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MICRC

20230316-1000 Council Meeting

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>> Good morning, everybody.

>> Good morning.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Good morning. As Chair of the Commission, I call the meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. This Zoom webinar is being live streamed on YouTube channel.

For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform than they are currently using, please visit our social media at Redistricting MI.

Our live stream today includes closed captioning. Closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish and Arabic and Bengali translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. Please E-mail us at Redistricting@michigan.gov or for additional details for accessing language translation services for this meeting.

People with disabilities or needing other specific accommodations should also contact Redistricting at Michigan.gov.

This meeting is also being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for viewing at a later date.

This meeting also is being transcribed and those closed captioned transcriptions will be made available and posted on Michigan.gov/MICRC website along with the written public comment submissions.

There is also a public comment portal that may be accessed by visiting Michigan.gov/MICRC, this portal can be utilized to post maps and comments which can be viewed by both the Commission and the public.

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Edward Woods III, our Executive Director and at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov or 517-331-6309.

For the public watching and the public record I will turn to the department state staff take note of the commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good morning, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name, where you are attending from and I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug.

>> VICE CHAIR CLARK: I'm present from Rochester Hills.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present; attending from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid.

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>> COMMISSIONER EID: Good morning. Virtually attending today from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom.

I thought Brittini was present.

One moment.

She may have left temporarily.

I will return to her.

Rhonda Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Osceola County, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present; attending from Lee County, Florida

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present; attending remotely from Battle Creek, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> CHAIR ROTHORN: Present; attending remotely from East Lansing, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

Janice Vallette.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present. Attending remotely from Highland Township, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

Richard Weiss?

Richard? Looks like Richard may be experiencing technical difficulties.

Richard, can you hear us?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: The screen froze up a little bit here.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Oh, no.

Richard.

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present; attending remotely from Saginaw Township, Saginaw. Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Great, okay.

Dustin Witjes?

>> CHAIR WITJES: Present; attending remotely from Tuscola, Illinois.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you. 10 Commissioners are present and there is a quorum

>> CHAIR WITJES: Excellent. Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt.

As a reminder to the public watching, You can view the agenda at Michigan.gov/MICRC.

I would now entertain a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

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Motion made by Commissioner Curry and seconded by Commissioner Rothhorn. Is there debate or discussion on the motion? Hearing none and moved and seconded the agenda is adopted.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

Aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The meeting is adopted.

Meeting agenda is adopted.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Chairman Witjes, this is Edward, just a question with regards to the letter that was submitted.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Go ahead.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: As to the Commission's wishes.

>> CHAIR WITJES: We received a letter that may warrant some discussion.

It was sent to all of our e-mails this morning.

I leave it up to anyone here to decide if it's something we have new business to discuss or if it's something we should handle at the end of the meeting.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Mr. Chair, I did not receive this letter that you're speaking of.

So I do not know the contents of it.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Edward, would you like to elaborate?

I can't hear you.

You are on mute.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Can you hear me now?

>> CHAIR WITJES: Yes, sir.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: This letter was submitted by access this morning and I forwarded it to the Commissioners at about 9:48 a.m.

And what they are asking for is and I'm going to read it off the screen to submit a letter in support of the management and budget proposed changes to statistical policy directive 15, which would combine the race and ethnicity question with the inclusion of a MENA, which is Middle East and North African category, would be a summary of what they are asking for.

>> CHAIR WITJES: All right. Now we can either have a motion to amend the agenda to add it under new business or keep the agenda as is.

And handle it when we get to correspondence.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I would move to add this to the agenda.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I second it.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Moving to add the discussion on the letter by access to.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Mr. Chair, I thought, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I thought all pertinent information for the agenda is to be subjected to us 24 hours in advance so we can review it if we have any questions.

So I would be opposed to this.

Based off of rules, all things that are supposed to be brought up and put on the agenda especially when it relates to something we are supposed to have 24 hours so we can review the documents.

And if there is any questions get clarification.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay, Commissioner Lange does indeed have a pretty good point.

And that is my feeling as well.

But Ms. Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Noting for the record Commissioner Szetela has joined the meeting at 10:11 a.m. Can you tell us where you are attending remotely from?

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Sure. Wayne County, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Any other discussion or debate on this motion? Okay, Commissioner Szetela?

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm just joining so I'm trying to catch up. This is the letter about adding Middle Eastern as a census category?

>> CHAIR WITJES: Yeah, we are having a motion to see if we want to add it to the agenda as new business item or discuss it during the correspondence Section.

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Okay. Thank you.

No further comment then. I was not sure if you were voting on it or if it was just to add it to the agenda.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Any debate or discussion? All right, the motion made by Commissioner Lett, seconded by Commissioner Orton.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Commissioner Curry.

>> CHAIR WITJES: All in favor on adopting the agenda raise your hand and say aye. Aye.

All opposed say nay.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Nay.

>> CHAIR WITJES: They.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Nay.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Did you get a count on that, Sarah?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Can the nays raise their hand one more time?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Since I'm attending by phone, this is a nay, this is Commissioner Lange.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That would be six to five.

Am I counting that correctly? MC is nodding, so the motion does not carry.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay, all right, moving on on our agenda to public comments.

Without objection we will begin the public comment portion of our meeting. Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with the public comment.

Individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide live remote public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so.

I will call on your name and the staff will unmute you. If you are on a computer, you will be prompted by the zoom app to unmute your mic and speak. If you are on the phone, a voice will say that the host would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six to unmute.

I will call on you by your name or the last four digits of the phone number. Also note if you experience technical or audio issues or we do not hear from you for 3-5 seconds, we will move on to the next person in line and then return to you after they are done speaking.

If your audio still does not work, you can e-mail at redistricting@michigan.gov and we will help you troubleshoot so you can participate during the next public comment period at a later hearing or meeting.

You will have two minutes to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

First in line to provide public comment ss Mr. Anthony Scannell.

>> Hello, MICRC. Thank you. Well, and in terms of that correspondence you got, well, I guess you did not add it. It's a tie. I don't know. I did not pay attention. Whatever.

And it did not get added to the agenda, but you already have correspondence on the agenda so I mean, I think you can bring it up then.

Anyway, to the point of this, I don't know if it would relate to agenda item you say election of the Chair and Vice Chair.

So I don't know if that is going to be happening again.

But in so doing great consideration might be a party affiliation of Commissioner that you would choose for that.

And I'll just speak as a voter or citizen, you know, I see a party affiliation is very significant as a way to judge, you know, the actions and character of a person.

I mean, I look at the two major parties that we have and I just I see as it said in the Constitution affiliate.

If you affiliate with the two major parties, I mean, I kind of look at you as a person who overlooks corruption and doesn't have a lot of original thoughts.

But, anyway, my question I guess would be for the Council. What is the meaning of affiliate with the party since we don't have party registration in Michigan? And by voter registration.

And then for the Council say a Commissioner wanted to change their party affiliation, how would they do that? I'm assuming they file a notice. And would that affect their standing on the Commission given that there has to be a certain number of party affiliates? So if they wanted to change their affiliation? Thank you.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Next individual to address the Commissioner is Mr. James Galant.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR WITJES: We can.

>> Okay. This is James Galant, Marquette County Suicide Prevention Coalition.

These are my opinions. And good questions, Anthony.

Keep it up.

And I'd like to make a prediction that within six months our case in controversy here about the Robert's Rules of Order, the rules of procedure and Secretary of State's Benson's absence from these proceedings will be front and center of our debate on how to save our democracy from the hostile actors who would want to change the fundamental principles of parliamentary law in the United States of American, which is Robert's Rules of Order and our Constitutional Republic.

Now, please take note that the Secretary of State staff took note of the members present, yet the Constitution says the Secretary of State, Joyce Benson, shall take the roll call and do the roll call votes. So she hasn't been doing any of that. I think she only started roll call once since the entire beginning of this.

So please consider requesting from the State Director of Personnel.

I just talked to them. And a training for Robert's Rules of Order of what it actually means. Like Page 366, Line 8, there shall be no debate before a motion is properly seconded.

Dustin Witjes, as a citizen of the Netherlands, is not doing that.

He is doing a different form of Government here.

And auditor general, please ask him to finish his audit.

He did not do the procedural audit part of it, which Edward Woods stated on the record that he was going to identify the rules of procedure and then generally follow the rules of procedure. And he didn't do that.

And please by resolution ask him to finish that and keep that going.

So, yeah, Secretary of State Benson, where is she? She is supposed to answer about right now about adding to this agenda and notice to the meeting about to get on the agenda.

That was Secretary of State Benson, legally under the Constitution was supposed to answer those questions because she is Secretary of State.

43rd in our country, right? So here we go.

So this is just another one.

She's just another one.

She doesn't get to just make it up as she goes and then disregard the way we do it in America.

You know, Robert's Rules of Order. The Secretary of State, I assume, has a working knowledge of Roberts Rules and she should...

>> CHAIR WITJES: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

That concludes our public comment. However, I would like to mention that all e-mailed and mailed public comments are provided to the Commission before each meeting and Commissioners also regularly review the public comment portal on our www.Michigan.gov/MICRC website.

We appreciate everyone who offers public comment in whatever way you choose and invite you to keep sharing your thoughts especially if you would like to share ways the MICRC process or procedures have been good or could be more effective.

Next on our agenda is unfinished business agenda item 5A. Fiscal year 23 budget impasse without objection I will ask David or Nate Fink to present this item.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, Mr. Fink.

>> Thank you, Chairman Witjes.

Good morning to all of you.

It's nice to see you all.

I hope everybody is doing well.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with just a very brief update as to where we are on the funding issue.

As I'm sure you're all aware we filed the lawsuit back in December against the prior legislature because they failed to comply with their constitutional obligations to appropriate the funds for the Commission's operations.

We filed the lawsuit and relatively shortly thereafter in the context of typical litigation speed I would say the legislature, the current legislature finally did appropriate all of the funds that we had asked for.

And we have now agreed to dismiss the lawsuit.

There had been questions raised about whether we could try to do anything in the context of that lawsuit to prevent this from happening again in the future.

Unfortunately because, well, fortunate that the legislature ultimately fulfilled its obligations and appropriated the funds like it is required to do.

Given the rules we all work under in terms of the Court rules and how litigation proceeds, there is really nothing else we can do to try to get some kind of ruling from the Court to order the legislature to comply with its obligations going forward.

And so we were sort of in the circumstances we had to go ahead and dismiss the lawsuit.

But we are certainly aware of this issue going forward.

We want to do what we can to prevent it from happening again in the future to this Commission or a future Commission.

To that end, we at the direction of Executive Director Woods and Commissioner Lett when we spoke with the Attorney General's office about dismissing the case, we did raise the issue of the fact that the current budget request for the -- the next fiscal year does not include the Commission.

And we raised that.

And expressed that that is a very significant concern.

The Attorney General's office was not able to provide us with any information as to what the legislature's intentions are going forward.

We are hopeful that ultimately when the legislature considers the budget for the next fiscal year that they will fulfill their obligation.

And, in fact, appropriate the funds that have been requested by the Commission, which is, again, from our perspective very clear obligation under the Constitution.

But we did raise that issue with the Attorney General's office.

Who are of course were representing the legislature in the lawsuit that we filed. And are responsible for communicating with the legislature in that context.

So, with that, like I said, I wanted to just provide the Commission with that update. I'm happy to address any questions that anybody might have related to that.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Anyone have any questions for Mr. Fink?

>> Commissioner Clark's hand is raised.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, Nate so what you're saying is we potentially will have the same issue in front of us that this coming budget year we had this previous year?

>> Well, it's possible.

My understanding is as of this moment the Commission's request for appropriation for the next fiscal year is not included and was not included in the request submitted to the legislature.

I believe the legislature has not yet taken up the next fiscal year budget.

And so we will see, like I said, I did raise this issue with the Attorney General's office.

And asked them to convey their concern to the legislature, to the legislative, to their legislative contacts.

And they said they would do that.

As the Commission is aware there is still pending litigation.

The AG case, AGEE matter which could certainly still be pending in the next fiscal year. It's hard to predict how litigation may play out.

But even under frankly under the best of circumstances, if ultimately the Court were to grant the anticipated motion for summary judgment that would be filed on behalf of the Commission, there's a good chance that the Court wouldn't even enter such a ruling until the next fiscal year.

And if the case ultimately goes to trial, that will almost certainly spill out into the next fiscal year so there will still be pending litigation in the next year so the Commission will remain active and need its appropriation and the legislature from our perspective that was a long winded answer to your question, Commissioner Clark.

We certainly think it could become an issue.

But we are hopeful that when it ultimately comes to it the legislature will actually go ahead and appropriate the funds and not require us to file another lawsuit.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: What is the timeframe on the legislature addressing the budget?

>> I'm not sure when they will be taking up the budget for the next year.

I think it could be in May.

But I would defer to perhaps Executive Director Woods.

Who I think just unmuted.

And.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I'm sure the Governor presented her budget last month to the legislature now it's going through the committee process.

So more than likely we would probably be part of a supplemental if we are not included, you know, right now maybe they are just waiting to see what happens with regards to our Court cases and what have you.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Any other questions for Nate from anyone? Thank you very much for your report, Nate.

Appreciate it.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Yep.

All right moving on to new business our next agenda item is new business 6A Executive Director part time contract extension.

Without objection I will ask Mr. Steve Lett to present the item.

Hearing none please proceed, Commissioner Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR WITJES: We can.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: My computer is doing weird things.

A contract extension for Edward Woods, III as Executive Director.

And I would ask Edward to explain where we are with his request and extension.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Sure.

This is basically extending it for an additional six months.

The current contract expires March 31st.

And it's at the same rate.

There is no changes.

It's a part time contract.

It's an hourly contract.

For up to 30 hours a week if needed.

But it's usually 20 or less.

With regards to that.

So it's just nothing changed other than the date.

It's been reviewed by our attorneys and just being brought for the Commission's consideration.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I guess I would have a question for you, Edward. Is the time allotted in the contract sufficient now?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Okay.

Then I would move the extension be approved.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay and Doug, do you have a question?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah I do have one question.

I read through this and compared it to the previous one.

My understanding is the only difference is the dates.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: The date where it starts and ends, okay, thank you. And I do put forward a motion to approve it.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Motion was made by Commission Lett do you want to be the second then, Doug? Okay.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett seconded by Commissioner Clark to extend the contract for the Executive Director Edward Woods, III.

Any debate or discussion on the motion? Seeing none vote, all in favor of the motion raise your hand and say aye.

Aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Nay.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay.

And looks like the ayes prevail and the motion is adopted.

Okay next item is the election of a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Without objection we will proceed with the election process.

Seeing no objections, may I take nominations for the Chairperson? Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I nominate Doug Clark.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Doug, do you accept?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I do.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Any other nominations for the Chairperson? Okay, let's see any questions for Doug? Doug, do you want to give a little speech here before we vote on you?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I've known all of you for the last few years.

So I think you pretty well have gotten to know me.

And I've led a couple of subcommittees.

And I have recently been the Vice Chair.

And filled in for Dustin a number of times.

So that is the basis of what I would like to present to you.

>> CHAIR WITJES: All right.

Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Yeah, I just want to comment.

I think I fully agree with having Doug as the Chair.

I think he will do an excellent job.

I've worked with him over our course of business.

I just want to make a comment that it's been suggested we should pay some type of special attention to party affiliation.

And I think that I probably have most of the Commissioners agreement that we really don't pay a lot of attention to party affiliation.

We have acted as a group that is all on the same Page to do the best that we can in redistricting and have done that regardless of who sits in the Chair and regardless of party affiliation so I want that on the public record.

That we, in fact, operate as a unified group.

We have differences of opinion.

No doubt about it.

But one of them isn't, are you a democrat or republican, or in a green party, I don't know what other party you want to call it.

I just want that known by the public.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Well said, Steve.

Doug, you raised your hand again, do you have more to add?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes.

I agree with Steve.

I think party affiliation has been really outside the majority of what we have done over the course of time.

The only time we really addressed it was when we put the three person subcommittees together and made sure we had a republican and a democrat and a nonaffiliated individual on those committees.

And that was more for public perception than anything.

So well said, Steve.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay, well, Commissioner Clark having been nominated for Chairperson, he is the only one nominated, however we still have to go through roll call vote for it unfortunately so I will ask Michigan Department of State to conduct a roll call vote with the Commissioners voting for their candidate of choice for Chair.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Certainly, Mr. Chair.

Commissioners, please state your support to elect Commissioner Clark as Chair with a yes or a no.

A yes vote being to elect Commissioner Clark as your new Chair.

I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Rhonda Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: No.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia with Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes, yes, and Anthony Eid.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Ten yes to one no Commissioner Clark has been elected the new Chair congratulations.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Congratulations Commissioner Clark.

I will repeat the process for Vice Chairperson of the Commission.

I will now take nominations for the Vice Chair.

Commissioner Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Yes I would like to nominate Cynthia Orton, please.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I second that.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Okay do you accept?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yeah, I will accept.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I was going to make the same nomination.

>> CHAIR WITJES: Any other nominations for Vice Chair? Do you want to address the Commission, Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Sure.

Same as Doug we have worked together.

I think you know who I am and I agree that we have not paid attention to party affiliation. So Doug and I are both republicans.

But that has not had any bearing on how we have worked together and like Steve said we work as a unified body so I would be happy to do my best as Vice Chair.

>> CHAIR WITJES: I think you will do just fine.

Okay we will go back to roll call to elect Commissioner Orton of Vice Chair of the Commission.

Ms. Reinhardt, would you start the roll call vote please.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Certainly Mr. Chair.

Commissioners please state your support to elect Commissioner Orton as your new Vice Chair with a yes or a no vote.

I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Reluctantly yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Emphatically yes.

>> Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: About time yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss? Yes Dustin Witjes.

Yes, Doug Clark, yes, Juanita Curry.

Absolutely yes.

Anthony Eid? Yes.

>> Rhonda Lange? No.

Ten and Ms. Orton is the Vice Chair.

>> CHAIR WITJES: So take it away.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: We need Cindy to have a little speech.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I'm going to pass on the speech tonight.

That continues the new business.

And that we have done so we have got to do the approval of the minutes that is the next on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the February 16th meaning.

These draft minutes have been provided to the Commission for the meeting and posted on the website.

Are there any edits to these meetings? This meeting.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Commissioner Clark we need to skill that.

They were not provided.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I was going to mention to you I had not seen it.

I don't know.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: A caveat just in case.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We will delay this and put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Now we move to the Executive Director report.

This is a report of the Executive Director today.

Without objection I will ask Executive Director Woods to provide his report.

Please provide us with the report, Mr. Woods.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you Commissioner Clark.

I will make sure you guys let me know.

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Do you see it on the screen? Excuse me, do you see it on the screen?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: We dealt with the impasse already.

Chair and vice elections.

Here is a report.

Our February report we are in the process of not getting our bills.

The bills we receive to date deals with staff salaries, printing, professional services, which is our financials that we do with insights three and Commissioners' pay.

We don't have all expenses so we have a total of \$31,615.09. This will need to be updated, but I just wanted you to know expenses up to date.

We sent reminders to our consultants, our legal consultants in particular, and they will be submitting them shortly.

But wanted you to know what we have to date.

We are reconciling to make sure all back bills are allotted to the correct month in terms of where they are from October 1 so you will get a very detailed six month report at our April meeting that outlines everything transpired as relates to Commission funding.

Highlights from the website and providing the information and talks to you where we are down from over 6,000 views and the final District maps and 13.

We received and got feedback from some of our associations who are interested in having all the maps and PDFs are not as user friendly so we will have picture files of the maps that you have already received and made available to the public so they can use them for their presentations, for their Government and policy committees so they can have access for PowerPoint presentations or what have you.

We may not have the ability to convert PDF files.

Regarding cyber security I have been working with Kim Metzger and e-mailing you to make sure computers are up to date and I had the appreciate things run on them if you have questions I'm here to help, the help desk is important as well but just really want to implore each and every one of your for our computers and our phones to make sure we are up to date.

Our lessons learned report is out on the front Page of the website and placed in the archives of State of Michigan.

In addition to the Commission report our maps and lessons learned report is there as well.

I have been spending considerable time on payroll processing and making a report at our next meeting with regards to getting the details and how that works.

And want to give a shout out to Skyline high school.

They did a report on redistricting for CSPAN and received Honorable mention of Skyline High School in the Ann Arbor Area and received Honorable mention on covering the Commission's work of redistricting by CSPAN.

If there is any questions, I can take them at this time.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Mr. Woods?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: It's not so much a question but a small request. In the future, I guess, I know you always do put up a visual when you do your executive director report.

Do you think it would be possible to get a copy of that prior to our meeting for those of us that may not be able to attend via Zoom so we will have I'm assuming there is figures on there and the stuff in front of us so we can follow along?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Sure.

Thank you for that question.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Do you have anything else Mr. Woods?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I want to thank the Commission for extending my contract.

I appreciate working with each and every one of you and I do know and can attest you worked well together as a team for the betterment of the State of Michigan and its citizens and I look forward to working with the new leadership and just thank you.

And I want to thank Steve as our legal liaison.

He has been very helpful in terms of taking the bills so definitely want to thank Commissioner Lett, Commissioner Steven T Lett as well as each and every one of you for reaching out and kindness and professionalism and moving the Commissioner's work forward.

It's an honor and privilege to work for you and serving the citizens of Michigan so thanks again.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you Mr. Woods.

And your work has been very much appreciated by the Commission.

And we want to note that.

There is a legal liaison report.

And without objection I will ask our legal liaison Commissioner Steve Lett to provide the report.

Please proceed, Commissioner Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Thank you, Doug.

Not a lot to report as Edward has said.

We have been really focusing on the new payroll processing and that has been taking basically all of our time.

There is nothing new on the litigation.

I'm assuming that many of you have been interviewed by our attorneys either in person or by Zoom.

Must be it was not too bad.

You all came back.

So that is a good sign.

I will save the rest of the comments when we do the payroll update from Edward.

I don't know if that is coming up, next.

If anybody has questions it really has been dealing with this payroll issue.

Nothing on the payroll on the agenda.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: It will come up next, month.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We will adjust that next month.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I will give you a little bit of an update.

I think you guys have been getting e-mails.

Have you been putting everyone on the e-mails, Edward?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: So you understand what the process is.

The thing that was concerning to us and probably you also is how are we getting charged 26% or 28% or whatever percent it is for processing payroll and as we got the numbers back and looked and you know I did one of the oh, yeah, we got to pay taxes. And I probably should have known that since I did that as in many law practice for years.

And just did not dawn on me that they would include that.

I just thought they were using that as their profit and they are not.

So you've gotten the breakdown.

We will talk about it further.

We are still working with them through the attorneys to work out the details on the contract.

As all of you I think have said we don't like this contract.

And we are not there, we are their employees for payroll but not employees for anything else so we are working through that part of it.

So if there are any questions on that I would be happy to answer them now.

But we will have a better handle on it next month.

In the meantime we are going to continue using Kelly.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you Commissioner Lett.

Do we have any questions for Commissioner Lett? Okay seeing none let's move on to the MDOS update.

Without objection I will ask either Mike Brady or Sarah Reinhardt from the Michigan Department of State if they have an update.

Hearing no objection, please proceed, Mr. Brady or Ms. Reinhardt.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Hi Commissioners I just wanted to say thank you to the Commission and to your Executive Director for working with our office to get your computers updated and connected and in compliance.

I know that that's not always the most fun of tasks to work with your computers.

And getting them updated.

But I really appreciate all of you doing that.

And for and grateful to your Executive Director for helping coordinate that.

Thank you and that is all I have.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Questions for Ms. Reinhardt.

Commissioner Curry?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: It's not a question Chair Clark but want to thank Edward for taking my computer.

This is one of the first times I had my computer with no trouble coming on and I just want to commend him for a job well done.

I mean I have been having so many problems with this computer that it's crazy but I thank him and whoever helped.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Realize of course now it's going to go blank.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I know, don't you try it, don't you try it, Steve.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Any other Commissioners having troubles with their computers or computer equipment? None? Commissioner Lange, you mentioned that you could not see things through Zoom.

Are you having an issue?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I'm not on Zoom, I'm on the phone.

So, no, no issue.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, thank you.

Appreciate it.

If there are no other questions, for Ms. Reinhardt let's move on to correspondence.

If there is any available it was received in advance of our meeting today along with any written public comments to the Commissioner.

Okay we did receive one issue of correspondence but not within the 24 hour timeframe as Commissioner Lange noted.

And we will address that next meeting.

Moving on to the future agenda items, are there any agenda items that Commissioners would like to have added to the future agenda?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I think at this point I would like to add the letter that we received to make sure we don't miss it somehow.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Because it won't come in as correspondence next month so let's add it for new business next month.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay I agree.

Any objection to that? Or any other comments?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I have a question, sorry.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, go ahead Commissioner Lange.

You have the floor.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Well, you're putting it on there as a discussion on the next meeting.

My question is, and like I said I didn't receive this, but in it it stated for us to vote about adding certain communities to the census; is that correct?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I don't believe that is what was stated. I have not received the e-mail as well.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, because I just want to make sure that we stay within our rules as we all agreed to about not supporting or supporting nor or not supporting any potential things that may relate to litigation or what have you as far as being neutral.

So that is where my confusion came from because I don't know the whole contents of it.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, let's give everybody an opportunity to read through the letter and get their thoughts together.

And then we will have a comprehensive discussion next meeting.

Commissioner Szetela?

>> COMMISSIONER SZETELA: Yeah, I was just going to add they are not asking us -- they were basically asking us to submit a comment is what it comes down to in support of categorizing people of Middle Eastern dissent as a separate category where there would be multiple categories so if someone was Hispanic and Middle Eastern, they could check both boxes.

Consideration of making the change at the Federal level and asking us to consider submitting a comment is what the letter was saying just for clarification.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Would that not go against our rules. I will wait for next month.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: That is diving in the letter but that was just the content of it.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Let's give everybody an opportunity to read through it including the individuals that are not here today.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Edward, was there like a deadline? I thought it was supposed to be time sensitive.

So is that accurate?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I did too. But the date wasn't in the letter request.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay thank you.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I did share that with them and let them know it could possibly be addressed at the last meeting and have not heard back from them at this meeting so we are fine just waiting until next meeting.

We also got correspondence from I should say I received, I received an e-mail from Mr. Brace from election services and he would be happy to provide some context to that discussion.

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>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you Mr. Woods would you ensure that gets put on the agenda for next month?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Yes, I will.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Any other comments? Thank you for your comment, Commissioner Lange and Commissioner Szetela.

Let's move on to announcements.

Are there any announcements? None?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Thank you Doug and Cynthia and we are getting good at this and thank you for stepping into leadership and retiring from leadership.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Dustin did an excellent job over the past year both as Vice Chair and Chair.

>> CHAIR WITJES: I don't know how you folks did it when we had meetings every day.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, I think those people that have the Vice Chair and Chair positions have the extra work for sure and we do appreciate that as well.

>> CHAIR ROTHORN: Unique challenges in this phase of our life too.

So I appreciate you all doing what you're doing.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay as the items on the agenda are completed and the Commission has no further business a motion to adjourn is in order.

May I have a motion to adjourn?

>> CHAIR WITJES: So moved.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I have a motion by Commissioner Witjes and a second by Commissioner Weiss.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

Aye.

I did not hear anything from Rhonda and she was an aye.

Opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail.

The meeting is adjourned at 6 minutes until 11:00

Appreciate it.

Everybody have a good day.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Good-bye guys.