
MEMORANDUM

TO: SELECT BOARD, TOWN OF EXETER
FROM: KATHERINE B. MILLER, MODERATOR
CC: TOWN CLERK, CHECKLIST SUPERVISOR, TOWN MANAGER
DATE: JULY 25, 2022
RE: RECOMMENDATION ON POLL PADS FOR 2023 VOTING DAYS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I recommend that the Town purchase or lease “poll pads” for the 2023 Town Elections. Poll pads: (1) allow ballot clerks to check in voters much more quickly, virtually eliminating check-in lines on voting days and (2) create a more accurate Checklist on the spot. Use of poll pads will add to the work of the Supervisors of the Checklist after the election, to reconcile the digital printout from the poll pads, the Voter receipts and the updated paper Checklist. The poll pad setups can be rented or purchased from LHS Associates in Salem NH. Cost to rent the setup for ten poll pads and one cradle point, for one year, would be \$5500. Cost to buy the equipment would be \$18,650. It is more cost-effective to own the equipment than to rent the system at the six-year point, but the Town can do either, including renting for a year to “try them out.” Note: the life expectancy for the hardware is typically 5-6 years, according to LHS.

DISCUSSION

Each poll pad comes with a screen, printer and case. Each one can be set up on a table with one Ballot Clerk per poll pad. The Town uploads the Voter checklist into the system, using ElectionNet, the state-wide, centralized Voter registration database for NH. Each poll pad has the entire Voter Checklist loaded into it, so Voters are not divided alphabetically. All the poll pads in use will be daisy-chained together with a single cradle point device, using extension cords, creating an Ethernet, not linked to the Internet.

Registered Voters will be directed to any poll pad, no line -- no waiting.

- The Ballot Clerk at the poll pad will ask the Voter to **show** their ID. The Ballot Clerk will make sure the person in front of them is the person on the ID (same as we do now).
- The Ballot Clerk will then ask if the clerk may scan the Voter’s NH driver’s license, in which case the Ballot Clerk will scan it, confirm the Voter’s information and print out a receipt, which the Voter will exchange at another table for a ballot.

- If the Voter does not want their license scanned, or does not have a NH driver's license, the Ballot Clerk will manually type in the Voter's name, confirm their information and print out a receipt, which the Voter will swap at another table for a ballot.
- If the Voter address has changed, the Ballot Clerk can manually that by typing in the changes and then printing the receipt. The Voter can confirm the information on the spot, resulting in fewer human errors with data entry.
- If the Voter information does not appear, the Voter is new or has changed a name and must go to the Checklist Supervisors table, and then come back to the Ballot Clerk.
- Once the Voter receives the receipt, the Voter proceeds to another table where Ballot Clerks will confirm the Voter's party affiliation, collect the receipt, hand out the appropriate ballot and direct the Voter to the voting booths.

Voters will be directed to the Checklist Supervisor table to register to vote and to update names:

- A Supervisor will enter the Voter registration information into a poll pad and print out a registration receipt (smaller than the receipts the Ballot Clerks hand to Voters). Be aware that there is a lag from the time the Voter's information is entered into the poll pad system by the Checklist Supervisor to the time the Voter's name can be recalled at the poll pad check-in station, of about 90 seconds.
- The Voter will take the new Voter receipt and an ID to a poll pad check-in table, and the Ballot Clerk there will verify their identity with the ID, take the Voter's receipt, recall the Voter's information on the poll pad by entering their name, and print a receipt, which the Voter will exchange for a ballot at another table. The Voter can confirm their registration information on the receipt on the spot, reducing errors.
- The Voter will proceed to the ballot table to exchange the receipt for a ballot.

Other Points:

- Throughout the day, we will have a Ballot Clerk serve as a "runner," putting in alphabetical order the receipts that the runner collects from the Ballot Clerks handing out ballots, and delivering the receipts to two other Ballot Clerks who will be marking the paper checklist, in a quiet but public location away from the check-in locations. By law, we have to keep a paper copy of the checklist for each election, and maintain and update it in "real time," to use in the event of a hitch with the poll pads on voting day.
- Poll pads can be switched in or out during the day, and configured to process absentee ballots, or to accept Voters at the check-in table, or register new voters at the Checklist Supervisors table, as needed.
- At the end of the election, counting tapes from the Accuvote machine will show how many Voters voted. The poll pads will show the number of ballots handed out to Voters. Reports needed for the Secretary of State's Office can be downloaded from the poll pads to a PDF file and printed the next day.
- Although the poll pads will save time for checking in voters, the work for the Supervisors of the Checklists will *increase*, due to the need

Staffing: We anticipate needing approximately the same number of Ballot Clerks for the poll pads as we used with the old, paper checklist process, but there will be *more* hours for the Supervisors of the Checklist, post-election.

Training: LHS will conduct *staff* training for the Ballot Clerks and the Supervisors of the Checklist. We also recommend a demonstration for *voters* to become acquainted with the system, ahead of voting day.

Support and Trouble-Shooting: LHS is a local company with an excellent reputation for customer service with the other NH towns that have begun using poll pads through LHS. Other out of state companies supplying poll pads to NH communities have been less responsive. LHS already services our Accuvote ballot counting machines, and we have a good relationship with the company.

Due Diligence: The LHS poll pads have been approved by the Ballot Law Commission. Poll pads are now covered in the RSAs. We all attended a presentation by LHS in person in Exeter, and we had a Zoom conference with Moderators, Town Clerks and Supervisors of the Checklists for several Towns currently using poll pads from LHS, who all enthusiastically endorsed the benefits of the poll pads. The Town's attorneys would need to review the contracts with LHS.

Poll Pad Set-Ups Current Prices

Rental Price per Year	Purchase Price plus Annual Fee	Other Equipment with Either
<p>10 Poll Pads with Receipt Printer: \$5,000.</p> <p>Cradle Point (in lieu of secure internet connection): \$500.</p> <p>Total for Each Year: \$5,500.</p> <p>Total Cost for 6 Years: \$33,000</p>	<p>10 Poll Pads With Receipt Printer, Total: \$15,250</p> <p>Cradle Point (in lieu of secure internet connection): \$1650 (Need 1).</p> <p>Initial Set-Up Cost: \$1750</p> <p>Total for First Year: \$18,650</p> <p>Total Annual Cost for Subsequent Years: \$3500</p> <p>Total Cost for 6 Years: \$32,650</p> <p>Life expectancy: Typically, the hardware can last 5-6 years.</p>	<p>10 Power Strips, Extension Cords and Floor Cord Covers</p> <p>Printer On Site (which we will need in any case to print ballots in event of shortfall), which Town currently owns, which can be moved in place for voting day.</p>

POLLING PAD

Pros	Cons
No line, no waiting	Cost
Local Support	
User Friendly	
Less Human Error	
More accurate	
Speed	
Less reconciliation time at the end of election	
Hands on training	
Accurate Reporting	
Easy Set Up	