

Meeting of the Commissioners - Elections
May 19, 2021

MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS

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Wednesday, May 19, 2021

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COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

LISA DEELEY, CHAIRWOMAN
AL SCHMIDT, COMMISSIONER
OMAR SABIR, COMMISSIONER
SETH BLUESTEIN, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
NICK CUSTODIO, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

ALSO PRESENT:

JOE LYNCH, ELECTION ACTIVITIES ASSISTANT
ADMINISTRATOR

HELD AT:

VIA ZOOM

REPORTED BY: Kathryn R. Doyle

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2 PROCEEDINGS

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4 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Good morning. I'd
5 like to call to order the meeting of the
6 Philadelphia City Commissioners, Board of
7 Elections for Wednesday, May 19th. We will now
8 move to public comment.

9 Commenters shall state where they live or
10 if they are not a resident of Philadelphia,
11 that they are a Philadelphia taxpayer. Public
12 comment is not an opportunity for dialogue or Q
13 and A. It is public comment, a chance for you
14 to tell us what you think.

15 Each speaker shall have two minutes,
16 however I may extend this time at my
17 discretion.

18 All public comments must be relevant or
19 germane to Board business.

20 It is my responsibility to preserve the
21 order and decorum of the meetings. As such,
22 scandalous, discriminatory or personal attacks
23 will not be tolerated.

24 Anyone wishing to offer public comment,

1 please step forward.

2 MS. McCARTHY: Good morning,
3 Commissioners. My name is Murielle McCarthy
4 and I'm a resident of Philadelphia. I was
5 working the polls yesterday at St. Stanislaus
6 Church. And before the polls opened, a voting
7 machine was down and had to be rebooted.

8 There was a problem regarding the sealing
9 of the USB compartment that I'd like to bring
10 to your attention.

11 The City's guide for poll workers is
12 incomplete about instructing machine inspectors
13 how to seal the USB compartment with a yellow
14 seal and how to secure the machine if the
15 machine needs to be rebooted at any time during
16 the day.

17 To reboot the machine, the yellow security
18 seal has to be broken. There are no
19 instructions for replacing the seal, how to get
20 a new one and how to get a replacement in the
21 guide. This is a security concern.

22 What is the point of this yellow seal if
23 it's not used correctly and consistently
24 throughout an election day? Please fix this.

1 And there are reports of similar problems
2 happening elsewhere. Some poll workers don't
3 seal the USB compartment just in case the
4 machine needs to be rebooted. In fact, it was
5 suggested to my group of poll workers by a
6 judge of election in another division to leave
7 our machines unsealed to make it easier for us
8 in case our machines went down.

9 Because of the shortcomings of the Board's
10 instructions and training, poll workers were
11 using unofficial instructions produced by the
12 Committee of 70. And those instructions, in
13 some cases, conflict with the Board's official
14 instructions, including how to handle spoiled
15 mail-in ballots.

16 I'm asking that the Board provide a guide
17 to poll workers that is more comprehensive and
18 clear to avoid confusion, and sometimes the
19 poor handling of ballots and machines, so that
20 our elections are more secured. Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Is there any
22 additional public comment?

23 - - - - -

24 (No response.)

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2 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Hearing none, we'll
3 move to a report on e-mailed public comment.

4 DEPUTY CUSTODIO: Good morning,
5 Commissioners. There were no e-mailed public
6 comments sent to the Board by 9:45 a.m.

7 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Thank you.

8 We will proceed to old business with a
9 report from our executive director, Joe Lynch.

10 MR. LYNCH: Morning, Commissioners.
11 Pardon my appearance. I have to do a lot of
12 running around today.

13 Considering yesterday -- I think went
14 well. We sent hundreds of people out to the
15 polls. We knew there was going to be a problem
16 when we had over 500 election material boxes
17 sitting at the police station on Monday that
18 weren't picked up.

19 So we sent over hundred of backup board
20 workers, casuals and temporary and even
21 full-time employees. We pretty much cleared
22 out our whole 5th Floor yesterday.

23 And considering that, I think we did a
24 good job on Election Day yesterday. I think it

1 went well -- better than expected. And that's
2 it. We're going to gear up and get ready for
3 the next election.

4 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Thank you, Joe.

5 I just want to thank you so much. You and
6 your staff did just a tremendous job. And we
7 know the work continues, but I just wanted to
8 take a pause to thank for the work thus far.

9 MR. LYNCH: Thank you. Thanks for your
10 support.

11 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Thank you.

12 We will now move to new business for a --
13 we are in receipt of a 25 PA CSA 1329 challenge
14 to the voter registration of Christine Flowers
15 of 1324 Locust Street in Philadelphia.

16 There is a formal process in the statute
17 when we receive one of these. Due to the
18 lateness that we received it, the Board was
19 unable to take it up before Election Day.

20 We are in receipt of Ms. Flowers' sworn
21 response and are able to consider.

22 First, is there anyone here who would like
23 to speak on this matter?

24 - - - - -

1 (No response.)

2 - - - - -

3 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Hearing none, thank
4 you.

5 I believe that we should be making
6 registering to vote as easy as possible.

7 Ms. Flowers has affirmed that Locust
8 Street was her residence under the penalty of
9 perjury when she first registered to vote. The
10 resident affirmed the fact a second time as
11 part of this challenge, which is more than
12 every other person has had to do. If this is
13 untrue, then that is a matter for law
14 enforcement.

15 But as far as her voter registration is
16 concerned, her affirming that 1324 Locust
17 Street is her residence is satisfactory to me.

18 Therefore, I vote that there be no change
19 to Ms. Flowers' registration status and that
20 she remains registered at 1324 Locust Street.

21 Do I have a second?

22 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Second.

23 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: All in favor?

24 (Ayes.)

1 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: So moved.

2 I just wanted to take a moment to say --
3 about the Election Day yesterday, first and
4 foremost, as always, a big shout out to the
5 Election Board workers that, you know, come
6 from all of our neighborhoods. They are our
7 neighbors and people who just step up to be
8 part of the process. We cannot run elections
9 without them. And we appreciate their work.

10 I would also, you know, again, thank the
11 incredible staff of the City Commissioners
12 Office.

13 Yesterday we anticipated that we would
14 have had vacancies, just due to the interest in
15 the election and, quite honestly, all the other
16 circumstances, COVID and whatnot. We were, you
17 know, anticipating that we would have a
18 shortage of election workers.

19 We worked hard and made thousands of calls
20 to try to fill some of those. And in the end,
21 we were able to get people up there, up to the
22 locations and get those polls opened. And that
23 is a true testament to the dedication of our
24 staff who have been working and everybody who

1 worked towards that. So it was a good
2 election. And we're going to keep going.
3 Thank you.

4 Does anyone have anything else?

5 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: I have nothing.

6 COMMISSIONER SABIR: Yeah. I'd like to
7 thank, of course, our Election Board workers
8 who came out to work and also the citizens of
9 Philadelphia -- you came out and voted in
10 person. I voted in person -- my electoral vote
11 and everything.

12 I would also like to recognize that the
13 former chair, Anthony Clarke, is here.

14 And, you know, we just want to keep the
15 energy up with voter engagement and voter
16 turnout.

17 I'd like to thank my colleagues. We
18 really appreciate you guys.

19 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Thank you,
20 Commissioner.

21 Do you have anything?

22 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: No, ma'am.

23 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Okay. Hearing no new
24 business and no more old business, I make a

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1 motion to adjourn.

2 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Second.

3 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: All in favor?

4 (Ayes.)

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6 (Whereupon the meeting concluded at 11:07 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence noted are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me in the foregoing matter, and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Kathryn Doyle
Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of the same by any means, unless under the direct control/or supervision of the certifying reporter.)

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