

ICRC

12/04/20 Meeting

Captioned by Q&A Reporting, Inc., [www.qacaptions.com](http://www.qacaptions.com)

>> Steve Lett: We'll try this one more time. Good afternoon, everyone. As chair of the commission I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order. The Zoom webinar is being livestreamed to Facebook and YouTube. For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform than they currently are using, please visit our social media at Redistricting MI to find the link for viewing on YouTube. Our livestream today includes closed captioning. We have ASL interpretation available for this meeting. If you are a member of the public watching who would like easier viewing options for ASL interpreter on your screen, email us at [redistricting@michigan.gov](mailto: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 email us at [redistricting@michigan.gov](mailto: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 email us and we will provide you with a unique link and call-in information. This meeting is being recorded and will be available at [redistrictingmich.org](http://redistrictingmich.org) for viewing at a later date. This meeting is being transcribed and those transcriptions will be made available and posted on [redistrictingmich.org](http://redistrictingmich.org) along with written public comment submissions. Members of the media who may have questions before or during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Tracy Weimer, media relations director at the Department of State. Members of the media should have her contact information. For purposes of the public watching and the public record, I will turn to the Department of State staff to take note of the commissioners present. Sally, would you kindly call the roll?

>> Good afternoon, everyone. 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.

>> Janice Vallette.

>> Present.

>> Juanita Curry.

>> Present.

>> MC Rothhorn.

>> Present.

>> Rebecca Szetela.

>> Present.

>> Rhonda Lange.

>> Present.

>> Richard Weiss.

>> Present.

>> Steve Lett.

>> Present.

>> All commissioners are present.

>> Steve: Everybody being present and online, we have a quorum and can continue on with our business. We have an agenda that you should have received. Are there any additions, deletions or new business that we need to add to that agenda? If not and you would approve the agenda, kindly raise your hand. Okay. That's unanimous on the agenda. Next, will be a review of the minutes that were provided previously from yesterday's meeting. I have had an opportunity to read through those. Hopefully, you all have. Are there any corrections, additions or deletions that need to be made to the minutes?

If not, and you would approve the minutes, kindly raise your hand. Okay. That's unanimous. Public comment. It's my understanding that we do have public comment today. A few notes about the public comment for those of you who maybe joining us for the first time. Because this is a virtual meeting, members of the public have to sign up in advance to address the Commission. Staff at the Department of State will unmute each member of the public for up to 2 minutes on a first come, first serve basis. This means 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 the public comment, please note that you will have no more than 2 minutes to address the commission at this meeting. You can also submit your thoughts to the commission and the public by emailing [redistricting@michigan.gov](mailto:redistricting@michigan.gov). The Department of State will provide your written thoughts to the Commission. By indicating in that email 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 on Redistricting Michigan's social media pages, on Facebook and Twitter at Redistricting MI. A note on the public comments that are written to us. I would rest – I would assure

all of you in the public that may be listening that in fact we do get those and we do read them. Now, I would recognize Sally Marsh from the Michigan Department of State special projects who will call on members of the public to address the Commission. Sally.

who would call on member the of the public to address the Commission.

>> Sally: Hello, it appears that the individual who signed up is actually not on the meeting. So, I think we can move on to the next agenda item.

>> Steve: Well, that's unfortunate. We were all looking forward to that. The next item on the agenda is a webinar presentation for the Michigan redistricting data. The moderator is Matt Grossman, Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research and Professor of Political Science at Michigan State University. Also, today we have Rob Surber, technology management and budget with the State of Michigan. Matt. You're the moderator. I am.

>> Matt: I am. Great to be back with you.

>> Steve: Okay. Introduce yourself and Rob, we're sitting here just waiting to be educated.

>> Matt: Excellent. Well, I'm excited to get into the details of some of the data that you'll be using. And I was able to listen in yesterday. So, I know you have lots of relevant questions on the details. And I believe Rob is – Rob was on the call. Yes, he's still there. So, Rob, as Steve said, is the enterprise portfolio manager Office Director the Michigan Department of Management, Technology and Budget. He has more than 25 years of experience in IT-related leadership positions including project management and data analytics and oversees IT projects across the state that have a value of \$800 million. And most importantly for our purposes, he is the state-designated non-partisan lead for the State of Michigan's decennial redistricting program in partnership with the census bureau. So, he'll be an important source for you all. Take it away, Rob.

>> Rob: Thank you, Matt. And hopefully you can hear me okay. I'm going to move to share my screen here in a moment. So, bear with me. Can you see the screen?

>> We can't yet.

>> Rob: Okay. One moment. One moment here. Let's try this again. There we go. I think this is...

>> Now we see it.

>> Is that better? Okay. Great. Okay. Well, again, thank you for the opportunity to come and speak to the commission here. And I'm -- I'm going to sort of give you an overview and some background on a program that the State of Michigan is involved in for quite a few years. It's officially called the Michigan Enhanced Redistricting Data Access Program. And there is a committee that actually oversees that particular work. So, I'm going to hopefully be able to move my slides here. Just one moment. There we go.

So, a little bit of history I think is in order for the commission here. And that is this program originally started as a project. Began in 1989. Quite a few years ago. And the effort was to start Michigan's participation in what the US Census Bureau calls the redistricting program. And Michigan is not unique to that program. Most states, even at that time, many states, participated in what the Census Bureau had set up to really ensure that the best, most accurate, timely information for each state, in this case, Michigan, was provided to the Federal Government processes to ultimately come back as data products that would best support what each state's redistricting process was. It is always been a non-partisan function. It's only been focused on providing the data and information to support the redistricting process. So, Michigan raised its hand and started that in 1989 for the 1990 -- the 1990 decennial process for the redistricting. Now, at that time Michigan had great interest from not just one area, whether it be management and budget which I was a part of, but as you know, the legislature and also the Secretary of State, the governor's Office, all four quadrants of the legislature participated as sponsors. They all recognized at that time that -- that the best data possible would help to facilitate the redistricting process. So, right from the start, a project was initiated that had really bipartisan support both at the Senate and the House, Republicans and Democrats, as well as the Secretary of State at that time and the Governor at that time. The team was asked from -- at that time it was the Department of Management and Budget, a technical team to help facilitate what would be the actual data project to support it. I think one of the important points to this group was that they recognized that the actual tasks of redrawing boundaries could be separated from the actual collection and making sure data was the best it could be. And so, that -- that was part of what the -- what the group worked on. Now, kind of in light of that, there were some specific project goals at that time. And the first goal was, as I alluded to earlier, they wanted to create a high-quality, timely -- timely is key because of the tight time frames within the redistricting process -- they wanted to create the bipartisan database that could be used by all committee stakeholders. Okay? to help with this process. The other important component of this at that time, geographic information systems or the computer mapping components, were just coming into existence. And so, the Census Bureau did the community a great favor in making sure the data could work with at that time it was PCs and the computes environment was a lot different. But in any case, what the committee asked the project team to do was to provide what would be data and then also some base mapping software for all committee participants. And the importance of that was that not only did they get the data and the equipment, but there was also training to ensure every stakeholder had an equal starting point from which to then begin to do their work. The second goal was to maintain a firm separation of the committee functions, the things that the group was working on around data, and then all the deliverables that came out that have. And specific, also, the team members that were doing the work from any actual formal

redrawing of district boundaries. That line was never to be crossed. In other words, the data was is something that was common to all. It was important that it was the best it could be. But that any actual redistricting or drawing was taken and done in a separate place by separate -- potentially separate functions and so forth. Okay? So, that was the second goal. The third goal was to -- to bring forward historic data throughout the project. And it continued to facilitate historic trend analysis. The importance there is to ensure that there's, you know, data that matches and is brought forward and integrated. So, you have not just one point in time, but you actually have historical ways to compare the past with the present. And that was something that continued on in the project. Now, again, this is -- this is a very important point in that initial project was delivered in 1991 or thereabouts. But we called it the 1990 project delivery. Excuse me. The team then delivered that. But also the participants as it progressed into the next cycle into 2000, ultimately 2010 and even this cycle. There's a lot of the common people involved in the start continued throughout. Some of the project sponsors, the political leaders, the Governor, the Secretary of State changed, but there was continued support to continue the process. And so, actually, the Committee continued even if it took a bit of a break between the censuses to continue to provide the information on a regular basis. There's actually deliveries in the last 30 years. Another important part is as signed agreements were established, it enabled the leadership in the legislature, in the Secretary of State, governors, to re-evaluate, do we still support this in a bipartisan way? And so, we had numerous signed agreements throughout the past 30 years. Also, numerous governors, Blanchard, Engler, Granholm, Snyder and currently Whitmer have been part of this process. It was successful enough that in 2011 the group decided to sort of continue it without a break so that the data could be kept up to date and be more timely. The other thing is the project team had a GIS data developer, a support team and project manager throughout the process for continued support. Another important component is the Michigan Department of State elections does provide ongoing election data support to ensure that the election information is current and accurate. I think the other important point here is that Michigan is fairly unique in that this project to create sort of this common data has been in existence for this long and it does have the longevity and consistency. Others have programs and groups working on this, but I think this is pretty -- pretty unique in that it's been some of the same people throughout the whole process. So, there's a lot of knowledge that's helped it to continue and make sure that there's accuracy and support throughout this 30 years. A little bit about my background, I was actually involved with the project since 1989. I'm sort of dating myself a bit. And I started there as part of the quality control within the data production in 1990. I was also involved through '92 through '95 in providing technical support. IT support, software support and to the Michigan Attorney General and the Federal Courts in several legal cases that came out that have. Sort of a bipartisan or a non-partisan support process that was set up through our team and a

few others. In 2000, I was a project manager for the cycle. 2010, I was a sponsor for the actual project team. In 2015 I was named as the Michigan non-partisan designee to this process through the US Census Bureau. Through the 2020 cycle. So, I'm in that role currently. And I also, as was stated, I currently in my -- wearing my other hat, I direct the enterprise portfolio management office here for the state. Okay? Now, in the data, it's all about the data, right? So, in the data, it's integrated and there's three major deliverables and I kind of wanted to cover that to kind of give a framework for which we can build on. The three types of data is not unique to Michigan. These are data that any state that's involved in this process really can and are using in a variety of ways. The first is boundaries. And the boundaries are within important part of making sure you have the location. Because redistricting is about district boundaries with location. And that's a very critical piece. And the Census Bureau helps us greatly by providing common information. Census. And that's there primarily through the public law 94.71. That's to ensure population -- equal population -- or population requirements are met. As well as some of the racial fairness questions that are important as part of a fair plan. And then the election data. Which is -- is vote data that's, you know, political party-type votes. But election data can be used from a partisan standpoint. But it also is a very important part to use for fairness and ensure that a plan has fairness from a political standpoint. The boundaries and the map boundaries that we have and that we have been providing represent a variety of levels that are important to the redistricting process. So, we have State Senate. And the State Senate, the boundaries are -- there's 38 of those. The most recent State House there's 110 of those. US House, there's 14 through the last cycle and the census will determine how many congressional districts we get in the next round. Voting for over jurisdiction in the state, most recent, 2020. Census blocks and I will talk about that. And the Cities and townships. Currently there are 1516, 10240 townships that complete the complete geography of the state. There's nothing not in a city or township. Those fit within the 83 county structure mostly. Now, that's the geography. The boundary -- or the census data is the public law data which is created and has been created since 1975. But this -- this data we have used in 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020 and it's coming in 2020. But basically, at a high level, it includes the total population, voting population, racial categories, Hispanic origin and housing units. Mostly. I'm just giving you high-level what the major categories are. And as I said earlier, any later delivery after 1990 includes the previous deliveries. So, we have been able to pull that forward for comparison purposes. And you can see now in the election data, that similarly, now in '90, what was provided and what was a part of the project was all general election vote data. And that's for all federal and Michigan statewide district races. So, anything at a statewide level had a general election. It started in 1984. '86, '88 and '90. So, all of the previous election data tabulations for those years were included in the '90 delivery. And then that continued. So, in 2000, you had '92, 4, 6, 8. And 2000, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. And 2020 similarly. You can see how

each delivery also included the previous decade's worth of information as well. All integrated so, if needed, you can sort of look at votes during general elections for the statewide races, okay? The other important part of the election data is that it is statewide, but as also consolidated. Some races have more than one candidate in a particular political party. The data is collapsed for more simplicity purposes for each of the identified races. President, Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, US House, Senate, State House, State Senate, University of Ed, Michigan State, Wayne State and Supreme Court. Okay? So, that information is provided and is made available. In each of those years that we talked about. Now, once that data is collected, the other important piece is that it's sort of pieced together like a puzzle between the map, census data that I talked about, and the election data. All three are a critical piece. And the important part is it sort of comes down, and the major point of the integration, if I say, you know, kind of the piecing it all together, happens at the census block. So, what is a census block? Some of you may know this. I apologize if it's review. But I just to want to make sure everybody is on the same page when I say "Census block" what that means. It is kind of the smallest unit in the census that they use to tabulate the data. It doesn't -- the data is not available below a census block. In the city, it's often a city block in urban areas. A regular city block generally represents what a census block is. And if you think about it, the census blocks are really made up of what you would call physical map features or bounded by some form of physical map features like roads, rivers, railroads. But the boundary could be part of a non-physical boundary like a city or a township boundary or some other political boundary, county boundary, okay? You can see the map on the screen. And the green boundaries are representing by the block numbers. And this is somewhat of an urban area. You can see the block groups. They actually group them by -- into block groups which are the first digit of a block number. All the 5,000s are like block group 5, right? And all the ones in 1,000 for a community is block group 1. And then those are nested into larger units called tracts. Census tracts. Which then in turn can be county-based. So, they all kind of fit within a county. We don't integrate at those other levels because really if you can integrate at the block level with the election and census data, then you can build up to anything that you might need at that -- from that point forward. So, the real integration, and I don't want to kind of come with this formula to make it too complicated, but I just wanted to indicate that there is methodology to ensure votes. Because votes are only submitted as precinct -- at precinct level. So, how do you get it down to actually a block? Well, in this case, we have voting-age populations with the public law data for every block. So, let's say you have a block, or a precinct that has a hundred blocks in it. With each a population of one voting age population. If you have a hundred votes, each block gets one vote. It's essentially an assigned by the ratio of the one block's voting age to the total voting age. If it's one vote per block, then at the precinct level, they would be assigned to each of the blocks. That's a simplistic way of

looking at it. But that's how it's done. It's done consistently like that and it's explainable and it's somewhat based on the potential age for voting because of the voting age ratio. That's the -- there's other details, and I won't go into that, but that's one of the basic features of the process to ensure, again, the best possible information for comparison purposes that we can provide. Okay? Now, once that data is sort of pieced together, so for each of those election years, 2012, 2014, we collect precinct boundaries. Because cities and townships change their precinct boundaries throughout the decade depending on -- they don't want too many long lines in precincts. They'll split a precinct if a population is expanding. There are some changes throughout the decade. Each general election year, we're ensuring that there's the accurate precinct boundary information that's used to then divide that data down to the census block. So, all of those activities are gonna occur here really right before we make the final deliveries. Because in the case of this slide shows we have all this data. But there's so much that goes into ensuring you have quality control and quality assurance so that there's no votes, there's no population missed that's correctly assigned to the right geographic area. Whether it be a city or a township. One of the real strong features of this committee is its commitment to accuracy as best we can to ensure all votes are accounted for. Another piece to this is that the absentee votes are also included in all of the -- in all of the election data as well. So, again, do all the -- does everything sum up? Do we have, you know, if you sum it up from the census block? Do you sum up from the cities and townships? The legislative districts? They all sum up to the same totals so you're not missing anything at any point. And that part of the process then comes down into the final delivery that's made. And that final delivery that's gonna -- we call it the 2020 delivery. And you can see how it's laid out here. But you have the GIS map layers, state, county, 2020 cities and townships. 2012 House, Senate, State House, State Senate, US House districts. And then 2020 voting districts which are essentially precincts. That's a term, voting district is the term Census Bureau uses. But it's essentially the precincts. And then census blocks. And you can see here that for each of those geographic map regions, we have 2020 census data in the delivery, 2010, 2000, 1990 and then the general election for all of those geographies, we've got 84, starting in 1984. And every general election since then through the most recent in the 2020 election will have that in there for all of those. So, that really forms the basis for this data delivery. Okay? Now, the upcoming schedule, if you're interested in knowing kind of what the to be. We don't have all the information for 2020 quite yet. And with COVID, it's been a bit of a challenge. Census Bureau is trying to work through their challenges, of course, and it's delayed it some. But current lit latest -- and we just had a meeting with the Census Bureau recently. And they are predicting that they're gonna have towards February, maybe the end of February, the map data that I was referring to. And that is going to be very critical. Because it's going to include all of the changes in maps between the 2010 census and the 2020. Why is that important? Well, cities

could annex portions of areas around them. Sometimes villages become cities. New blocks are created because we have some new subdivisions or new population changes within the population. So, that census map is a very critical piece to ensuring we have the latest boundaries to draw on. So, we don't get that until probably, you know, towards the end of February. So, that's the first thing. Excuse me. Then the next one is late February, early March, we have the 2020 general election vote database. Currently, that is being worked on. The most recent election. And that's not going to be entirely in a form that we can start to work with until late February or early March. Finally, they're saying normally April 1st was the due date for the public law from 1974 to 2020. But because of COVID, they're saying generally in the spring. Could be mid-April. Might be May. They weren't quite sure. And so, really, we can't do anything until all three of these things come in -- come in and are all together before we finally filter it down and build the final database. Now, we are saying that probably between 30 and 60 days after all the 2020 data is received. So, you know, if we get two out of the three, it's still not all ready yet. We need all three to be able to do the work. So, if the data is all in good shape and there's no potential quality concerns or other issues, technical issues, that come up, we're thinking maybe a month in terms of turning that around and the complete delivery. But if there are potential challenges, and it happens. And there's a lot of data. There's a lot of things to look at. And the committee has always been very, you know, they've stressed. We want the best data possible. So, do the best job you can and if it takes a little longer, that's okay. Because, you know, ultimately that will help us, you know, do whatever. So, that's -- so, we're saying, it could be up to maybe 60 days. Depending on the quality issues that come in and some of the work that has to be done. And the final thing here is that the committee is open to making this available to the ICRC if it so desires at the time that the committee is getting the information it can also be made available. So, I think the, you know, the important part of that is that I have been talking about the data. And, of course, important part is that it needs obviously software and some hardware and some, you know, some people to kind of run that -- run reports and so forth. I know that's probably overstating it, but I just want to make sure that this is the data file for that. Now, the important part to this data file, though, is one of the features of what the committee's requirements is that it can be easily loaded into mapping software and to make reports and plans and, you know, analysis and any of that could be useful for the process. So, that is still gonna be the case. We do a lot of our own testing on some common mapping soft quarter wave to ensure quality. So, it's -- we already know that it can work with some of the major -- major products out there. So, with that, that kind of concludes my -- my formal presentation. You can see my contact informs here. And I believe that will provide the slides for you and you'll have this. But that's my phone number and my office email as well.

So, with that, I think we can open it up for questions. And maybe what you will do is I'll stop sharing, if I can do that, and then put it back to -- to the group. Is that -- is that stopped? Can everyone see me okay?

>> chair: Yes. Yep. We can all see everyone. So, yes, if you have a question, raise your hand and I'll try to bring forward some questions from yesterday too. Anthony, you want to start?

>> Anthony: Yes, thank you for that presentation, Rob. It was definitely very informative. I have a question on the age distribution in the voting block that you mentioned about maybe 15 minutes ago. You said that it's calculated based on age. When yesterday we heard that, you know, and we all know Michigan's population is aging. So, I'm just wondering, is that data updated to account for people that might just be turning 18? And also, updated for people that may pass away between elections?

>> That's a great question and I'm glad you asked that. Sometimes it's hard to know how far down into the presentation to go. But this is a great topic. The foundation for all the age-related data that we use for the committee is based on the census data that's taken at the time of this past census. So, if somebody takes -- and they are 18 at that point -- they become a part of that voting age population. And that's a critical threshold. Anybody 18 and over at time of census becomes part of that cohort, essentially. And that's really the foundation for what we use. It's -- it's really that point in time. And so, as far as if a population took the census, whatever age, if they're deceased, they wouldn't have taken the census. So, it's everybody that takes the census at that time last year during the census cycle. And that's for the 2020. So, any of the -- the foundational calculations would only be in use 2020. We're not using 2010 or any previous. It's only the current. Yeah.

>> Thank you.

>> Matt: So, Rob, yesterday, they heard from Eric Guthrie who was talking about data available for state health and business and things like that. Is the committee going to be hands off after they hand the data product off to the commission in terms of integrating other data? And if so, are you gonna sort of -- is there a list that the state has of vendors who are capable of working with the data or any other kind of advice you have for the commission handling that handoff?

>> Rob: Sure. So, let me put a couple -- that's a great question, thank you. And by the way, Eric Guthrie does sit as an adviser to the committee. So, he's plugged in and is a great resource. It sounds like you already talked to him. Let me just say kind of as a disclaimer, any -- obviously we defer to this commission on any requests, obviously. And this is commissions, you know, prerogative in terms of what they're asking for. As far as the committee's focus and, you know, mission, it's really been about this data. And about delivering this -- this particular product. If there would be any -- I would -- I couldn't speak -- I mean, I would have to go back in the committee and say, hey, is there any interest? Because at this time, there's not any in scope. That's what I would

say. As far as other vendors, you know, that's an interesting -- I think -- I think one of the important pieces to that would be to ensure whatever data, and I know there's some other data out there and certainly Eric is an expert in some of that information, I would say that it would be important to ensure that the -- if it was let's say for this commission, that whatever integrations done, it's done at a quality acceptable to the commission's, you know, tolerance for accuracy and so forth. So, I guess it would be data -- data-dependent, you know? Because some of the data isn't at the block level. So, again, that would have to be -- that's been an important part of our committee process. Is this an acceptable process? Do you still feel that this is accurate enough to, you know -- and we have those discussions. I'm sure it would be a similar discussion with the commission. But given that that's -- there probably are some datasets, I would think, given that -- that could be open for discussion. We are -- I wouldn't be able to speak on behalf of the committee. I would need to go back to the Committee and ask if there's any integration they would also want to help provide or so forth. But at this time, I'm sure there are -- there are groups that can do some of that. And, you know, maybe we could, you know, have another discussion maybe at a later point depending on the types of data if you wanted my opinion on, you know, what the possibilities were there. I will say that the process we -- we use for the -- for this committee's work probably is not too dissimilar so how you would ensure you would make sure it's all accounted for in each of the blocks and some of the GIS manipulation is somewhat similar. But it would depend. Hopefully that's not too long of an answer. But I was trying to make sure that, you know, I didn't overstep my bounds.

>> No, we appreciate that. Thank you.

>> Matt: So, we also heard -- sorry, Erin, go ahead.

>> Erin: I was just wondering, we heard yesterday that the Census Bureau is not going to meet until -- will not meet in December and will likely miss the April meeting. And with all these various datasets that we're waiting on, is there a potential date that we're looking at receiving that data?

>> Rob: Well, so, that's a great question. I've heard anywhere between mid -- and, again, this is the latest I've heard. But again, it's not definitive. The latest may be mid-April, mid-May. I would say at the furthest out, if we get it in mid-April, let's say, at hypothetically, that that's when they deliver, and I believe the public law data, the census data, is going to be the last data delivered. Based on what the election data is gonna be, I would predict the public law data to be the last. So, let's say mid-April I would say mid-June for that delivery mid-April. If it's mid-May, it's going to be about mid-July. I think it's a couple months at the outer window is what we're predicting to get it all packaged up and ready to go. And I'm hopeful, you know, that spring is, you know, May -- Mayish time frame. But we're thinking 60 days at the outer limits. That's kind of a target to plan on.

>> Matt: So, we also talked yesterday about a couple of the problems with the census data. We talked about differential privacy at the block level, about county renters versus homeowners and about potential undercounts. Is there anything that I guess that the Committee does about those potential problems? Or ways that the commission should consider them?

>> Rob: So, it's a great question. And I know is the Census Bureau, and Eric is an expert on that. I know they're doing all they can to ensure everybody's accounted for. That there's no privacy considerations that are, you know, out there. And I guess what I would say, the Committee understands that the Census Bureau will continue to make the best adjustments in the time frame they have. But we are in -- under such a tight time frame to deliver, we generally work with the formal deliveries that come out. And I know that sometimes after the formal redistricting data deliveries, they can come up with adjustments later, right? Through the official processes. Depending on how -- how that syncs up with the timing needed to get the work done. I guess that's still an open question. Normally -- I'll just speak from historical purposes. We have -- we have -- because it's been an ongoing program, we have made some potential adjustments later in the cycle. But I don't recall any statistic adjustments that were able to be sort of agreed upon and then put into our database for the actual timely delivery of the redistricting process. I'm just, you know, that's historically kind of the tightness of it. Now, I think the committee is open to, you know, some of that. And if there's time to make adjustments, they have been always open to saying, we want the best available. If it's timely. So, I think that's a timing discussion. And but certainly the actual changing of, let's say a vote because of a challenge in the census, that's not hard to do. Related to if we have the machinery to create the current product, adding that later is something that can be done provided it's timely enough for the redistricting cycle. So, I know that's a long answer, but I don't recall in previous cycles having enough time to get that part of it in before the boundaries need to be done. So, that's just my background of what we've experienced in the past. Not that these are not critical issues. And hopefully some can be addressed before the cycle. If needed. Other questions? I think -- and maybe in one of my slides I mentioned general elections' data. We do not collect primary data as a source. That was a decision the committee made back in the day. And so, it's only general election votes. For the dataset.

>> Matt: One of the ways that came up previously is that the Voting Rights Act panel suggested that if you're evaluating a group like say Hispanic voters, you have to kind of consider if they vote for -- not just if they exist in a geography, but that if they tend to vote for certain kinds of candidates. So, one way to do that was to look in the -- in the primary data. Another way was to look at the demographics of the candidates. Is there any -- I guess is there any data that's provided about -- so, we have who -- what the votes went for. But do we know anything about those candidates to make that analysis?

>> Rob: That's a great question. We have not -- we've only focused on the official database that's sort of tabulated by the Department of State Bureau of Elections coming from all the clerks at the city and townships levels in the county. That database does not include that demographic information. So, that's been our total focal point at this time. I'm assuming maybe that data is out there, obviously. It's a fairly straightforward question. I just -- I'm not sure, you know, how that's collected and how that could be added to it. I'm just -- I'm not aware.

>> Matt MC?

>> MC: Rob, I think when you were talking about the project goals for the committee. There was something about training for the committee stakeholders. Because we're going to be tight on our timeline, yeah, I'm wondering if there's ways that we can -- be trained. I know we're not the committee stakeholders. But I was wondering if there's ways you can help us train. Because what I'm imagining, as we get trained, that we're also helping fellow citizens in training and sort of understanding how we're gonna want to take this in. And I think we're gonna need to understand how we want people to give us information so that -- and we have to have some sort of map and have a very clear process. The more training and include as many stakeholders. Yeah.

>> Rob: That's a great question. Let me explain what this Committee has done and explain our process and go from there. This Committee has agreed to try to come up with some software that all the committee members like. So, what we've done in the past is we've looked out at the industry. Again, this is not -- this is kind of basic software, right? We're not trying to -- what is out there? What's available? We've brought it back -- as a project team, we brought it back to the committee. Says here's two, three, four examples of products that are pretty mainstream, not too cutting edge. They're just mainstream products. Here's their capabilities. What we've done in the past is we've actually done a bit of a demonstration of each product. We've had it come in and say, here's what this product does. And give the committee a chance to ask questions. Sometimes they'll say, here's the questions -- general questions. Not -- but, you know, we want to be able to make a map. Or we want to be able to make a report or do some different analysis. And so, we'll send those to the let's say possible vendors. And then they'll come and go through it with us. Then the committee will then look at the results of that. We'll help facilitate it. But they'll say, we think -- and then we'll also give them, you know, roughly pricing and here's generally the licensing. And at the end of the day, the Committee makes that decision. It's a bipartisan, non-partisan committee. They'll make -- this is the product that we think is best as the foundational product that we can all sort of agree to use. And they've done that each time. We've literally gone through that usually, you know, at a certain point. And then we've purchased that for the Committee. We've helped set it up. And then we've done training based on that product that the Committee -- with the data that, you know, that we have. And in case usually it's a little before the final data. But you can use previous

data, right? And you can sort of get them familiar with it. And make sure core functionality, they understand how to turn it on. How to make a map or how to do an analysis or a report. And just make sure nobody is at a disadvantage. Everybody has the same common information and can get it. And in the case of this Committee, we've actually purchased the hardware/software for them and helped them get it at least loaded and printers or whatever. And then everybody has the same starting point. That's where then we stop and everybody did their whatever work. So, that was the sort of the -- how that worked. And it seemed to work pretty well so that everybody felt comfortable with that product. And again, this cycle, you know, we're doing that for the committee. We've gotten some hardware. We've picked a product and that sort of thing. That's kind of how we've done it. And it's -- it's just sort of the common -- so, everybody has a good starting point. Does that help you at all in any way? To answer your question?

>> MC: I think so. And Matt, back when you were with us maybe a month ago, you gave us some software, some suggestions for mapping software to play with. Does that sound familiar, Matt? Maybe you asked us about it, but it was mapping software. Is that some of the stuff -- do you know -- was that some of the same software that the committee maybe evaluated?

>> Matt: Yeah. I'm sure it's the same list of three or four products that Rob makes the data ready to go for.

>> MC: Thank you. That's the answer to my question, thank you.

>> Sally: MC, if I could just quick add to that, I want to be sure we're totally clear what software means in this context. You may have seen lists, Maptitude or ESRI, the links to online redistricting games where you can kind of play around with old data, that's not really software, right? So, like the kind of thing -- why Rob is saying like "Product" is that it's an actual -- you have to purchase it. It's a product that a company maintains over time. So, this sort of equation of data plus software plus the individuals who actually do the mapping. Rob's kind of speaking to a couple of those different things at the same time.

>> Steve: Well, I guess one of the things I think our members on the Commission are asking for and that is some names of vendors that we can go out and say, okay. We're gonna need to draw maps and we're gonna have certain types of data. You give us three, four, five names. Are those available? Rob or Matt?

>> Rob: Yeah. We can -- we can provide that to you. I mean, from our perspective, we did some research. We can give you the list of ones we looked at. Matt, you probably have some others. We can combine 'em or however that would best work.

>> Steve: Can you get those to Sally or myself? I don't care which.

>> Rob: Absolutely.

>> Steve: Thank you.

>> Rob: Yeah.

>> Matt: So, Rob, another thing that they have to consider at some point in the criteria is measures of partisan fairness. You're giving them kind of this data on individual election outcomes. So, could you, I guess, talk a little bit about it. If you got the data, what would be the sort of first ways that you would start to look at them when you have all of these different elections, all of these different outcomes. We don't have partisan registration in Michigan, how they should think about that.

>> Rob: Let me put a disclaimer in here. I don't get involved in the actual drawing and the partisan part. I have really, really tried to stay completely separate. But I do know in general some of the -- some of the types of data that -- in the -- and, again, there's different purposes, right? So, this isn't a one answer. But I do know that one of the races that are -- is often used as a partisan indicator is State Board of Ed. The State Board of Ed is kind of a broad statewide. And sometimes people, if they don't know the details of the individuals, might be a partisan indicator in a way. That has historically been something that the industry uses a little bit in that space. I'll just say that. It's not something I've done. But I'm just speaking from kind of historical suggestions that that's been out there as one of the tools.

>> Matt: I guess beyond just --

>> Rob: Does that answer your question --

>> Matt: I guess beyond just sort of picking one race, are there ways to think about making these composite indicators? Or should they only be looking at the most recent election? Or, you know, you're gonna give them elections over time? So, I guess I was looking for some ways of thinking about how they combine that data.

>> Rob: Well, again, I've stayed clear of that. So, I will defer to the more experts on that. I'm providing the data.

>> Matt: All right. Other questions? Maybe just could you give people a sense. I heard about the census block and the block group and the tract. Give us a sense of how that compares to, say, the smallest increment that they're going to be using. These State legislative districts. What, you know, what's the State House District normally include? Is it cutting across those things? You know, how aggregated will these blocks end up being?

>> Rob: So, for US congressional, the law states one person -- they have to be equal population, right? So, the 14 -- if Michigan keeps the 14 districts. Or if it doesn't. But whatever that number is, that's where to get the equal population, you're gonna have to be going down to the block level. And so, it's gonna cut across some townships, cities, just to get the actual equal population. So, that's often very common when congressional district, US congressional district boundaries are concerned. For State House and Senate, because there's, you know, in the past there's been kind of a legal guidance out there that it's within a range. To maintain certain communities of interest and, you know, not splitting as many cities and things such as that. There's a bit of a range. So, but all the blocks are often, you know, made up of, you know, built

up into cities and townships. So, for the State House and Senates, you see more whole cities and whole townships and whole -- historically, that's been the case. Right? Less down to the block level. But I will say, I can't remember how many blocks are in the state. But we're talking, you know, 83 counties, 1500 and some townships. And within a township, there's probably, you know, maybe in a rural area, you know, 50 to 100 blocks, right? Just to give you an idea. There's, you know, a city can have thousands of blocks. City of Detroit, City of Grand Rapids, thousands of blocks. So, there's hundreds of thousands of blocks within the State of Michigan. Right? And block groups are probably, you know, if there's 100,000, there's probably maybe 25,000 block groups. Or -- maybe not that many. Maybe 10,000, right? And then in tracts, there's maybe a thousand. Something like that. To give you a rough idea of how that geography works out there. But does that answer some of your questions? But certainly -- certainly for congressional, it's to get that equal population. You're going to be down to the block level to getting those boundaries identified. Less so at the State House and Senate. Did I utterly confuse you? Hopefully not.

>> Steve: We're all confused, but we're getting there. We're starting to absorb through osmosis what people are telling us. And so, it's -- we really appreciate you taking your time to come in here and -- and give your expertise to clearly neophytes in this process.

>> Rob: Yep.

>> Steve: Do we have any more questions? My more comments? No? We're all done? Any final thoughts? Matt?

>> Matt: Rob, maybe, is there any inspiration you can give, I know you've worked with a lot of stakeholders who may not have started out with a lot of knowledge in this space. But just give some sense of how people are able to kind of eventually move from novices to understanding.

>> Rob: Well, yeah. I just say that I have a special, you know, I -- literally I started my career right out of graduate school helping to support a, you know, good information like this. To support the process that's, you know, by law has to happen, right? And -- and I've come to appreciate just the importance of making sure the data is all there. And making sure that it is as consistent and as -- really as fair -- fairly and easily accessible as possible. Right? That's been really the hallmark of what this committee, what the passion behind it is. Is to make sure that no one area has sort of the upper hand on the data. Because that was one of the first things. It's like, let's take data off the table, right? Let's make sure we all are starting at the same place. And that's been really the commitment that the -- that I've had to ensure there's a trust level in the information, in the care from which it's, you know, compiled and provided that you can really trust. Because that's so important that, you know, there's a trust level that we're starting with a good starting point. And -- and I believe this Committee and this work really is -- has done that. That it's a trust across -- I mean, through many different

administrations. That this is needed to do the basic -- the basic work. And the basic work, you know, we've tried to -- one of the foundations is that this data is not unreachable to people. Right? It's -- it's -- you can plug it in. You can turn it on. And with a little training, you can start to see how it can be used. And that's continues on to this day that, you know, no one area has an upper hand just in being able to do the work of the data. Do you see what I mean? And that's -- and I think that's what this committee has done even to this day. And we can hold our heads high to say, we've made it and it's accessible. And it's -- honestly, I think it's unique around the country just in terms of the wealth of information that could be used if you so desire that. But, you know, I -- if you like maps, if you've ever used maps and, you know, I think that's a great place to start. Because, you know, and you have some mapping background and I've loved maps. Just to be able to look at maps. This is all about the map. And so, you know, get familiar with the maps, right? And I think that's -- it's so visual. And I think as you become more -- more aware of it, you become -- become more comfortable. The map is your -- is really your friend here in this process. And -- and, you know, I remember back in the day when, you know, we barely could get a printout. It took all night just to print out some of these maps. So, they became very, you know, today you can spit out and print out -- but back then, it was all you could do to get a map printed. So, today is a lot -- a lot better. And so, certainly it's more accessible than it ever has been. I don't know. That's some of my -- my counsel.

>> Erin has one more?

>> Erin: I do. And forgive me. It goes back to the timeline. How encouraged should we be? Has it been an easy process in plugging that data into the software and coming up with a map? Because we have to come up with our first map by August. And if we're not getting the datasets until mid-July, how easy of a process is that to come up with the first map?

>> Rob: Well, I will tell you from -- from how we do the training -- now, there's lots of criteria. And I've stayed completely separate from that part of it. So, depending on how much other criteria you want to add. But from actually the nuts and bolts of loading the data and really some of these software products have some built-in capability to run some scenarios. I mean, that's just how they're set up. So, if you put it with the data with some basic training on just, you know, when you open a package, you know? Christmas is coming up here, right? You open -- read this first. I don't know if you have been a parent. Or you have the -- go through the read this first. And that's what we've tried to do. Read this first. And you can get started with making some maps and doing some simple analysis. Now, I'm not saying that's the end of what your criteria will be. But really, you can get started fairly easily because so many of these products have -- have kind of the easy access goal in mind of citizenry or other type of input to not make this too complicated. And the data that we provide does plug into that kind of thinking and that kind of way of looking at it. Now, it's maybe not an online. There will be a little

bit of -- if you're using one of these software products. But I will tell you, there's 10 to 20 things, step 1 through 20, you can be starting, right? I'm not saying whatever you decide is your criteria, maybe there's other things to do. I can't speak to that. But just to make a map, just to start. It's so much more advanced than when I started in 1990. So much more in the capabilities there. And Michigan is not the only one doing this. A lot of the vendors are out there trying to help, you know, the country so to speak. And so, they're doing this. And the other thing is, each cycle, it's similar types of functions. So, this is not something new, right? People know they've had to do this for a while. So, I think you're coming in at a good time. There's been a lot of heads bumped and knees scraped, you know, in the previous decades to make software more usable. I think that's the good news. I think you ultimately have to determine what other criteria that you need to add to get your final, you know, your maps and so forth. Hopefully that gives you something to think through. Yeah.

>> Erin: Since you both are well-versed in the software, does it have certain criteria where you can plug in communities of interest and put in that data where the communities of interest are in Michigan? Is it that detailed, or is that something we're going to have to add by hand perhaps?

>> Rob: Well, I think if you have that as a data item. Let's say you have it in there, I think it's pretty easy, right? You pick this field and you'll say, okay. Group by this. Right? So, it's all gonna be dependent on -- really, that's why data is so important. Because really the tools are fairly straight forward once you have it. And, you know, common things like community of interest. There's tools for compactness. Making sure you don't go too far afield geographically. Tools equal population. You know? You can set it up that it will beep at ya are if you've gone over a population threshold. Things like that. But it does come back to you like a community of interest might need some data added as a -- let's say a column in your database. To ultimately make that a little bit simpler. Yeah.

>> Matt: And some of that can be -- I mean, we can work toward thinking about that before the data product is done. What are the -- because, you know, the list of communities -- potential communities that's already in the data is not that long. You know? Race, ethnicity, age. So, if you come up with an economic community or religious community or something like that, that's got to be something that you could think about in advance. The other thing is when you hire the vendor, it's not like they have to wait completely for the new data. You know? You can work with existing data or last time's data and play with some scenarios so you can sort of see how -- how it plays out. And there is some -- I guess -- there's also some scientific value to kind of deciding some criteria even before you see the data. And, you know, so, that you're not so much reacting just to the results as the process. All right.

>> Rob: Great question.

>> Matt: All right. I think we're ready to turn it back to Steve, then. Thank you.

>> Steve: thank you, Matt.

>> Matt: Thanks, Rob.

>> Steve: Thank you to both of you for taking time out of your busy days and come and talk with us. Okay. We are now at the Department of State Administrative update. And that would typically be Sally. Wherever she is. There you are!

>> Sally: Hey, everybody. Good afternoon. And hopefully your head is not spinning too much from that data discussion. Good thing it's recorded. You can always re-watch it. And we'll be sure to get you the slides as well so you can look over those afterwards too. So, I just have a couple of really quick things just sort of ongoing updates. One, is that our next meeting next week on the 10th, we will extend that out to 1:30 p.m. So, instead of being from 9 to noon, from 9 to 1:30. That way you'll have time for a 45-minute interview of each of your general counsel candidates. And then you'll have still some time to discuss those interviews after the fact before the meeting is over. So, we'll make that extension. I'll send around an email too like usual. But just wanted to provide that update. And then after that, you actually only have one more meeting scheduled before the end of the year which is really crazy. And I wanted to mention, I know that back in October we had a series of conversations about the open meetings act and accommodations for meeting remotely and that the legislature, you know, passed a law that basically allows you all and other public bodies to be meeting virtually right now through the end of this year. Currently, before the end of the legislative session, which I believe ends next week or the week after, they may decide to extend that time frame longer and allow for remote meetings, you know, for example, through March or some other time frame. That sort of still remains to be seen. They are having discussions about that and other kind of related items. So, we'll keep you updated as we know things about that. But just know that might impact, you know, once your executive director's on board, that may impact exactly what your January and February and March meeting schedule begins to look like. Sort of to state the obvious there. And in terms of compensation, my expectation is that next -- early next week you will be contacted by Kelly Services to fill out your sort of individual paperwork and start receiving a payroll paycheck the week after that. And then they'll process a sort of lump sum for the time frame between October 1st and now for your payment at that point. So, you should expect more information, like I said, early next week about that. We'll check in about it next week Thursday when we meet. But we're, you know, they've completed the work on their end, essentially, and so, I'll be giving them your contact information and you should expect to hear from them with more details.

>> Brittni: Thank you so much for working so hard on that. I just wanted to take the time to express how grateful I am for your diligence and just constantly moving back and forth between us and our needs. So, thank you.

>> Sally: You're so welcome. And I wish it could have gone faster. But it is happening. You know, at this rate you'll get it before the end of the year which is better than nothing.

>> Brittini: Everything happens the way it's supposed to.

>> Sally: Rhonda, did you have a question?

>> Rhonda: I do, and doesn't pertain to us as the commission right now. The previous commissioners, since we had two that did have meetings. Will they be compensated for their time that they did spend since they were part of the commission? You know, at least for a few meetings? Can you hear me? Okay.

>> Sally: Yeah. You know, it's -- I hadn't -- hadn't thought of that to be honest with you. I think -- I think -- I think the short answer is no unless you all were to move to do something different. But, you know, in short, because you all are actually not officially on that payroll yet, you will be, it will be a really complicated process to figure out how to do that because they resigned. I'm just not -- yeah. I would -- that would sort of be my initial answer there.

>> Rhonda: And then one more quick one. So, because of the fiscal year October 1st was the beginning of the fiscal year, correct? So, we won't be compensated for the time in September? I'm just asking just so I know what expectations are.

>> Sally: Yeah. So, the way that -- basically the sort of money that you theoretically had in September is now no longer accessible to you. It's sort of the cleanest and the easiest, most logical to start it off with the fiscal year of October 1st.

>> Rhonda: Okay.

>> Steve: Doug.

>> Doug: Hi, this is relative to compensation. But not to salaries. Now are we gonna deal with expense reports? Go through Kelly Services or go through the State to get reimbursed?

>> Sally: You'll go through them. Because they will be kind of your payroll and HR people, for lack of a better term. But that's a great point. I will ask them for more information on their process there.

>> Doug: Okay.

>> Sally: And make sure that we're clear on the standards there. Because if there's a major discrepancy, I can communicate that to all of you. And, you know, goes without saying, but one exciting thing about you all being close to having an executive director is you'll have someone who is able to really marshal of this for you in a more full-time way.

>> Doug: Okay. Now, and let me make sure I understand. We're -- I just want to validate this -- we're not employees of Kelly Services. We are contractors.

>> Steve: They're a contractor of us.

>> Doug: What's that?

>> Steve: We contract with them.

>> Doug: Individually. Yeah.

>> Steve: As the commission.

>> Doug: Yeah. Okay.

>> Sally: Yeah. And, you know, the way I would think about it is that the legislative council is sort of the entity that where the legislature sort of placed your funds to be, you know, administratively housed, if that makes sense. The legislative council uses Kelly Services for some of their HR for some of their employees. And that's why you all -- that's why the recommendation was to utilize them and, you know, your budget will pay a small markup for their sort of payroll services and other services. Does that help clarify, Doug? Okay.

>> Steve: Any other questions for Sally. Sally, you got anything else for us? Oh, Erin has a question.

>> Erin: Since our funds are going to pay their markup, are we going to get what that markup is?

>> Sally: Yes. And I believe -- I believe I've reported it before. I don't remember it off the top of my head, but I can find out and let you know.

>> Erin: Thank you, Sally.

>> Sally: Great. Mike, go ahead.

>> Mike: I wanted to clarify on the question, it's paid bit commission, not by each of you individually.

>> Sally: Yes.

>> Mike: Wanted to make sure that was clear.

>> Sally: Commission funds, not your own individual compensation.

>> Steve: Anything else?

>> Sally: All good.

>> Steve: All right. Let's take a break. It's 2:23. Come back at 2:35. And we'll finish out today.

[Break]

>> Rhonda, are you there?

>> I am here.

>> I just wanted to say yesterday I kind of acknowledged about Mr. Hubbard to Juanita and I didn't want to seem I slighted you because he was your pick. I guess I will apologize for that.

>> No apology needed.

>> But I did have him on my list. He was an interesting choice. But obviously we learned he was a good choice, but maybe not a good choice really. But we tried. So, okay. Cool.

>> MC: Did anybody else get to see that little vision of Brittini's dog that was in the picture?

>> No, I missed it.

>> Yeah, she said she really loves her dog. It was kind of funny.

>> Someone -- one of the other commissioners son walked through the background the other day. And I noticed that. And that's why I tell my kids, don't walk behind the camera. Or it will be memorialized forever.

>> I called him over here. Everyone you are a star. You are a star in all my Zoom.

>> Oh, my goodness, he's a big dog, isn't he?

>> Yeah, he's like -- well, I don't know. It depends. I'm a dog lover. He's like 47 pounds. To me, like 50, 60 is a bigger --

>> Medium.

>> Could you kind of lift him up a little bit more? Brittini?

>> He will literally get in my life. Hendrix, come.

>> Oh, yeah, Hendrix. Rhonda, are you getting your dog too?

>> Oh, my goodness. We're all dog lovers.

>> See, this is my dog.

>> Oh, wow. He's cute.

>> Yep, he was --

>> He will be a lot of company for you, Brittini.

>> He is. I love Hendrix. I love animals. Particularly dogs. He was a rescue.

>> Oh, my goodness, Rhonda.

>> A little one.

>> You guys, you could tell they're spoiled. They seem to love being in y'all's lap performs she's a 12-year-old doxie.

>> Maybe I'll bring my python out next week.

>> Oh, no. No, no, no. Then I'm running, MC.

>> Well, that's me.

>> That was Dustin.

>> I'm running, Dustin, if you bring your python out.

>> Yeah, I have turkeys and chickens. I can show them.

>> That's cool. I want to see some turkeys and chickens.

>> My turkeys are going to be processed in two weeks. And unfortunately the Tom is being quite aggressive and I don't feel like having them anymore.

>> Is processed like turkey wings?

>> Yes, we are going eat them.

>> I knew that was code for a meal.

>> We were planning on keeping him. He's beautiful. He's what's called a lavender. It's light blue color, like a light slate, a heritage bird. And we have a hen that's the same color. But he has gotten so aggressive towards me. And, you know, they're 40, 50 pounds.

>> They're not small, yeah.

>> Yeah, they can hurt you. So, it's just, you know, it's like rule number one of any breeding program and that includes turkeys that you don't breed aggressive animals. He's very aggressive with me and the kids and my husband. He's got to go bye, bye.

>> Cycle of life. What's his name?

>> We haven't named him.

>> Dang. Yeah, he's a turkey sandwich. That's a turkey sandwich for sure.

>> Is that the one you have?

>> We have four. He was going to be our breeding male. And unfortunately, he's just -- he's gotten nasty.

>> Oh, my goodness.

>> Yeah.

>> A drumstick.

>> Yeah, we don't want to keep him. So, yeah. I just scheduled him for being processed two days ago. So, he's going bye, bye.

>> Does that happen all the time? They get aggressive after a certain time, a certain age.

>> They say when the males are teenagers, they get aggressive. He's around that age, a little over 6 months old. So, we could try to, you know, reassert dominance. That's what he's trying to do. He's trying to assert his dominance. But he's honestly so aggressive that, you know, he's not someone who I feel like we're going to break him easily and reassert that I'm the boss. He's been like attacking the, you know, gate when I walk by. So, he's pretty aggressive. So, he's just not -- and again, we wanted to use him to have chicks. And there's just no way I want him as part of my breeding program if he's going to be that aggressive.

>> Maybe Brittini will loan you her dog.

>> Hendrix plays no games. Yeah. He'll -- I don't know, though. I don't know if --

>> Are we all back?

>> I don't know if he could handle no name turkey.

>> Yeah, a turkey that's as big as he is.

>> He probably would be like, ears lay on back.

>> I'm afraid!

>> We had wild turkeys in our neighborhood. So, he has seen them and thinks that it's play time. No, it's not at all.

>> If you watch videos on YouTube, like if you look up like aggressive turkey, there's lots of videos of male turkeys doing the same thing to the postman and people on the street. They can just get very aggressive and they're very large and they have very sharp claws.

>> Oh, my goodness.

>> They can hurt you.

>> Steve: Okay. Folks, we're back. The next item is further discussion on the executive director hire. And I know we have a letter. I assume everybody got that. So, we can further discuss that. Brittini, would you help us out with our discussion?

>> Brittini: I will. And I will be transparent knowing that I have to leave early. I discussed that with Sally. So, you're going only to see me for 20 more minutes. I saw Doug's hand. I will moderate, Doug, do you want to lead us off in the discussion?

>> Doug: Yeah. And I want to do that because Rhonda and I were part of the group that had the discussion.

>> Brittini: Absolutely.

>> Doug: And so, I want to talk a little bit about that and then put a motion forward for approval. But let me say, I think we're gonna be very happy with this individual through our conversation yesterday. I think she's gonna fit in very well with this group. We talked about a number of things. Other than the salary portion. We talked about how you would get paid. Which is the same way we're gonna get paid, through Kelly Services. We talked about that we were gonna provide a laptop and mobile phone which we approved yesterday for her. So, she's aware of that. We talked about the demands of the job. And she's all up for that. From the conversation. So, that's -- she's very, very positive. She has been listening into all of how sessions. So, I'm assuming she's listening today as well. And hopefully got a lot out of the presentation, the webinar that we had earlier. We had a discussion on salary and we came to a mutual agreement that the appropriate salary at this point about \$136,000 annually. And she was okay with that, we were okay with that in our discussion with her. And we want to get her started as soon as possible. She is wanting to start as soon as possible. So, begin that, unless Rhonda has some additional things to say, I would like to put forward a motion that we approve the \$136,000 a year salary and in addition to that, travel expenditures will be reimbursed based on whatever the State of Michigan guidelines are. Rhonda, go ahead.

>> Rhonda: And I want to add that during our conversation with her, we told her everything is tentative and nothing is for sure until we brought it back to the whole commission today. Just so everybody knows, we didn't say this is -- it was the full commission. I just wanted that clear for the public too that we did tell her that we had to bring it to the commission today.

>> Doug: Good point. And she is aware of that. Anyway, I want to put forward that motion, Steve.

>> Steve: Is there a second? MC. You're the second. Okay. All right. I believe --

>> Brittini: Did Anthony have a hand?

>> Anthony: Yeah, I could say what I want to say during discussion.

>> Brittini: Okay.

>> Steve: This is it, Anthony.

>> Anthony: Oh, okay.

>> Steve: Discussion.

>> Anthony: Okay. I'm just wondering, how did y'all come up with that 136K number? I know we had a range for this -- for this job posting. So, some insight into that would be great?

>> Rhonda: Can I take this, Doug?

>> Doug: Yeah, go ahead, Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: How we came up with that range, one is we are not offering benefits. There is no health insurance being offered. So, other than compensation for any travel, you know, mileage, hotel room that may have to be done because of the job, we're not offering any other benefits. And another was based off of her previous salaries. Taking into account other jobs, what she was paid. So, that's kind of where we came up with that number. Initially we did offer a little bit lower. But with the fact that we're not providing insurance, for instance, and since I've done some insurance shopping lately, we kind of went back, figured out what that would be, you know, and that she's going to be an independent contractor, I believe, through Kelly Services. I'm pretty sure. So, we kind of took that into account also.

>> Doug: Yeah, absolutely. We wanted to make is sure that she in this job didn't make less than she did in her previous job for one thing. And then we factored in some money for benefits. So, that's basically how we came up with that. Go ahead, Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: And we didn't go higher because I know that during our discussion, there was a little bit of concern that she didn't have as much of the government experience. So, that's why we came in on a little bit of the lower end also to kind of even it out, I guess you would say. Because the range that was listed on the ad was 124-something up to 164-something. So, that's kind of how we came up with it.

>> Doug: Yep.

>> Steve: Just to clarify one point, I believe, is she is an employee of the commission. She's not an independent contractor with -- through Kelly Services. Kelly Services is simply a payroll service that legislative services is using to get us paid and her paid. But she is not an independent contractor. We're the ones that are hiring her. And we are able to fire her.

>> Rhonda: So, with that being said, are we taking taxes out for her? That's what I mean by independent contractor. That she'd be 1099. I was not aware that we would actually be doing Medicare taxes, state income tax, federal income tax.

>> Doug: I don't think we know that until Kelly Services gets with us with the payroll.

>> Brittini: Maybe Sally or someone could magically appear.

>> Steve: Mike, do you got anything to say on that?

>> Sally: Looks like Mike is figuring out his audio. I'm going to let him kind of address it, though. So. Over to you, Mike.

>> Mike: Can you hear me now?

>> Sally: Yes.

>> Mike: Can you hear me now? Okay. It may have been Doug who said touch base with Kelly Services to see how they're able to structure and the option there is. One of the things that Sally and I had discussed with Doug and Rhonda, and I believe in one of the emails as well, was that probably makes sense to have an employment contract with her once, you know, there was an offer and kind of the broad strokes. Just that would define things like exactly that, you know, who is paying for payroll tax, you know, whether -- when you say no benefits, does no benefits mean no medical benefits. I think that's what I heard you saying. There are other types of benefits like, I don't know, sick time. Or -- okay. So, Rhonda is shaking her head no. I guess it would just be a question, practically speaking. All of is that would be laid out in the employment contract that we can now work on and get, you know, some drafts together for, you know, for this Commission to review and finalize that before it goes to her. But ultimately, it makes sense to have a basic offer letter to seal the deal, get her on board and start the rest of the process. And we can finalize the actual employment agreement that would finalize all of these things. If she doesn't get sick time, what happens when she's sick? Is it a flat rate? Set up like a retainer? These are questions you don't have to answer right now. But these are questions that the agreement will need to -- that the agreement will both ask and answer and clarify when she gets sick, what happens with that? Does it not matter if she works 20 hours a week or a hundred hours a week? She's not getting overtime. But you also don't care if she takes time off when she's sick, or time off for a family event. It all comes out in a wash. That's what I'm taking Rhonda's head nodding to mean. Just in terms of we're not giving her any benefits, that will all be laid out in the employment agreement. I don't actually have insight into the answers to those specific questions at the moment, but I assure you that there are standard employment agreements that we've gotten that we can certainly pull together and would be happy to work on and run that by Doug and Rhonda before it comes back to the Commission.

>> Steve: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: I still have a question I guess it would be for Sally on if she knows how Kelly Services would work as far as she goes. I guess I was under possibly the wrong impression. Do you have any clarity on that as far as when we onboard other people? Even though they're our employees, is Kelly Service going to be taking out taxes and stuff like that? Or would they be a 1099 employee also?

>> Sally: I don't know. Mike looks like he's raising his hand. Mike, you two first.

>> Mike: I do have a response. But Dustin's hand shot up and I believe he has experience in these sorts of points. I wanted to acknowledge that before the Department of State responded.

>> Dustin: Yeah, I do. I do work in payroll, that's my day job. You've got keep in mind that if we hire them as a W2 employee, we also are responsible for the employer taxes at that particular point. Whether that's state unemployment taxes. There are the

company's version of Medicare and Social Security along with other employer taxes that would now be in tow with hiring someone as a W2'd employee. I am in favor of a 1099. Because we are all 1099 contractors as well. So, at that particular point, we pay them the straight fees -- straight fees? Straight salaries that they would be getting per year regardless on how much people work. That's the same as us. And then the taxes -- the taxability is on that particular person at the end of the year, which is most likely going to be next year, let's face it. We're not going to be hiring them this year with pay more than likely. So, that's my thought. And it makes the most sense.

>> Steve: Then I think Mike needs to give us an opinion as to what our executive director, our communications, our general counsel are all gonna be. Because having practiced in the employment law field for about 14 years, I don't consider that these people are in fact independent contractors. We are going to direct their employment, their hours, what they're going to do for us. They are not going to be out there on their own. And as such, I do not believe that they will in fact meet the criteria of independent contractor. We're gonna provide them with the tools of the trade, so to speak, the computer, the phone, et cetera. We're gonna provide them with an office at some point in time. And, you know, I don't want to get -- I don't want to get the commission in trouble down the road to say, whoops! They really were employees and not only do you have to pay all the employment taxes for them, now you got to pay all the fines and interest, et cetera. So, Mike, I would like to have a response in that so that we don't get ourselves in trouble.

>> Mike: I appreciate that. I have a response. But I see Rebecca has raised her hand and I would like to --

>> Rebecca: Yeah, I was just going to say that I agree with Steve coming from an employment law perspective as well. That I don't see how we could reasonably claim they're independent contractors when we're supervising . their work and telling them what to do.

>> Mike: So, that was my read as well. And so, that was -- that's my initial inclination. I appreciate the questions raised, I guess, on all sides and some of the different perspectives raised in this meeting and I'll follow-up on that and just do the fuller analysis to report back to this commission. But my initial instinct having served in my current role and at a general -- as general counsel before and just the nature of probably any organization, employment law is one of the more common legal issues that comes up because organizations, public, private, nonprofit all employ individuals. It's, you know, Dustin notwithstanding the benefits that you may perceive for the organization versus how other people may perceive that as employees, the 1099 versus the W2 -- the 1099, I'll just say that is one part of a longer analysis from the IRS and the Department of Labor in terms of whether somebody is actually an independent contractor or whether they're actually an employee. And there's a lot of case law for different people in different circumstances, sometimes they prefer to be labeled one or

the other. And the basic statement there is it doesn't matter what they call themselves. It matters how this larger analysis plays out. Exactly how Steve and Rebecca were detailing there. I'll look into that and, you know, report back to the commission.

>> I have access to a whole bunch of different, oh, what's it called? I don't want to say books, but actual long stuff through work where we actually go through and figure out what kind of designation a particular employee would have. Whether it's independent contractor or if it's regular employee based on a whole bunch of different things. I can see about reading up on those items. And bringing them to all of us if we'd like. And I also have a lot of people that make a lot more money than me at my job who know these things way better than I do. So, I can ask them as well.

>> Sure.

>> Dustin: If that would help.

>> Steve: Based on that, is the letter -- this letter still good, Doug and Rhonda?

>> Doug: As far as I'm concerned it is, because it doesn't get to whether she's a hire or a contractor or whatever. I got two questions on it. I get maybe Mike can answer this as well. Well, actually, one question. This is signed by Steve. And I'm assuming that's because he's the chairperson of the Committee. And unfortunately, it's got my phone number because I didn't have Steve's at the time. So, I would have to modify that. But the problem is, if she has questions, she'll go to Steve and Steve is not aware of the conversations Rhonda and I have had with her. Is that the appropriate way to address that, or should this come from Rhonda or myself and deal with it from that perspective?

>> Mike: It can come from whoever is authorized by the commission. As noted in the prior meeting, the Commission authorized Rhonda and Doug to have a conversation and come back with a recommendation to the Commission. That's what's happened today. Ultimately if this Commission decides to accept this recommendation or move in a different direction, that will require a motion and an affirmative vote by, you know, by this commission. And so, with that, you can say, instead of saying, we authorize Steve Lett to sign this letter, we authorize, you know, Rhonda to sign or Doug to sign the letter as amended in the following way or whatever else you want to do. This commission retains its autonomy to act in the ways you described. Doug, you raise a very practical point that may very well be taken into consideration by the commission.

>> Steve: I have no desire to sign a letter. I would suggest that Doug and Rhonda both sign it as the Committee chairpersons and use their phone number. And if they have any questions -- if she has any questions, they can talk to her. They know what they've said. The only suggestion I would have on the letter is that you make the offer subject to the finalization of an employment contract which will be forthcoming.

>> Doug: Say that again, Steve.

>> Steve: I'm suggesting to alter the later to say here is the offer, 136 annually subject to the finalization of an employment contract.

>> Doug: Mark, what's your opinion on that?

>>

>> I fully agree with Steve's recommendation. Just by way of basic background, this is a modified version of something that the Department of State uses. Unlike the Department of State, however, this Commission doesn't have existing employee handbook, employee policies and other things for somebody to come into. So, if someone -- when someone starts with the Department of State, they receive a letter along the lines of, you know, what they're looking at. And that person knows they start. And then on the background, you know, are all sorts of infrastructure and policies and procedures and other things that define the employee/employer relationship and define the benefits and define the expectations and define all that have. Not only because this Commission is brand new, but also, just questions that we've already heard in terms of whether -- does it make sense to have an employee handbook per se. But given the small number of employees that you're going to have, employment contract can define the same kinds of things and address the same kinds of questions that are natch questions for anybody who is working for you.

>> Doug: Okay.

>> Mike: So, I think Steve's recommendation is spot on. Thank you, Steve.

>> Doug: I'll add that to the letter. And based on approval of the Commission. It's difficult because we're on different sides of the state to sign it.

>> Mike: You can electronically sign for the record.

>> Rhonda: Doug, you can go ahead and sign it.

>> Doug: I'll take care of it if it's approved. Turn it back over to you, Steve.

>> Steve: Mike or Sally, you're going get us some sort of a proposed proforma employment contract to look at?

>> Mike: That's correct. We will.

>> Steve: Number one, everybody on the Commission should get one. But make sure Rebecca and I get one. We will look at it and go from there. And Doug and Rhonda.

>> Doug: And Dustin should too. I think he's got some knowledge that some of us don't have on the payroll.

>> We'll be sure to send it to all of you.

>> Steve: Okay.

>> Doug: If we get this approved, Rhonda and I will meet after this meeting and we have already planned a discussion -- another discussion with Suzanne based on what the recommendations are today. Or not the recommendations, but the approvals. So, we are going to do that as well. And then we'll get the letter out as soon as possible if it's approved. So, I'll turn it back to you, Steve, and deal with the motion.

>> Steve: Okay. We may have to adjust the start date subject to the finalization of the employment contract. So, I guess what I'm suggesting is that we would -- would say letters to confirm our offer of full-time employment, et cetera, et cetera. Your official

start date will be determined upon completion -- upon the completion of an employment contract which will be forwarded to you shortly.

>> Doug: And, Steve, if we could have a second motion dealing with Rhonda or I sending out the letter. Or we could incorporate it within what you just said.

>> Steve: Yeah, I'm just making suggestions for changing and then we'll put it all together in one motion. I'm asking, I guess, now is that acceptable to you two? To add that? Take off the December date, put into the contract the completion date. And you can put -- you can put your start date in the contract. Which you don't have yet.

>> Doug: One of the things we want to do is get her started as soon as possible. That will delay it before we get the contract.

>> Steve: I guess that will be somewhat up to Sally and Mike. But we can certainly -- I know Rebecca and I can certainly go over it as soon as we get it. Right, Rebecca? Okay. And we'll get it to you. For your review. Okay?

>> Doug: So, the way you phrased this, we will not be bringing her on Monday.

>> Steve: No, not unless -- no, we won't. No. But I would assume we'll do it sometime next week.

>> Doug: Well, you know, we've got two more sessions and I don't know how far along Mike is on this employment contract.

>> Steve: Well, I think from what they were suggesting, they had a pro forma. If that's true, we should be able to bring you something on the 10th at the latest.

>> Doug: The motion is --

>> Steve: I would say we're taking out the start date and we'll put in there after the first paragraph -- this is subject to your approval of an employment contract setting forth the details of your employment.

>> Doug: Make sure I got that the way you said it. This is subject to --

>> Steve: Subject to your acceptance of the -- of our employment contract.

>> Doug: Which is forthcoming?

>> Steve: Which is forthcoming. Period.

>> Doug: Okay. So, the start dates of -- should we even deal with the start date?

>> Steve: No.

>> Doug: Okay.

>> Steve: We'll put that in the employment contract.

>> Doug: Okay. All right. We'll have that discussion with her today, then. Okay.

>> Steve: Okay.

>> Doug: So, that change will be there. That's the only change we're talking about at this point.

>> Steve: Yeah. You're taking out paragraph 2 and replacing it with that sentence.

>> Doug: I'll leave part of paragraph 2, the basic details, which would be the pay rate.

>> Steve: Sure.

>> Doug: We'll do that.

>> Steve: Take my name off, put yours on.

>> Doug: Unless Rhonda wants hers on.

>> Steve: Put both on.

>> Doug: We'll deal with that.

>> Steve: With that change, do we have a motion to make the offer as stated in the amended letter?

>> Brittini: So moved.

>> Steve: Brittini, second?

>> I will second.

>> Steve: Okay. All in favor, raise your hand. Passes unanimously. Thank you, Doug and Rhonda. Appreciate your hard work on that. And I'm assuming that you had a pleasant conversation with her.

>> Doug: We did. She seems like a wonderful person. Sally's got a question, Steve.

>> Steve: Sally?

>> Sally: More just an offer. Just in hearing that you all want to get her started as soon as possible. If you all would like, at the Department of State, we could meet with her before your meeting on Thursday not to discuss the details of the contract, of course, but to start bringing her up to speed on some of the behind the scenes logistics, some of our contacts and sort of start to share the information that we have that might be useful to her. And would be happy to do that before your meeting next Thursday to start to transfer over some of that if that would be helpful to all of you.

>> Steve: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: I think that would be a really good idea because there's going to be a lot of catching up to do. And I was actually going to ask the Department of State if maybe they could put together a folder for her like for us with the amendment to the constitution, the open meetings act as a reference if she has questions. I think that would be wonderful. But I didn't know if the State would have to charge us. That's why I was waiting until we were here in case, we had to approve the cost of that as a commission.

>> Sally: That's a great point. And we can start that conversation. Hopefully it will be ongoing. And like I said, we're here to support you all even once you have your staff. So, I'll -- we'll reach out to her and start talking to her on a staff level if that would be helpful to all of you.

>> Steve: Sure. Anybody have any objection to that taking place? If you do, shake your head yes, no. Good. Good to go, Sally. Thank you. Anything else on the executive director? Okay. Moving right along to the communications director. Who is the committee persons? Had

>> I am the --

>> Steve: Chair.

>> Juanita: I'm the chair of the communications outreach committee. And we have with us Janice -- how do you pronounce your last name, Janice? Can she hear me?

>> Janice: It's Vallette.

>> : Juanita: Okay. We have Janice Vallette and Cynthia Orton. Are you ready for us to start, Steve?

>> Steve: Yes.

>> Juanita: All right. I want to say hi again to all the commissioners and I guess we have eight short list people that we decide to choose from. And we split them up where each person would take over a couple or two or three of them at a time. So, we're going to begin this session with Janice Vallette. And she's going to start with her people. She has three people, Michael scroll -- or knoll. Edward Woods and -- I can't see the third one.

>> Brenda.

>> Juanita: Brenda Kerfoot. Yes. Okay. We're going to have her come forward first. She can do hers. After Janice, we have Cynthia, jump in after her, you do your two and I'll do my three after you guys finish. And you all can -- we're asking that the commission just kind of listen to us good and decide on the at least five that we could interview at such time.

>> Janice: Okay. And I'll be brief about them because we have so many of them. With the first person, I'm going to talk about and it is very brief. It's like why I maybe thought they might be a good one or someone else. Is Brenda L. Kerfoot. She has 25 years' experience. And she has enacted several marketing and public relations campaigns. So, I thought that was pretty impressive that she had done so many of them. She's orchestrated events involving local, state and government military leaders. So, she did not say she was familiar with the -- the open meetings Act. So, I think that might be something that we might be looking for someone who was more familiar with that. And then my third -- my second person is Michael J. Kroll. And he has 10 years' experience. He worked with the Department of Commerce for the US Census. He had very extensive experience with social media. He had management of social media. He dealt with press releases and distribution of information. He worked for the Wall Street communications and public relations. And when he answered one of our questions was his approach to communications. I actually liked what he said. He said he compiled information at our audience utilizing research, analytics and experts trusted voices who are knowledgeable about how to count hard-to-count communities. So, I liked that about him. And then my third one was Edward Woods III. He had 10 years plus service. He worked for the Department of Human Services in the Office of Communications Director. He loved -- he also led public policy campaigns, established and maintained relationships with media. So, he had extensive experience with the media. And then he worked in the Department of Budget, director of communications. And he served as Department spokesperson for By Michigan First. He's the one who

has experienced with Open Meetings Act. So, that's my brief thing. I honestly don't think we need to interview all eight of these people. I was hoping that the commission would help us narrow them down to maybe four or five. And that's it. And Cynthia, you're on.

>> Cynthia: So, before I talk about the people on my list, I wanted to just explain to the commission how we went about this. We did not have a coordinated rating system before we met. So, we each used our own system. So, I wanted to explain what system I used. I read through all 47, all the material that was sent for 47. And I was looking primarily for years of experience and the type of experience. And their education and their style of communication. So, from that, I found 21 that I felt fit our needs. And so, I re-read the material from all of those and I paid special attention to the supplemental -- the answers to our supplemental questions. I did -- I distilled it down to 7 with a possible eighth person. And I did a quick Internet just social media check. It wasn't thorough, just quick, what I could find. If there was anything too controversial or negative, then I put that into consideration. And so, then we came together for our meeting. We each shared our top picks. And we didn't have any that were on all three of our list. So, any that were on two of our lists we -- we decided to put those forth to this commission. So, that's some of what you've heard already. And that was six people. And then Juanita had two that she felt strongly about. So, those were added as well. So, that's the eighth. So, the two that I was assigned to present is Janet Lebson. She has government experience. Several departments -- government departments. Non-- like MC was saying yesterday, not political, but government. Positions there. Outside of the State of Michigan. In the State of Washington and Oregon. But she worked in public affairs and communications in those governments. Her education is in political science, English and political journalism. I thought that was a plus. Her -- she had a lot of volunteer experience in various areas in her communities. And I was especially impressed by her answers to the supplemental questions number three. Her approach to communication strategy and development. And also, her answer to number five I thought that was also impressive. So, you could look those up if you want. The other person that I was assigned to talk about is Sonya Powell. Sorry, Sonya Howell. I felt that she had a little bit less experience, but her experiences with Goodwill and with a school district. So, not government, necessarily. Her education, she does have a Ph.D. in philosophy of education. A master's in educational media and technology design. And her bachelor's was in design and visual communication. She was involved with community organizations as well. And I felt that her answers to the supplemental questions didn't give me as much information. I didn't feel that it really helped me make a decision on that. But that's who I have.

>> Juanita: :Are you through, Cynthia?

>> Cynthia: Yes.

>> Juanita: I wanted to say that as Cynthia said, I came up with 20 something where I wrote very good or good on. And each one of these applications, resumes, were ones that I had chosen along with the ones I had for my own self. Because we narrowed it down. I have three that I thought were very good. Each one of them. Very good. I'm going to start with the first one, and I really highlighted it there. I didn't want to add my opinions to it other than the fact that I thought each was very good. I want to get your opinion from what I decided with the ones that I chose. And so, my first one was Andrea V. Taylor. And she was -- she stays in Farmington Hills, a passionate communicator with a passion for media. She worked with General Motors, she worked for -- she worked in Cleveland for six years as a press secretary. She has a whole lot of things that she did that would be relevant to the commission. She served as a communicator -- she served as the communications director for the -- Juanita Millender on Capitol Hill. She worked as -- she strategically positioned public/private institutions, corporate brands and political leaders as subject matter experts on a variety of complex topics. When it came to her professional profile, I enjoyed it. She worked as a senior-level communicators and government relations executive for over 10 years. She demonstrated experienced planning and executing media campaigns, creating strategic communications plans and managing DEI and community relations initiatives. She has a strong verbal and written communication skill with the exceptional ability to serve as a spokesperson representing high-profile public officials, institutions as well as corporate brands. She's innovative and creative. She's an innovator and a creative thinker who embraces new ideas and approaches to create and achieve internal and external key stakeholders. She has professional experience in outreach director which would be very beneficial to us. Her primary role is to create, develop and manage relationships with -- when she was working as an outreach director the district 11 congresswoman. This work is building relationships, gaining trust and opening a communication line with her constituent groups. Her portfolio includes M1-11 ethic, municipal and industry leaders. Support includes planning and executing roundtables, preparing materials, drafting talking points and assisting the communications team with social media messaging. She also has a graduate student and MBA program. It's so long, I don't want to just take up too much time on her. Communications manager. She served as a communications lead for Global Chief Diversity Officer responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating speaking and media opportunities, public engagements, activation events and -- overall communication support to GM brands and executives in the diversity space. And she was responsible for over \$300,000 budget for 25 diversity marketing activation events. Not to mention that she provided high-level communications support for senior leaders, speeches, talking points, press releases, video scripts and statements. She supported the GM Foundation initiatives and charitable giving with event marketing campaigns which were created and cultivated relationships with media, grassroots organizations through the United States with a

DISCLAIMER: This is NOT a certified or verbatim transcript, but rather represents only the context of the class or meeting, subject to the inherent limitations of realtime captioning. The primary focus of realtime captioning is general communication access and as such this document is not suitable, acceptable, nor is it intended for use in any type of legal proceeding.

particular focus on the media market. She directed the development and execution of editorial strategy for diversity media outreach. She created large scale activations, events that included communication supporting key US markets. I'm just going through some of them. She was a lead communications partner in marketing and advertising departments on diversity. For initiatives from key leaders internal and external and stakeholders. She also worked for the City of Cleveland press secretary. She was a spokesman for the Mayor Frank G. Jackson. Going to skip all the other stuff. She was a communications director. She served as a communications director for the late Congresswoman Juanita McDonald, legislative District 37. She developed a district event on security. They joined the congresswoman for one of the most comprehensive symposiums presented on port and homeland security. She was an event planning consultant, she drafted press releases, monthly op eds and other collateral material for clients, negotiated contracts with companies for event partnership opportunities. She pitched and secured media coverage for all client events. Created, developed and maintained relationships -- all when interacting with dignitary. She had a lot of radio experience. She was a promotions director for WDMK 102.7, KISS 98.7. I won't go into all of that. But she was also a newsroom experience with associate producer, editor. She was an associate producer and assignment editor for WNWO television, Toledo, Ohio. WID TV 4, station of the year, Detroit. And I looked at letter -- she has a lot more. I'm skipping some of it. Her education, she has a master's in public administration, Bachelor of Arts degree. She also worked in the Museum of African American History for the Detroit, Michigan public relations and events specialists. She has certifications. She's certified in the crisis communications for FBMA Institute. Then when it came to some questions, I wanted to know how many years of experience, professional experience did she have in communications and public relations and the media? She had 10 or more years. When it says describe your experience working in an executive level position, I -- she had a role as press secretary for the City of Cleveland. I was sworn -- she said I was sworn -- a sworn member of the Mayor's executive team for 10 executives and cabinet of 36 members. The Mayor has been in office for a year when she was appointed to the position. Allowing her to build the media relations program from the ground up. She -- some of her things she did was disseminate an introductory press release and invited media outlets to a 30 minute meet and greet. She met with colleagues to determine what negative stories were out that constantly garnered media coverage. She initially -- she initially -- some of the television stations would not cover the issues needed for the community to know. So, in response she expanded her reach to the national media for coverage. She said during her tenure, she managed administrations response to high profile events such as capture -- and I thought this was a little kind of wild -- capture of the serial killer Anthony [audio cut out] -- I don't want them to come messing with us. But anyhow, her approach to communications strategy and development was to identify and learn about the

perceived problems. Also, she would look for opportunities to communicate -- to communicate the principal vision and plan that the commission would have. Her collaborate -- she collaborates with colleagues, team members, community leaders and she -- her research -- she does her research before setting on a theory of a case. And she said once that is worked out, she starts to craft a plan that would resonate with target audiences. I also thought it was good when she mentioned, she said here are some of the communications vehicles that she had employed in the past. National and local media interviews, community newspaper outreach, town halls, city cable channels, executive roundtables, employee management meetings, op Eds, social media and website content. She had 10 years of experience when we asked the question how many years of experience do you have developing strategic communications and outreach programs? Her answer was 10 or more years. And finally for her, she said when she asked the question, describe your experience with community-level engagement, outreach and education, she said that all of her strategic communication campaigns include community-level engagement, outreach and education. And as a communications chief or global one of our clients was a municipality that needed help to garner buy-in from city residents. So, as a big part of the strategy was to always developing messaging that demonstrated that we understood community concerns and what resources were needed while simultaneously highlighting the benefits of the project. So, she said we developed a listening tour for the Mayor. She hosted community conversations. Created bus tour for stakeholders and media to see project progress. She designed collateral materials to promote community support of the project. Direct mailings to residents and collaborated with other branches of the government to leverage their assets such as free bus tokens for residents looking to work on the project. That was all I had on Andrea D. Taylor. I thought it was pretty good. I wrote very good for her. Then I have Bill Froehlich who I enjoyed also. He was the next person that I enjoyed reading his resume. He has 20 years' experience as a journalist. He's worked as a journalist in Michigan over -- since -- he worked as a journalist here in Michigan since 2002. He met thousands of members of our wonderful communities across the state. He said he has covered Michigan elections and politics as matter of daily routine and had become familiar with our state lawmakers, candidates and local and state officials. Both elected and appointed. Enthusiasm as he submits his resume for consideration as the communications outreach director. He has -- I enjoyed that about him. His -- the fact that he had 20-something-odd years working as a journalist. His summary was detailed -- he has 25 years of media experience, public speaker and journalist with experience in crafting unbiased content for regional and statewide audiences. Successful in developing and managing media messaging out -- communications and presentations skills person. Background in political science and familiarity with Michigan politics, issues, and media markets. I highlighted that he's skilled at identifying and presenting topics relevant for targeted audiences, business and

community leaders and other stakeholders, members of the public. He demonstrated ability to foster highly effective working relationships with media colleagues and influential community leaders and organizations. He developed and produced creative concepts and strategies for internal and external audiences that led to an increase in participation and in engagement. That was a good thought. I thought that was good that he could do something that would increase the participation and engagement. Especially at the town halls whenever we get ready to get to those. Lastly, but not last, but almost last, management and leadership and work experience. He's a career exhibiting professionalism, integrity, excellence and commitment to non-partisan presentations. He supervised and coordinated activities of various departments concerned with marketing, public relations, recruiting, training and media production. One of the other dots that I circled that he developed content for annual reports, monthly and weekly videos and newsletters. He's proficient in broadcast media production, writing for print, videos and newsletters. Writing in print and social medias. And a staff member engaged in both television -- to the management and leadership work experience. But his work experience is even broader than that. He also has a work history. I'm going through all of this. But he's worked on WW TV, Traverse City. He's a director of multimedia in Littleton, Connecticut. And a news reporter and a photojournalist for staff and freelance. News writer, reporter, executive weekend producer. All kinds of things. Community -- such as, I yellowed out a couple of them. He was the local chapter at March of Dimes. The President for that. Master of ceremonies for March of Dimes auction. A visiting speaker at schools. His education from DePaul University with a bachelor's degree in communications. A media fellows, honors program, minor in political science and secondary education. His awards and honors, which I thought was real relevant. He was nominated for the -- presentation anchor. The best breaking news reporter. A merit award for investigative reporting, merit award for newscast presentation anchor. And that's Bill's resume. And then finally, my last one, I put very good for him. Andrea, and even my last one, which is Amy Hybel. I put very good for her. Hers is not as long and extensive. But she had a lot of work experience with WJR TV in Flint. WR -- Washington, D.C., CNN International, Amy Jordan. She's worked in world, vision and international Niger food crisis communications officer. King Hussein, I guess I'm pronouncing that right, foundation admin. Jordan media officer. It goes on and on. She has a lot of work in radio and TV and broadcast and federal news and whatever. She was on the United States Senate Washington, D.C. Press Secretary. She worked the WM AR TV Baltimore, Maryland, as a freelance reporter. She was a news channel 8 Washington, D.C. and WVEC TV in Norfolk, Virginia. She has references here. She has one, two, three references. Amy Hybel says here, she was a journalist with the strong background. Her background is strong in communications. Who can hit the ground running for you? That's how she puts it when she wrote her letter for us. She can hit

the ground running for us. A strong sense of news judgment and know how to pitch stories to editors and producers. She spent the past four years reporting the stations in Kalamazoo and Flint and have a thorough working knowledge of the political and media landscape in Michigan. Is she's passionate about visual storytelling, writing and messaging and have a strong interest in local politics. She is a hard-working self-starter who enjoyed networking and knows how to land earned media -- in the Middle East and working as a media officer for the Foundation, the King Hussein Foundation. This role provided her with the opportunity to create an effective media strategy for the seven institutions that fall underneath the KHF's umbrella. She created video and written content for the Foundation's website and social media outreach. She also created and promoted and covered major efferents that garnered positive media coverage for the Queen's initiative. And then finally, she says her role as special projects producer gave her the chance to plan and produce town halls and election night coverage. That's one of the things that I so enjoyed reading her thing. She's worked in town halls and election night coverages. She also underlined where she has a detail-oriented, project-driven and worked well under deadline pressure. She's also served as a spokesperson and knows how to respond to media inquiries on decline after working on Capitol Hill. She believes that her background in news combined with the communications experience makes her the perfect candidate for the role that we're looking for. This is her saying that. And when we came to some questions, she has ten or more years. How many years of professional experience do you have in communications? She wrote 10 years or more. Describe your experience working in an executive level position. She described the King Hussein Foundation in Jordan. She worked closely with the Foundation's executive director to create, promote and cover important media events promoting the Queen's initiatives to empower women from underserved regions. Some more things that I underlined, she created video photos and written content for the KHF website and social media platforms to engage donors, partners and stakeholders. Another one I underlined it with my yellow pen is that she also engaged with senior policy experts on important policy issues. She liked doing her homework. Gathering research, conducting interviews, putting together photos, video and written content for project-based assignments when planning an event. She has how many years of experience do you have developing strategic communications and outreach programs? She responded to 10 years or more. And most of her experience in this realm has been as a journalist. She's spent years in the field attending, covering and producing stories on a deadline about community outreaches including the first community forum held after criminal charges were dropped in the wake of the Flint water crisis that we're all familiar with. She's also, and I'll be through after I highlight these two, also, she says she's also covered local education boards, city councils and neighborhood meetings to tackle blight and crime. She also felt strongly about the importance of providing the community with timely

information to help them make informed decisions. And some of these that I underlined that I thought was real great because we're gonna need experience like this from all of these panel -- all of these people that have sent in their resumes. But this is something I wanted to go into a little detail because I know that we have read a great many of 'em. There was so many good ones. But these are my choices. Amy, Bill, Andrea V. Taylor and Janice's -- Cynthia's is Sonya Howell. Reiterating again. Janet Lebson and -- Janice -- that was Janice has Edward Woods III and -- and I think I just said another one of hers. But we want to keep all these in mind and whoever you decide to be our five short list, I guess we will agree. Or disagree.

>> Steve: Doug.

>> Doug: Yes. Could each of you tell me who your number one candidate was.

>> Juanita: Since I'm kind of up here talking, I'm in between Bill Froehlich and Amy Hybel. Cynthia and Janice?

>> The one that really stood out to me was Janet Lebson.

>> Juanita: Okay. And Janice?

>> Janice: I didn't think these three were supposed to be my three top because we just randomly after we were done sorted them through. So, if I had to pick from the three that I had, I would pick Edward Woods because he's familiar with the open meeting act. But I thought all 47 applicants were excellent. And like I said, this -- these weren't necessarily the three that I would have gone with top. I don't have the other ones resumes in front of me.

>> Juanita: I just want to say that I did read every last resume. And the ones that Cynthia and Janice chose, or did a little survey on them, I agreed with them. We had at least 21 very good ones. But these three I chose I thought were very good. I put "Very good" on their resumes. I had Janice -- what was her name? Andrea, I think -- so, all of them were good. So, it's just a matter of which ones you all think would fit the communications director.

>> Steve: Rhonda:

>> Rhonda: I'm going to be quick, guys. Out of the ones you did, my question about Michael Kroll, I noticed all of his jobs were in South Carolina. I was looking for an address. I don't know if he lives in South Carolina. That may be an issue with if we have to be here.

>> Cynthia: I thought that was an issue as well.

>> Juanita: Was that your choice, Cynthia?

>> Rhonda: Oh, sorry and other than that, just real quick because my notes didn't print. For the top two of the ones you picked, I had Janet as my top pick and Brenda. That's all I've got. I would give you why, but my notes didn't print and I don't have their resumes in front of me so I would apologize.

>> Juanita: Okay. Back in the hands of Steve.

>> Steve: Dustin.

>> Dustin: I was going to just piggyback off of what Rhonda said. Janet was also my number one based on what I reviewed. That was just me. And I also don't have my notes in front of me. It stood out to me.

>> Steve: Rebecca.

>> Rebecca: Yes, so -- make sure I'm off mute. I'm off mute. I looked at all of them, they're all good. And obviously they have different experiences and that's interesting and good and lots of -- lots of depth here. My only thought was, with Amy Hybel and Bill Froehlich, they both are reporters, right? And they don't seem to have as much of a PR background. In my mind, I think of those things as being very different. I think of a reporter as being someone who comes out and finds the news and reports on it. And obviously is going to have very good public communications skills because they're speaking live and so on and so forth. Whereas I think of someone with PR experience as the person whose sitting down and thinking about how we're gonna phrase things and what we're gonna say and maybe making those connections to meet with the reporters. But doing more of positioning of how we say things --

>> Juanita: Is the only one that did have?

>> Rebecca: Reporting on things that other people prepare. For the group, I wanted us to consider someone who is a reporter versus having public relations experience and social -- or managed social media accounts. Whether that would be a better choice versus someone who has more of the actual PR experience?

>> Juanita: I think that --

>> Steve: Excuse me, go ahead, Juanita. Go ahead.

>> Juanita: These are good. I think Bill Froehlich had some PR work. Amy was the only one with a lot of reporting skills. But I think that if we -- we need to just select five and then kind of interview them and see how they do.

>> Steve: MC.

>> MC: Janet Lebson also stood out to me. I just wanted to acknowledge. About Michael Kroll, extensive experience. But I think that Michigan connection. And it occurred to me, Sonya Howell, from the county as the potential executive director. May be important to just sort of check in about -- with our -- our executive director, Doug or Rhonda, I can't remember who is going to be talking with her. But know if she did work with Sonya Howell. What I'm thinking about, again, is team fit. That may mean less diversity because they both come from the rural area. But maybe a stronger connection. It may be pro and con. Hard to evaluate. But thinking about team fit. I wanted to raise that. And frankly, I think Andrea Taylor had a really interesting piece too. That I would want to -- I would like to see her in the running too.

>> Steve: Was any consideration given to the politics of these people?

>> Juanita: Yes, yes. I believe that -- oh, my goodness. I'm losing my thought. That Cynthia checked it all out and made sure that the politics and any kind of -- what was

the word? Nepotism about them. She kind much went through that and made sure everything was good with all of them that we talked about today.

>> Cynthia: I did. But I didn't do a deep dive. It was just what I could quickly find. And that was only for my -- my top ones. The list of seven to eight that I came up with is the ones that I really looked at. So, some of these were not on my list. And so, that's --

>> Steve: Okay.

>> Cynthia: So, some of these may have things.

>> Steve: Who else has questions? Janice?

>> Janice: I also did look for, you know, some of their social media. And actually on the three that I had, I did find Facebook pages and I really didn't find anything negative that I would consider negative.

>> Steve: Juanita, was it concerning at all that Andrea and Amy both have political jobs?

>> Juanita: We had Cynthia look over Amy's. And I asked her was she pretty good? Because she was looking up some people to see who had the politics on them or the nepotism. And she said Amy was pretty good.

>> Cynthia: Juanita, I don't know if you remember. But -- those are the two that you wanted to add at the end. So, those aren't ones that we had both agreed on. So, anyway, both of those do have --

>> Juanita: I understand what you're saying.

>> Cynthia: That's a concern.

>> Juanita: Okay. I just think they're good. And when you come to the politics part of it, that's something for you all to decide if you all want them. I'm not one way or another swayed. I think all of them are good.

>> Steve: Yes.

>> Juanita: As a commission.

>> Janice: Yeah, after we picked, we went over and we picked who two people had. And there were -- like seven or so that we had picked. And I know Cynthia and I picked a lot of the same. And she said she had gone over those ones. But we didn't go through all 47 of them and check. And like she said, Juanita put the two of them on at the very end. --

>> Juanita: Well, I think we talked about Amy several times. And I just didn't have her on the list. But that's up to you all. I think most of these people that we chose are absolutely very good. Communicators and so, the only thing you have to decide is as the commission who you want. I'm in agreement with whoever you choose because I think all of these, we have on the list are good.

>> Steve: Rebecca.

>> Rebecca: Sorry, let me unmute here. I just did a quick search on Michael Kroll. And I do show him as being a resident of South Carolina. I don't know if we want to use that as a basis to remove him from consideration. He doesn't appear to live in

Michigan. That's maybe something we want. Someone who is local. Just raising that up to see if we can kind of cross someone off of the list.

>> Steve: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: I would agree with Rebecca. You know, if we're going to have to do this in-person, if everything was on Zoom constantly, it might not be as big of an issue. But if we are able to ever go out into the public then, you know, we're going to want somebody here. And if issues arise, you know, and they need to speak to the media, it can't always be over Zoom. There's going to be times I imagine where they have to be there in person and that could just be a big conflict.

>> I agree.

>> Steve: Janice.

>> Janice: Yeah, I agree too. I would cross Mr. Kroll off the list too. I didn't notice after we picked him that he was in -- was it North Carolina or South Carolina? And I tried to find him in Michigan. But I could not find him. So, another one in Michigan. So, I would be okay if, you know, I don't have any specific attachment to him. That we could cross him off the list.

>> Steve: Anybody else?

>> Janice: Cynthia.

>> Steve: Cynthia.

>> Cynthia: Just to get us started on a list, we were hoping to whittle it down to four or five to interview. I felt really strongly about Janet and then Sonya Howell was kind of the second one was interested in interviewing.

>> Steve: I have a question before we start striking people. Was Walt Sword considered by anybody?

>> Juanita: I mean --

>> Cynthia: Yes. But there's a lot of political around there.

>> Steve: Obviously he has the most impressive credentials of anybody in this 47 people.

>> Juanita: Right, right.

>> Cynthia: He definitely does. Maybe we should consider him. I didn't put him on my list just because of the political nature of his experience.

>> Steve: I'm not on the committee.

>> Juanita: Well, as the chair of the committee, like I said, I read over -- I read every last one of them. And out of all the 47 or I thought it was about 50, we got the ones we had and more are good. So, we just grabbed the ones that they kind of personally liked. I put -- as I said -- very good on Bill Froehlich and Andrea Taylor and the other person, Amy Hybel. I'm with whoever we choose. If I had to lean, I would lean towards Andrea V. Taylor to be one of the ones. But like I said, that's just me.

>> Steve: All right. We need to have some suggestions. We got -- looks like we got one, two, three, four -- I think four, by my count, maybe five that we want to interview. I

certainly would want to interview Amy Hybel. I want to know what a job is like for King Hussein.

>> Juanita: Yeah.

>> Steve: So, I mean, from what I've heard everybody say, we were kind of looking at Ed Wood, Janet Lebson, Froehlich and --

>> Sonya Howell.

>> Steve: That's it. Sonya Howell. Cynthia, go ahead?

>> Cynthia: I would like to know if other members of the commission read Walter Sorg's application. What you think. Because like Steve said, he definitely has the most experience. So, do we think we should interview him?

>> Steve: Well, I -- number one, I don't know him personally. But being from Lansing originally, he's been around a long time. You know, he probably knows everybody in the Capitol already personally. You will not find in your other -- if there were 47 in your other 48 resumes anybody that has the breadth and depth of experience that he does. Those are the good points. The bad points are, he's obviously political. If we ran a donation check on him, he would have made a lot of donations to somebody. My guess would be he probably did it on either side of the aisle. And the other thing was, he was on the committee. So, I mean, we already know what we're gonna get if he is one of the ones we interview. There's gonna be a lot of people that are gonna come out and say, hey. He's really good and there are people that are going to come out and say, you guys have got to be crazy. I personally -- I don't think that's our guiding light on who we interview or don't interview. Just understanding that that's what we're gonna get. We've already gotten it twice. So, I -- I mean, it would be interesting just to interview the guy.

>> Juanita: Well, let's take a vote on who we're going interview.

>> Steve: Well, Janice, do you have a comment?

>> Janice: Well, if you think this guy is worth being interviewed, I think we should interview him. And then I know Cynthia had a couple that she liked. And I had Mr. Woods. And I know Juanita wants two, at least. So, what are we at? Six?

>> Steve: That would be -- if we added -- well, Ed Wood, Janet Lebson, are we throwing in Sonya? No? Yes?

>> Yes. Cynthia was that yours?

>> Cynthia: Well, she was second on my list. But whatever you think.

>> Steve: Okay.

>> Janice: Let's interview her.

>> Steve: Andrea Taylor, Bill Froehlich, and Amy, and put in Walt. That's three, six, seven. Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: I'm just having a hard time, guys. If we know it's going to throw fuel on the fire, why are we doing this to ourselves? I mean, are they brought seven that they felt were good and, you know, they -- they went through their online footprint and everything. And I just don't understand why we would have to put ourselves in that

position. If it's somebody we know is going fuel the fire and if there's other people that are well-equipped to do the job, why are we going to keep puts ourselves in that position? That's just my personal opinion. This is stressful, guys. I have to admit, this is like stressful.

>> Juanita: This is what we have to do to select the best person for the commissions.

>> Rhonda: I realize that. I'm just saying, you know, I thought with your recommendations, the ones that you got, I went through them all. I honestly, I didn't read because reading all of the resumes and the previous ones, a little burnt out to tell you the truth. That's a lot of resumes. So, I took it off from your suggestions and reviewed those. I haven't reviewed this gentleman's to have an opinion. And I think it would be fair to have an opinion. But that's just my opinion. And I think you should consider Brenda too. She was on your list. I didn't hear her name in that. That's my opinion. Thank you.

>> Steve: Dustin.

>> Dustin: I have to agree with what Rhonda was saying to be honest. That's one of the things we were dealing with too. Was trying to keep as much politics out of the individuals we were going to interview and consider for at least the executive director position. And we're basically doing the same thing. So, again, just make us open to public perception that we're not being -- or we may be hiring someone who has political affiliations far greater than what we would want and what the public would want working in our aspect for what we're going to be doing. And again, just my opinion on that.

>> Steve: Rebecca.

>> Rebecca: Yeah, so, I was number one going to ask about Brenda because I feel like she got dropped off the conversation and so, I was just curious what our thoughts were on that. From my perspective, I personally feel like she's the least qualified out of the bunch just because her experience seems to be a little bit more limited to smaller organizations, smaller budgets. That's kind of my thought on that. But I was just looking for clarification. And then in terms of Walter, I think my viewpoint is the same as I said for Mr. Lancaster. Then let's interview him. Someone thinks he's the most qualified, like, I don't want to just outright reject people who are very qualified based on concerns about politics without at least having a conversation. And then we can evaluate those -- those concerns later. I haven't personally other than just pulling it up right now haven't looked in detail at his resume because he wasn't on the original list. But if there is the perception among committee members that this person might have the best qualifications, we should there's look. And if we end up rejecting him later, so be it. But I would to want at least give him a look.

>> Steve: Doug.

>> Doug: I agree with both Rhonda and Dustin on this. But I question why he wasn't on the list of eight people, you know? Because those eight people that the committee

brought forward to us were supposedly the most qualified. So, I almost think we should stay with those eight. And --

>> Cynthia: The reason that he wasn't on my list is because of the politics. We were trying to steer clear of that.

>> Juanita: That's the only reason he wasn't on our list.

>> Cynthia: But speaking of that if I can have a minute, Andrea Taylor also has a lot of politics. Her job experience is definitely in the Democratic realm. So, I think if we're using that as a measuring stick, then she shouldn't be one of the interviews.

>> Doug: I think the measuring stick should be who do we think are the best qualified? And bring four or five of them up and then filter them out from that point. Similar to what Rebecca is saying.

>> Steve: You've got -- forget Walt for the moment. Amy worked for a Senator as a press secretary. And Andrea Taylor worked where?

>> Doug: She worked for two different Congresswomen.

>> Steve: If we don't interview Sorg. I was just questioning why we didn't look at him. Because he's clearly got the credentials. By my count, we've got Ed Wood, Janet, Sonya, Andrea Taylor, Bill, and Amy, that's six. And MC.

>> MC: One way we can manage this, I think is that it comes through public comment, we can look at the team and understand if we're having partisan, right? We may want to balance it. We want to understand how we create a mix that can potentially leverage some of the political experience and frankly that's government too. But I think we do want to stay away from political. But I think it's so very difficult to get deep in and have the experience you have that we have in these candidates -- yeah. And stay apolitical. So, what I'm suggesting is I think we might to want say, hey, can we look at a mix and it's hard. But right now we can still have -- I think we have Sue Ann who is pretty -- I think we evaluated her as sort of independent. I don't remember. And what I'm suggesting is that we may want to create something or try to figure out just that, you know, keep that in mind, I suppose. That's -- that's it.

>> Steve: Okay. Are the six I read off, is everybody agreeable to interview those?

>> Juanita: Can you just read them one more time.

>> I was going to ask you do reread the list because it was fast.

>> Steve: Sure. Ed Wood. Janet Lebson, Sonya Howell, Andrea Taylor, Bill Froehlich, Amy Hybel.

>> Juanita: That sounds good.

>> Steve: Do I hear that as a motion, Juanita?

>> Juanita: I motion that we move it to those six.

>> Steve: Okay. Second, somebody?

>> Second.

>> Steve: All in favor of setting up interviews for those six that I read off? Raise your hand. Okay. All opposed? Any opposed? Same sign? Okay. That -- those six will be set up to be interviewed. Okay. And Sally. Are you still with us? Yes, you are.

>> Sally: Yes, hello.

>> Steve: What -- coming back on the 10th, what do we have on the 10th?

>> Sally: General counsel interviews.

>> Steve: Pardon?

>> Sally: Interviews for a general counsel.

>> Steve: Okay. So, we need to contact these six and work on setting up interviews with them. But we don't have any more dates, do we? After the 10th?

>> Sally: You all have a meeting on the 17th. Of course, if you interviewed them on the 17th and didn't make a decision on that same day, there would be probably a substantial gap between that meeting and the next meeting that you were to come together. So, yeah. That's sort of the current status.

>> Steve: Then we got Christmas and New Year's. So, all the partying we're gonna do on Zoom. Okay. Well, let's work on -- can somebody from you or your staff work on at least contacting them and saying, hey. We would like to get you in for an interview and see what they have to say as far as their date availabilities go?

>> Sally: I think that if -- if you were to want to interview them before the end of the year, although I'm -- there's sort of two options. Either you all can decide to interview them on the 17th when you're already scheduled to meet, or we could look to have one more meeting sometime earlier that week in which you interview them prior to your meeting on the 17th. In that case, I would want to schedule that meeting for all of you like based on your availability before scheduling the actual interviews themselves. We can also contact those -- those candidates and just let them know that they are a -- we can contact them quickly and let them know that you have selected them to be interviewed and that we will be following up shortly with a date or further details.

>> Steve: Rhonda.

>> Rhonda: Do we have some type of tentative idea of what's going on on the 17th? Would we have enough time to do the interviews and have a good discussion about them? Do we have other things any webinars or anything like that scheduled for the 17th? I know it's a tentatively discussing our schedule for the following year. But is there wiggle room?

>> Sally: So, I think there is some wiggle room. I would recommend saving space for discussing at least your January meeting dates or schedule with your executive director. And starting to figure out at least that initial period of time what that's going to look like. So, that those can be publicly noticed. And right now, that meeting's only scheduled for three hours. So, it's six candidates, that would need to be a very long meeting again. So, probably until about 2 p.m. on the 17th. Just guessing. Not having done the math completely. And even then, you probably won't have as much time as I

noticed that you all like to have before making a decision on personnel. So, I, you know, for what it's worth, I wouldn't recommend that you leave that until the 17th. Although, you absolutely could.

>> Rhonda: So, cost-wise as far as what the commission goes and what it takes to do the Zoom meetings and ASL and all that have, it's not gonna -- it would pretty much be a wash, right? Because if we had to go longer on the 17th, it's going to cost about the same? More or less?

>> Sally: Exactly. And, you know, I'm not typically one who suggests that had you all meet to have meetings at all. That said, if you want to get those interviews done before the end of the year, I think realistically you're looking at make one more meeting in addition to the ones you're already scheduled that is fully just on that particular topic. And that will allow you to have six half hour interviews plus time beforehand to agree on questions and then time afterwards to have a bit of a discussion that you can then follow-up, you know, the next day or two days after. I'm wondering if, for example, and I can follow-up with all of you on -- via email. But the afternoon of the 15th, for example. Might be a good time frame to do it. So that you all have, you know, a daybreak before the next meeting.

>> Steve: Just my personal opinion is I think we're pushing it on these interviews. I would like to get the ED on board and use the 17th as a planning session for the upcoming after the 1st of the year. Have her there also and we will have had some contact with the proposed interviewees. And we'll have a better idea of their availability also. So, I just -- I mean, that's my suggestion.

>> Sally: MC, did you have?

>> MC: I would concur with that, Steve. Because I want to really try to help us onboard the ED. And we want to understand the organizational chart and how we as a body of 13 work with the ED. If we're going to hire the general counsel, I don't know if we have talked about it already, but if we can incorporate with the ED is with us potentially, getting some -- yeah, insight -- it would be really -- it's special I think if we could have her a part of the -- yeah.

>> Sally: And, sorry, MC, I should have mentioned that prior. Forgive me. Because you all are interviewing general counsel candidates on the 10th, that means the next meeting when you would theoretically being deciding you would move forward with the candidates would be on the 17th. And so, I really -- I would recommend against trying to schedule anything else for the 17th beyond like you said onboarding your executive director and making that decision, you know, in any direction on the general counsel candidates. And MC, I think, you know, you make a great point about wanting to have time, and Steve as well. One thing I do want to make sure to mention is that, of course, you all are hiring the general counsel, not the ED. And so, I just want to kind of underscore that again that you all are the bosses. You're the decision makers. And, you know, I just think that's an important point for you to keep in mind.

>> Steve: All right. So, I guess I would entertain a motion that staff contact the six people we've named, tell them they're in the running and get an idea of when they might be available. We'll use the 10th for our interviews for the general counsel and the 17th to discuss general counsel hiring. And scheduling and hopefully we will have the ED on board by then. Cynthia?

>> Cynthia: Maybe you can all weigh in whether you think this will be valuable or not. But I was wondering if we -- when Sally, whoever, contacts the interviewees, if we could request a sample press release or some writing this from them that we receive before the interview just to get a feel for their style?

>> Sure.

>> M C: May I suggest that it be addressed to communities of interest. Like if they choose a community of interest. Because I think that feels to me like an important way that we could help -- that might be useful to see how they approach a community-interest.

>> Steve: If they know what it is. I'd rather -- my suggestion would be, if they've got a press release, they've done, that's what I would like to see. Then you're getting one that they didn't have to be brilliant to us. They had to be brilliant to a boss. But request a press release of some description. If they don't have one, tell them to prepare one.

>> Sally: Okay. So, just to make sure I'm clear on our marching orders. So, we'll let them know that they are selected to be interviewed. But that they will likely be interviewed after the 1st of the year. And so, I'll wait to actually ask for their availability until you all decide on your meeting schedule for the beginning of the year. Just because general days are, I think probably not valuable to you as much. And then I'll ask -- we will ask them to provide you all with a press release they've done in the past or a new one. And then would you want like a strategic outreach plan for a community of interest? Or just the press release?

>> Steve: Just a press release. What -- you don't need to get specific dates. But certainly ask them if after the 1st of the year they have some time they are not available. Okay.

>> Sally: Absolutely can do.

>> Steve: I kind of made a motion. Want me to restate?

>> Juanita: Second the motion.

>> Steve: So moved, seconded, all in favor, raise your hand. Okay. That passes unanimous -- well, anybody opposed? Had raise your hand. Okay. That takes us to time to go home. So, I move we adjourn. Doug just seconded it. And all in favor, turn your computers off. Bye!

>> Good night, everybody.

>> Thank you, communications people.