sue is going to have you know a staff in her garage. You are right. But I'm not suggesting we are going to make a move next week but that is something to keep in the mind that down the road, you know, it's doubtful we will keep doing what we are doing and the way we are doing it.

>> Juanita: Yeah, well maybe we will have to use it as long as we go.

>> Brittni: Anthony, Dustin, Doug and then but those are just the hands I saw and then Sue.

>> Anthony: Yes, do we know when or is there like an estimated timeline on when the census data is going to be available to us?

>> Steve: When what?

>> Anthony: Census data will be available to us.

>> Steve: The last I read which was this morning they are anticipating that the first report is going to come out some time in March.

>> Anthony: So that is a little you know I think we need to think about how we are going to do this because the planning is going to be pretty essential since it's coming out so late. That means in between whenever we get the data and let's say you know October or November of this year, we are going to have to have the maps completed. And that is a pretty short amount of time.

>> Steve: You will have to have them completed before November. On our timeline it's probably August because you're going to have to have five meetings before November. November is the drop dead date.

>> Sue: Actually September 17th because there has to be 45 days of comment after the lines are drawn. So if you're looking at September 17th, that is eight months, 35 weeks, or 246 days just to be exact.

>> Steve: Well, I think at least to me it's becoming obvious we have to get the map drawers on board so that we can start working with that. There is no reason we can't do preliminary maps with the census data whatever we have and then adjust those based upon the census figures that come out. That's my guess. As to how it's going to work. So Doug.

>> Doug: Yeah, I was going to say I think from a priority standpoint for this first quarter particularly January and February, we need to get the RFPs out.

>> Right.

>> Doug: So that we can hire those people in so we can have the tools to do the work.

>> Steve: Correct.

>> Doug: I think that is one of the big priorities is in the next few weeks to get the RFPs out and I think key people will be like communications director will be a key person. Because he will be involved in all these public comments. So we got to figure that out. Let me explain what my thoughts have been about the RFPs. And I drafted three of them before. I don't know if we will go with three or however many we are going to go. Let me just take the one for the mapping first as an example. I think we should have a subcommittee that does that. Basically it is you know a three-person subcommittee like we have done before. Basically it's a lot of work for the purchasing people which I think Sue and Julianne have been in contact with at this point. But the document is probably going to be 35, 40 pages. And two pages we are going to be responsible for. But I think there are some additional responsibilities once the subcommittee drafts that and brings it back to the commission for approval. But I think the additional responsibilities, and let me see if I can frame this right, would be, as part of the RFP process that I've gone through before, once it gets submitted out to the field and let's say there is five vendors that want to bid, there is a meeting that is held. Where they can ask questions about the RFP. And that subcommittee should be part of that. If that is how the Michigan purchasing works.

And then they go back and they present their proposal. They bring and send in their proposals but they present them as well. And that subcommittee should be there when they present them. And then in addition to all that, and then they have to bring that back to the commission and get a vote on it. But then in addition to all that, I think that subcommittee should also be involved with determining how we are going to interface between the commission and the mapping people. I think that interface and how we are going to do our work, the processes that we do our work are very important. So that is kind of how I would frame that whole subcommittee.

It's just more than just putting out the RFP. So that's just my thoughts off the top of my head. So I thought that is why I think get the RFPs out in the field quickly is important and how we manage that is important as well so I just wanted to bring that up.

>> Steve: Okay thanks Doug. I appreciate that.

And you know, we just need to get moving on that. No doubt about that. Anybody else before I go back to Sue?

Sue.

>> Sue: Sally was going to jump in here. She has her hand raised.

>> Brittini: Rebecca had a hand raised as well.

>> Sue: I did not see that.

>> That is okay.

>> Sally: Rebecca if you want to go first or I can talk now.

>> I want to comment on the public meetings we need as well and once we get a communications director on, I think it would be prudent for us to move forward with some of those meetings even if we don't have census data because my concern is if we wait, we will end up getting crunched trying to have meetings and trying to draw maps and trying to you know do everything at once. So I'd like to at least you know I think everybody has the goal going in that we want to do more than ten but if at least we start getting our tendon I think it will make things easier when it comes to June and July when we are trying to get more stuff done.

>> Steve: True, Sally.

>> Sally: Just on the RFPs and sort of the process I wanted to kind of provide a bit of an update. So I have been working with Sue and of course Julianne as well on an RFP template that basically starts from what is standard in the Michigan Department of State and other agencies within state Government and really tries to streamline it down to what you are all will need. And take away some of the red tape that can sometimes slow down the process. So our experts on our team who do procurement and RFPs all the time are helping the staff, your staff draft this. We actually intend to have a draft not just template but also a statement of work for your review for at least one of the RFPs if not more than one by next meeting. So you all will have the opportunity to review. I really can't emphasize enough just based on both personal experience and in talking with Chad that my colleague who we have been working with for this procurement is how important it is to get it out the door as soon as we can. You know as all of you have been talking about. So as far as kind of the review processes and what you want to do once you have vendors, I think there is opportunities to talk about that further and certainly procedures that are already used to review written submissions by vendors that you know you all can engage in. But I just want to emphasize like I think you know, and in talking with Sue and Sue feel free to jump in that really our priority in the short term is to present you all with some drafts that you can review, you know, edit, approve, and then get them out the door so that we are limiting the amount of red tape for starting to get vendors in.

>> Sue: We also have Rob Serber who is going to come back on the 21st and talk about more about mapping. And he is a great resource. So as we are looking at that

scope of work, he will be available so the commissioners can ask him questions. And take advantage of the expertise that he brings to us.

>> Steve: Okay, Julianne?

>> Julianne: .

>> Steve: There you are. I don't know about the rest of the commissioners but as far as I'm concerned, you're an integral part of this commission as the general counsel. And unless you have an objection, I'd like you to keep your video on so that we can see you. Thank you.

>> Julianne: That's not a problem at all.

>> Steve: Makes me feel you are more of the process here. Okay, Anthony?

>> Anthony: So two things real quick. I definitely agree with Julianne that while you know the immediate priorities to get the RFPs out, but then, you know, 1B would be to start determining where we are going to have these public meetings. And also the logistics on how we are going to have them with the pandemic going on. There was a question at the last meeting on does it have to be a quorum at the public meeting? And there was also a question on if a public meeting as it says in our Constitution can be completed over Zoom. Now, how I read it is that, yes, there does need to be a quorum. And the meeting does need to be in person in whatever community that you know in the ten or more that we choose to go to. But some clarification on that would be great.

>> Steve: There was some discussion. I don't know Julianne, if you heard that previously. I asked the question of if we could send out a couple of commissioners to have more meetings by doing it that way. So that's kind of what we are at least what I was thinking. I don't think Mike thought that was probably going to work. So I think Anthony is raising that issue again, can we spread ourselves out or do we all have to be there?

Does it have to be in person?

It obviously has to have Zoom visual tech pursuant to the amendment. We have to use that. So if you could bring us a little report on that the next time, the next time or two that would be probably beneficial.

>> Anthony: Go ahead, sorry.

>> Julianne: No I apologize. So one of the items that I volunteered submitted I've already submitted a memo to Sue Ann on that topic and really breaking down the most recent changes in regards to that, I will prepare it in a fashion for the entire commission for your next meeting as you requested but I would like to reassure the commission that you can continue to meet remotely for no reason until the end of March. So your next series of meetings you can hold entirely by Zoom.

>> Steve: Right, I think our question, at least mean is any way, if we are going out in the community, do we -- can we also do those strictly by Zoom?

>> Julianne: I will incorporate that question into the memo and also the hybrid that commissioner Eid mentioned in the question. The initial memo I did Mr. Chairperson was a very narrow question because I was not your official legal sell so counsel so I will go ahead and expand it for the commission and answer the additional questions.

>> Steve: Thank you. Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: My question was along the same lines as though two meetings and just getting information out when I watch our Zoom meetings. Our meetings online on YouTube I noticed that there is hundreds of viewings but not as many as what I liked. So I was thinking and I was going to talk to Julianne about it too is there anything that says that a single commissioner could not reach out to county commissioner boards and that we could come up with something informational wise. Some people may not know that we are even around. Some people might not know where to submit public comment. So would there be anything as long as we did not you know, talk about specific things that should be talked about in meetings, is there any reason why individual commissioners couldn't reach out to county commissioners around them just for informational purposes so the county commissioners can put it out to members of their county and then possibly have them submit, you know, things to us? Is there anything that would prohibit us from doing that especially being a single, you know, one person in the commission as long as we are following the guidelines of not discussing specifics that should be discussed in the meeting?

>> Julianne: So my response commissioner Lange would be that is going to be I think an integral part of the communication plan. That we are going to establish with Mr. Woods. I know in drafting the policies and procedures, the progress has been going very, very well.

Except for the communication policy. Because I really need to have his expertise. But a more direct answer to your question would be so the section 11 prohibition is for members of the commission itself, the staff, or consultants having communications with the public. So the example that you gave would fall under that prohibition. If you were having a discussion or communications with someone not on this board or staff of the board. And the example you gave also talks about educational or informational materials. And, again, my personal opinion is I think that really falls under something that Mr. Woods would want to be involved with, to send to all the county commissioners potentially in the State of Michigan. So that we are reaching the most people, we are reaching and we are giving the same information out to everybody. So that's my initial thought on that question and that topic. I hope that was helpful.

>> Steve: Doug, did you have a comment?

>> Doug: Basically the same thing Julianne just said. I think it needs to be a coordinated effort through the communications director so we have consistency in the messages going out.

>> Steve: Okay we seem to have hijacked your timeline, Sue. So we are back to you.

>> Sue: I appreciate the input. We are working on a lot of these things. So, you know, I think we need to get the communications and outreach director on board as quickly as possible. And hopefully we can get the negotiations underway and bring back the offer letter and the contract next week for the commission to approve. So if all goes well, we will -- I will work with Doug and Juanita to make that happen.

And I mean that really is an integral part. You know I think if we get our consultants on board, I think that is key, Doug has talked about that many, many times. And I do believe that can be streamlined most easily by bringing drafts to the commission. Again, you can accept, reject, edit, whatever you want. But especially for the scope of work as we reach out to the experts in these fields, Sally and Sarah have agreed to help draft the scope of work. So we can make sure we have those comprehensive and we will bring the format to you next week. So you can see the format for the bidding process. And that will show some of the timelines and the procedures. And how long it will take. And you know, I think it's very possible that we can have people in place in February, latest sometime in March. So we need these people in place before the other states who are all hiring these same consultant positions get the best people. We want to be able to be in line to get the highest qualified people and not get the leftovers.

As far as public hearings I was thinking a little bit more about, you know, starting those in -- I mean right now we know we are under a pandemic order that is not friendly to having in-person meetings. So I was thinking maybe if we looked more towards April, May for those meetings, but again there is a lot of planning involved an ahead of that and it may take until that time to get a lot of these set up.

Again, that is a conversation with the communications director.

And then we probably will not get final census data until July maybe. So.

>> Steve: I think when I was reading the article, they were looking at hopefully June 1st, I think.

>> Sue: That would be awesome. That would be great.

>> Steve: Everything it's a moving target and it keeps getting further away.

>> Sue: Yes, and we have to comply with our Constitution. So we will need to do what we can do ahead of time. And then be prepared so that census data can be layered in at whatever point it comes to us. So that is really all I had. I just wanted a sense of if there is anything else you wanted us to focus on and Anthony what do you have to say?

>> Anthony: This might be more of a question for Sarah and Mr. Brady, but is there any question to or should we be prepared for any questions about the legitimacy of the census data given that it was taken during you know a pandemic?

And quite likely it might be under reported. If there is a challenge to it, how would we then proceed?

>> Steve: Well, under reporting is not new in Michigan. Historically Detroit has always claimed that they were under reporting and when they were dropping -- when they dropped below a million people, they really got excited. And sued the census Bureau claiming they were wrong. You know certainly this commission I don't believe is probably prepared to Sue the census Bureau. And I think we are going to end up being stuck with what we are stuck with. If Julianne has a better answer than that, I will be happy to hear it.

>> Julianne: Yes, it's my understanding that the city and the city is already moved towards making those challenges. My advice would be that the commission continue with its work until there is any determinations on it. We will use the data we have available until that's changed. But it is definitely a good thing to keep in mind. And to monitor which I'm already doing.

>> Steve: I think we are going to be stuck with tweaking this data right up until the last day. And, you know, I mean we have -- we as this commission really have no way to affect what the census Bureau puts out. Detroit certainly wasn't very successful in it when they challenged it. They still went below a million people which doesn't make a difference at that time because if you are over a million people it's a huge difference. Julianne.

>> Anthony: I would like to hear really quick what Sally has to say she has been trying to talk for a minute.

>> Sally: Julianne did you have something specifically.

>> Steve: We are on a roll Sally don't slow us down there.

>> Julianne: There is challenges to the process as well as what the results are likely to be. And yes, we had to change quite a few state laws, in fact, for the population thresholds particularly when we dropped under 750,000 in the city of Detroit.

>> Sally: And I would just under score kind of one of the I think the key takeaways of what Julianne just said you all will still proceed. You will proceed with what you have. Steve was just mentioning that. What I would say though related to I think part of your question Anthony is about kind of the unique challenges of this particular census and you know, both in the fact that during the collection the pandemic hit and really impacted the census Bureau's ability to collect the data they need. And they are also doing for the first time differential privacy which you heard Eric Guthrie talk about in a presentation a couple weeks ago and that is a new method that they are utilizing. And so what I would also say Anthony I think to sort of your broader question is that when you have the data and when the data is final, I think there will be experts like Eric Guthrie and Rob Serber folks to help you understand the dynamics that are happening within the data. And how things have changed or how things are the same. And you all will sort of be able to take that into account with all the other factors that you have.

>> Steve: Certainly I would expect the mapping people are thinking about all of this stuff right now. And they have been through it more than we have certainly. And we

will be able to also explain to us here is what is going on and here is when the numbers are coming out. Here is what you can do with them. Here is how you change them and all that stuff. So we are you know we are not census people. We are not mapping people. But hopefully we hire the right people that know what they're doing. If that's possible in today's world to know what you're doing which maybe it's not.

Okay, anything else on the big picture timeline?

Okay, upcoming meeting agenda items. Obviously, one will be to approve the negotiations and contract with Ed. And that will come back and we are meeting next Thursday if my calendar was right. The 21st. Sue, what have we potentially got?

>> Sue: So in addition to approving Edward and by the way I did ask and he does prefer to be called Edward so just so everybody knows. We will also have Rob Serber coming then to present more on mapping. Recently we sent something out that he had provided, so we will send that out again so you can take a look at that.

We will have a draft RFP for mapping, so you can look at the format of the RFP as a commission. And you can also look at that scope of the work and then determine if that is indeed the scope of the work that you wish to have happen.

Also, you can look at the procedures like Doug mentioned to make sure that this commission is going to get what it needs in order to do its job. So I think that will pretty much if I'll that meeting. It is scheduled from 1:00-4:00. So that is a three-hour meeting on the 21st.

Also on the 28th then I want to make sure we have some time to talk about budget. And taking a look at where we are, where we are headed. And if we will need to ask for additional resources, what our strategy may be there. So that will be a very important discussion. I want to say we have been working on really tight timelines. We've had three meetings here, two business days apart. So for people it's hard to get things turned around and back out to you so you have ample time to read it. So in the future we are going to work harder to make sure that you have what you need earlier so you have more time for review. Despite our tight timelines. So that is my commitment. I really want you to have more time to review so you come to the meetings fully prepared to discuss and ask your questions and then make the determinations you need to make.

>> Steve: Well that is wonderful but I can tell you as we get further into this process the timelines are going to get shorter and we are probably going to start meeting about five days a week. And then we will take two days to catch up. But we will see if my prediction comes true.

You're going to -- we are going to earn our salary. Let's put it that way.

Anybody else have anything they want to be sure is on the agenda item so we can get it on there?

But we are not talking about already. I mean, it's pretty clear. We got to get the RFPs out before the census for the mapping people and the census people to get the experts on board. So we don't have to -- I mean we are already building this plane as we are

flying it. Let's get the engines on anyway. If not does anybody have any -- oh, February and March calendar meetings, we have some ideas about that, Sue?

>> Sue: Possibly MDOS staff could ask people what days they may or may not be open and we could get some meetings scheduled for February and March and try to get them on people's calendars so then we have our marching orders and we with can set these times aside.

>> Steve: We will send some e-mails out on that you or Sally or whoever is going to do that and either ask for dates from everybody or give dates that we are thinking about. So we can do that instead of everybody sitting here looking at their calendars on here.

Doug?

>> Doug: Yes, as I recall, we need to give sufficient notice out on the website prior to a meeting. I forget how many days it was.

>> Steve: That is correct yes.

>> Doug: We need to deal with that because February is coming up, quick.

>> Not only on the Internet but post it on the building which we are doing at the Secretary of State's Office right now.

>> Doug: We are halfway through January already. So we are using the time.

>> Steve: The other thing we can do is we can publish the dates and then we can change them. And the change is quicker than the publishing itself.

>> Doug: Correct, correct.

>> Steve: Okay, anything else?

For the good of the group?

All right, following our enhanced procedure, I take a motion to adjourn from somebody.

>> Dustin: So moved.

>> Steve: Second?

Juanita seconded it all in favor raise your hand and wave good-bye. [Hands raised]
Have a nice day.

>> Steve: Have a nice weekend everybody.

>> Juanita: Be well everyone.

[Meeting concludes at 11:08 a.m.]