

Office of Town Clerk

Laura L. Schwall, CMC/CMMC
Town Clerk
148 Peck Street
Rehoboth, MA 02769



August 5, 2020

Town Clerk's Report on Polling Location Change

In accordance with Section 11 of Chapter 115 of the Acts of 2020, the Town Clerk of the Town of Rehoboth respectfully requests that the location of the Town's polling Place, for the September 1, 2020 State Primary and November 3, 2020 Presidential & State Election be re-located from three individual precincts (Precinct 1 – Rehoboth Town Hall – 148 Peck Street; Precinct 2 – Rehoboth Council on Aging/COA – Senior Center – 55 Bay State Road; Precinct 3 – Rehoboth South Fire Station – 102 Pleasant Street) to the Palmer River Elementary School Gymnasium, 326 Winthrop Street due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, State of Emergency, and social distancing protocols required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The proposed new precinct location at Palmer River Elementary School is not new to Rehoboth voters. Rehoboth voters voted at Palmer River Elementary School from December 10, 1956 through March 2, 2004. When the new Gladys L. Hurrell Senior Center/Council on Aging officially opened on May 13, 2003, discussions began to change the Town's precincts to three separate precincts. On February 9, 2004 the Selectmen voted to approve the COA as Rehoboth's Precinct 2; the first election held at the COA was April 4, 2004. We have been voting at all three precincts until this year's COVID-19 Pandemic. Due to Social Distancing Protocols, the three individual precincts are unable to safely social distance the number of voters expected for the upcoming elections. Therefore, the Dighton-Rehoboth School District, and more specifically, Palmer River Elementary School Principal, Arlene Miguel, has given the Town of Rehoboth permission to hold the remaining two 2020 elections at the old polling site, Palmer River Elementary School Gymnasium.

On August 3, 2020 the Town Clerk-Laura Schwall, Selectman-Gerald Schwall, and IT Director-Derek Rousseau, surveyed the proposed site for the combined polling location of Precinct 1, 2, 3 using the Secretary of the Commonwealth's regulations for polling place accessibility (950 CMR 51:00) and determined that the Palmer River Elementary School Gymnasium, 326 Winthrop Street, Rehoboth meets the criteria for a polling location.

FINDINGS: The Palmer River Elementary School Gymnasium is centrally located and easily accessible by the town's major roadway, Route 44. It meets the requirements for site access, voting equipment, secure Wi-Fi access, parking, entrance, ramps, and building interior. Palmer River Elementary is a public school, in the Town of Rehoboth, is ADA compliant and will not have a disparate adverse impact on access to the polls on the basis of race, national origin, disability, income or age. Palmer River provides adequate space for voters to be able to maintain social distance from each other and Election Officials upon entering, waiting in line, voting and exiting the polling location. Further, Palmer River Elementary School provides adequate space for Election Officials to perform their duties while maintaining social distance from each other to the greatest extent possible. Based on this information provided to you, I hope the Board of Selectmen will find that this proposed change in polling locations is in accordance with Section 11 of Chapter 115 of the Acts of 2020 and will have no adverse impact on the voters of Ward 0/Precincts 1, 2 or 3.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Schwall, CMC/CMMC
Rehoboth Town Clerk

POLLING PLACE AND REGISTRATION SITE ACCESS

LOCATION: Palmer River Elementary School DATE: August 3, 2020
WARD: 0 PRECINCT: Precincts 1, 2, & 3
SURVEYOR: Laura & Gerald Schwall SURVEYOR: Derek Rousseau
TITLE: Town Clerk & Selectman TITLE: Rehoboth IT Director

This checklist is based on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's regulations for polling place accessibility 950 CMR 51:00. To complete this survey, you will need a level and a tape measure. Please specify in the "Comments" section, below, any issues that need further clarification.

1. Site access (Path of Travel):

(a) The paths of travel to the polling place from the parking lot and from the street are clear, reasonably lit, and unobstructed.

(b) The paths have continuous common surfaces, not interrupted by steps or abrupt changes in level greater than 1/2 inch.

(c) The path of travel is the same or a substantially similar distance for all persons entering the polling place.

<p>Comments (City/Town Representative): Gymnasium (built) and parking lot (upgraded) in 1998. 2019 parking lot was resurfaced when solar parking panels were installed. Also in 2019 an additional exit from the Palmer River Elementary parking lot, onto Route 44, was created to add easy exit from the school facility. There is a large blacktop area outside the gymnasium, which will be perfect for social distancing of voters leading up to the handicapped entrance of the gymnasium. Town Highway Department will be marking 6-foot distancing areas on the school blacktop playground area.</p>	<p>Comments (Monitor):</p>
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2. Parking:



(a) The required number of handicapped parking spaces is provided as follows:

<u>total no. of parking spaces</u>	<u>no. of handicapped spaces required</u>
1 - 25	1
26 - 50	2
51 - 75	3
76 - 100	4
101 - 150	5
151 - 200	6
201 - 300	7
301 - 400	8
401 - 500	9
501 -1,000	2% of total
1,001 and over	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1,000

(b) for parking lots striped prior to 9/1/96:



(1) The handicapped parking spaces are 8 feet wide and have an adjacent 4 foot access aisle which is painted or striped yellow. The parking lot is reasonably lit.



(2) The handicapped parking spaces are identified by a sign at each space or pair of spaces containing the International Symbol of Accessibility, with the top of the sign between 5 and 8 feet high above the ground.

(c) for parking lots striped after 9/1/96:



(1) The handicapped parking spaces are 8 feet wide and have an adjacent 5 foot access aisle which is marked by high contrast painted lines or other high contrast delineation. The parking lot is reasonably lit.



(2) Is there at least one "van accessible" space. (one in every eight accessible spaces must be van accessible, but no less than one) This space is 8 feet wide and has an adjacent 8-foot wide access aisle which is marked by high contrast painted lines or other high contrast delineation. The parking lot is reasonable lit.



(3) Each handicapped parking space is identified by a sign containing the International Symbol of Accessibility, with the top of the sign between 5 and 8 feet high above the ground. Van accessible spaces shall include the words "Van Accessible."



(d) Any sidewalk provided at the handicapped parking spaces has a curb cut (sidewalk ramp), with a slope no greater than 1:12, at each space or pair of spaces.



(e) If no parking lot is available, there is at least one on-street parking space which is at least temporarily designated as a handicapped parking space during the election in front of the polling place.

Comments (City/Town Representative): Five of the handicapped parking spaces do have the symbol of accessibility signs; we will be marking another four and putting temporary handicapped signs for election.	Comments (Monitor):
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3. Entrance



(a) At least one entrance to the building is accessible.



(b) The approach to the accessible entrance is a paved walk or ramp with a non-slip surface uninterrupted by steps or changes in level greater than 1/2 inch. There is a level space 60 inches from the door on both the exterior and interior sides.



(c) Lever handles or other accessible hardware are provided on doors, so that they may be operated with a closed fist.



(d) Doorways are at least 32 inches clear width. Door thresholds are no higher than 1/2 inch above the floor.



(e) If the main entrance is not accessible, signs direct people to the accessible entrance.



(f) If the accessible entrance is not the main entrance, it is unlocked and able to be used without assistance during the same hours as the main entrance.

Comments (City/Town Representative):	Comments (Monitor):
Gymnasium entrance/exit will only be used. Main entrance will be locked. Election signs will be in place to direct voters to blacktop area/gymnasium entrance/exit. Election workers will be stationed at entrance to provide additional direction and/or assistance.	

4. Ramps

(a) If the entrance has stairs, there is either a permanent or portable ramp. If permanent, the ramp has a slope no steeper than 1:12.

(b) The ramp is at least 48 inches wide.

(c) The ramp has two pairs of handrails along both sides that are round or oval in shape and are set in pairs, one at a height between 34 and 38 inches and a lower one at a height between 18 and 20 inches.

(d) If the ramp is portable, it is as close to 1:12 as possible, and either handrails or wheel guards at least two inches high on both sides are provided.

(e) Please describe the portable ramp (if applicable):

Handicapped ramp is cement with two pairs of handrails as specified in (c) above. There are double doors that open to the Gym; each individual door is greater than the 32" minimum.

Comments (City /Town Representative):	Comments (Monitor):
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5. Building Interior

(a) All interior doors, approaches, and ramps necessary to obtain access to the polling place comply with 3 and 4 above.

(b) An accessible route which provides a continuous unobstructed path at least 36 inches wide is maintained inside the polling place and shall coincide with the route for the general public.

<p>Comments (City/Town Representative):</p> <p>The general public will use the exit from the gymnasium that has 3-4 steps leaving the building. Handicapped exit will bear off to the right where the voters are exiting and exit through the handicapped access door they entered. All incoming voters will not be granted access to the handicapped ramp until there is an available check-in station; therefore the handicapped ramp will always be clear for anyone needing to exit through the handicapped entrance/exit.</p>	<p>Comments (Monitor):</p>
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6. Voting Equipment



(a) All Polls - A sample ballot will be posted on the wall no higher than 48 inches above the floor.



(b) Paper or Datavote ballots - At least one marking shelf (one for each party in a primary for Datavote) provides a clear space under it at least 30 inches wide, at least 27 inches clear to the underside, and no more than 32 inches high to the top. Any Datavote stylus handle is at least 1 ¼ inches thick and at least 3 inches long.



(c) Voting machines - At least one machine has a sample ballot posted inside, not higher than 48 inches.

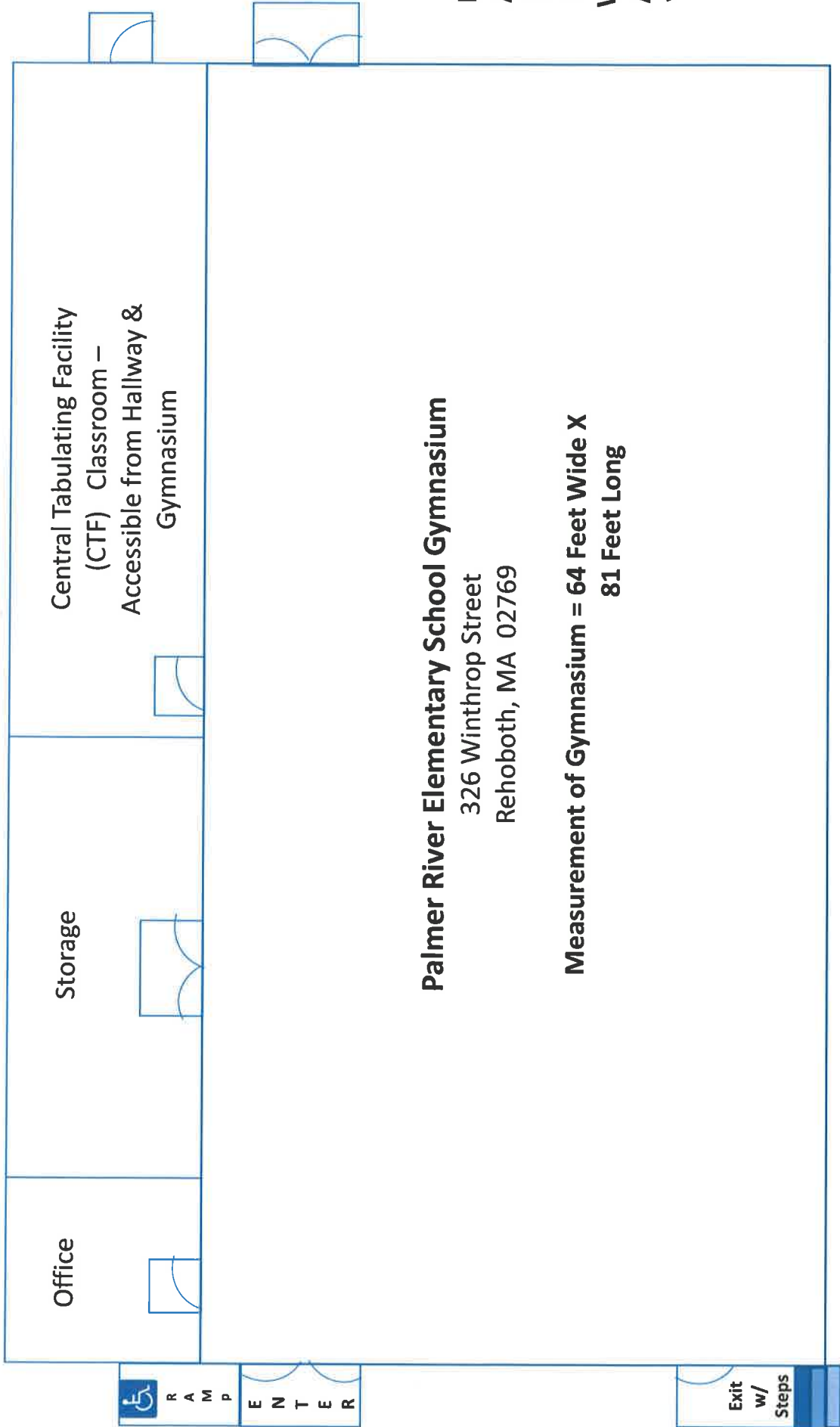


Voting levers are no higher than 48 inches above the floor, or a "reacher" is available for the upper levels.

<p>Comments (City/Town Representative):</p> <p>Our election equipment (Accuvote Scanners) do not have "voting levers".</p>	<p>Comments (Monitor):</p>
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PLEASE SEND THE COMPLETED SURVEY TO:

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH
ATTN: Bridget Simmons Murphy
Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
Elections Division
1 Ashburton Place, 17th floor
Boston, MA 02108**



Palmer River Elementary School Gymnasium

326 Winthrop Street
 Rehoboth, MA 02769

**Measurement of Gymnasium = 64 Feet Wide X
 81 Feet Long**

H A L L W A Y

B L A C K T O P

RAMPA
 ENTER

Exit
 w/
 Steps