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CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
CITY COMMISSIONERS BOARD MEETING

ELECTIONS MEETING
Wednesday, April 10, 2024
11:00 a.m.

Job No.: 41004

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ATTENDANCE

- OMAR SABIR, CHAIRMAN
- VINCENT GOWANS, DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR
- LISA DEELEY, VICE-CHAIR
- NICHOLAS CUSTODIO, DEPUTY TO VICE CHAIR
- SETH BLUESTEIN, COMMISSIONER
- ERIC KAPENSTEIN, DEPUTY
- JOSEPH LYNCH, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
- STEPHANIE REED, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIONS

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (11:00 a.m.)

3 CHAIR SABIR: Good morning. Call to the meeting
4 of the Philadelphia City Commissioner's Board of
5 Elections for Wednesday, April 10, 2024. This meeting
6 is in compliance under the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

7 The Philadelphia City Commissioners are a three
8 member bipartisan board of elected officials in charge
9 of elections and votive registration for the county of
10 Philadelphia. Each commissioner is elected to serve a
11 four year term that coincides with the municipal
12 election cycle for mayor and city council. The
13 commissioner set and enforced departmental policy to
14 administer voter registration and conduct elections in
15 accordance with federal and state voter registration
16 and election laws.

17 The City Commissioners were created by the
18 Pennsylvania assembly in 1711 with a focus on taxation
19 and held various regulatory powers throughout the
20 centuries. The Commission started maintaining voter
21 lists in 1799 and took on more election related
22 responsibilities, but did not emerge into its current
23 form until to the adaptation of the Philadelphia Home
24 Rule Charter.

25 We will start off with public comments. Before

1 beginning their comments, commenter shall state where
2 they live or if they are not a resident of
3 Philadelphia and that they are a Philadelphia
4 taxpayer. Public comment is not an opportunity for
5 dialogue or Q&A. It is public comment, a chance for
6 you to tell us what you think. Each speaker will have
7 two minutes to speak. However, I may extend the time
8 at my discretion. Public comment must concern matters
9 on today's meeting agenda.

10 Finally, it is my responsibility to preserve the
11 order and decorum of the meetings as such, profane
12 slander, discriminatory or personal attacks will not
13 be tolerated. If you wish to make a public objection
14 to a perceived sunshine violation, please raise your
15 hand and I will recognize you. Outbursts will not be
16 tolerated. Anyone wishing to offer public comment,
17 please step forward.

18 MR. BUCKLES: Good morning, and I appreciate the
19 opportunity to speak to talk to you.

20 CHAIR SABIR: Good morning sir. Can you please
21 state your name?

22 MR. BUCKLES: Yes, my name is Robert Buckles. I
23 am the Judge of Elections of the 56 4th division. And
24 so, once again, I just want to thank you all for your
25 -- for your excellent work. And I don't think that it

1 gets publicized enough you have those satellite
2 offices, which are great, which are being set up. So
3 I'm here just to urge you to publicize that more.
4 Like I don't know what the hours are. Are they open
5 right now? Can I go down? Also, I'd like to
6 recommend, I know that there are logistical issues,
7 but this site sounds perfect because there's no lease
8 issue. You own it. You don't have to worry about --
9 People here are all set up and working. I understand
10 there's a security issue. Perhaps in the future we
11 could cordon off a section of this building. So, just
12 going to recommend that.

13 And as a Judge of Elections, so a lot of the
14 other divisions around where we are have been having
15 issues with the police coming in a timely manner to
16 pick it up. Sometimes it's an hour and a half,
17 sometimes could be even up to two hours to pick up our
18 electoral material. And as you all know, there's a
19 constitutional deadline, but we have to have it in by
20 that time and not this past time, but two times ago
21 where we called up and it was like two hours later in
22 already and the police still hadn't been there and so
23 we had to actually hand carry it down to Columbus
24 Avenue. So I know that this is out of your control,
25 but I'm just asking you to perhaps pass that along to

1 the police to encourage them, perhaps to have more
2 people if that's what's necessary. Thank you very
3 much for your consideration.

4 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you. Is anyone else here for
5 public comment? No one else. We will now move to
6 report from Secretary Bluestein for email public
7 comment. Secretary Bluestein, are there any public
8 comments?

9 MR. BLUESTEIN: All comments that were emailed by
10 9:45 a.m. were shared with the Commissioners and
11 Deputies and have been provided to each Commissioner
12 at the beginning of the meeting and are available at
13 the public comment table. We received one comment
14 from Dinah Buchholz related to elections coinciding
15 with Passover. I have reviewed the comment and asked
16 that it be moved into the record.

17 MS. DEELEY: I have also reviewed the comment and
18 agree to move it into the record.

19 CHAIR SABIR: I have also reviewed it. Please
20 move it into the record. We will now proceed to old
21 business. We have a report from our Directors of
22 Election and Operations, tongue tied, which will be
23 reported by Joseph Lynch and Stephanie Reed.

24 MR. REED: Morning, Commissioners.

25 CHAIR SABIR: Good morning.

1 MR. REED: This is our weekly Sunshine update for
2 April 10, 2024. For our voter registration report, we
3 processed a total of 101,063 registration applications
4 so far. Out of these, 12,009 were sent to us on
5 paper. All applications that we received by April 8th
6 deadline have been processed. On April 8th, we
7 received 2,745 online and paper applications. All
8 correspondence letters have been mailed. The staff
9 are currently proofing and making any necessary
10 corrections.

11 We are still processing online and paper mailing
12 ballot applications and will be assisting the county
13 board as needed. We will be mailing ID cards at the
14 end of this week.

15 For the county board report, as of yesterday, we
16 have approved a total of 87,811 vote by mail
17 applications, which is 7,256 added from last week's
18 total. Of those, 51,773 are paper applications and
19 36,038 are electronic applications. This includes
20 civilians and overseas and military voters.

21 We currently have 1,019 applications waiting to
22 be processed. Of those, 250 are paper applications
23 and 769 are electronic applications. We have mailed
24 out a total of 85,574 mailing and absentee ballots.
25 If you would like to vote by mail, the deadline is

1 Tuesday, April 16th at 5:00 p.m. Voters may apply
2 online at vote.phila.gov rather than return to the
3 paper application.

4 The Philadelphia County Board of Elections office
5 in City Hall, Room 140 opened for in person ballot
6 request and replacement and serviced 90 visitors since
7 March 28th. Visitors should enter through the south
8 gate of City Hall. Visitors may request a mail in
9 absentee or replacement ballot. The City Hall, room
10 140 office will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
11 Monday through Friday.

12 ID verification letters have gone out to voters
13 that either did not include the required proof of
14 identification on their absentee mailing ballot
15 application or their proof of identification could not
16 be verified by the County Board of Elections Office.
17 Voters who have received this letter may submit their
18 proof of ID to the County Board of Elections via email
19 at philelection@phil.gov, fax it US mail, telephone
20 or in person. Voters have until 5:00 p.m. on April
21 28th to return their proof of identification.

22 Friday, April 12th, 2024, is the deadline for
23 filing cycle two second Friday pre-primary campaign
24 finance reports. All candidates, committees,
25 political committees and committees contributing to

1 candidates for office that had made expenditures to
2 influence a city election must file a report.

3 For our Election Board report, confirmation calls
4 and emails for board workers continue. We have
5 confirmed a total of 7,343 board workers with 932
6 declines and left messages for 359. Additionally, we
7 currently have 1,440 poll workers registered for
8 training. So far, 5,150 have attended seminar
9 trainings and 2,399 have attended express poll
10 refresher training sessions. With the online training
11 now accessible, 1,290 poll workers have completed the
12 training online.

13 The Polling Place Unit has been confirming
14 locations and we currently have 689 polling locations.
15 We continue to monitor all sites.

16 For our satellite election office, we are in the
17 in the lease draft phase for the six locations and two
18 locations are in the letter of intent phase. For
19 district one, we have received approval to use the
20 space leased by the city. We continue ongoing
21 negotiations and coordinations between the city
22 departments to facilitate the use of space. That's
23 all I had today, Commissioners.

24 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you.

25 MS. REED: Good morning, Commissioners.

1 CHAIR SABIR: Good morning.

2 MS. REED: I'm pleased to present an overview of
3 our recent activities across various departments in
4 our weekly administration report for April 10th, 2024.
5 A quick addition to budget and procurement today is
6 our budget hearing with council, so people have been
7 working diligently to prepare for that.

8 We've also been in touch with food trucks from a
9 list provided by parks and rec arranging schedules for
10 election week and confirming the schedule and menu for
11 one of the food trucks. Our routine processing of
12 purchase orders and invoices covered various services,
13 including office supplies and items being used for
14 warehouse security plans.

15 Speaking of security, warehouse credentialing
16 processes are being finalized. Emergency plans are in
17 the end stages and ready to be implemented.

18 Additionally, our newly redesigned credentials have
19 been distributed to our staff and vendors.

20 Instructions for how to handle lost credentials and
21 how to obtain replacements will be emailed to
22 supervisors and managers by the end of the week. And
23 yesterday, the USPs led a white powder training for
24 our staff.

25 Moving on to communications, various

1 initiatives are in process, including updates to
2 satellite election office signage and social media
3 posts creating instructional materials like pack your
4 ballot illustrations and election related information
5 through multiple channels, including public notices
6 and additional advertisements and local publications.

7 Updates to the polling place list website
8 and preparation of election day materials are
9 underway.

10 In terms of engagement, tabling and voting
11 machine demo events were organized at various
12 locations, including the AAPI Heritage Month GALA and
13 community centers. Election materials were
14 distributed in efforts to recruit bilingual
15 interpreters and engage with local businesses and
16 centers for further outreach are ongoing.

17 Human resources updates include our ongoing
18 hiring efforts with positions for clerks and temps.
19 We've made significant progress in hiring with most
20 positions filled or in the process of being filled.
21 Our current workforce totals 184 employees, consisting
22 of 155 civil service and 29 exempts. Within the bulk
23 of the civil service roles, we have 52 clerk ones, 21
24 clerk twos, twelve clerk threes, and 15 trades helper
25 positions. We're focused on continuing new hire

1 activities and preparing for orientations, as well as
2 planning for surge staffing. Regarding surge
3 staffing, training for polling place liaisons has been
4 underway with a substantial number of participants
5 completing the program. Efforts to staff RTC,
6 regional transmission centers and e-car drivers are
7 ongoing with a high confirmation rate among enlisted
8 drivers. Coordination with the health department for
9 additional support such as e-car drivers and Dropbox
10 lockers is progressing smoothly.

11 Our information technology team has been busy
12 with ongoing testing of e-poll books. Offers of
13 employment were extended to candidates for GIS and
14 tech support specialists, and both candidates will be
15 presented today for board approval. General IT
16 support services are being provided as usual. I'd
17 like to express my appreciation to all of the hard
18 working staff across each unit in our department for
19 all of their hard work and dedication.

20 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you, Vice Chair Deeley do you
21 have any questions?

22 MS. DEELEY: I do not.

23 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, do you have
24 any questions?

25 MR. BLUESTEIN: Mr. Chairman, I would just like

1 to note one correction to Mr. Lynch's report. The ID
2 verification letters, I believe, are due back on the
3 29th, not the 28th. That's all I have. Thank you.

4 CHAIR SABIR: Okay. So we got that amendment.
5 Okay. We will now move to the next agenda item. I
6 motion to authorize the professional staff to
7 establish mobile Dropbox events. Is there a second?

8 MR. LYNCH: Second.

9 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, please go out
10 of roll.

11 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

12 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

13 MR. BLUESTEIN: I vote aye., Chairman Sabir?

14 CHAIR SABIR: Aye. Motion carries. Secretary
15 Bluestein, please put forth your first motion.

16 MR. BLUESTEIN: I move to adopt the absentee and
17 mail in application challenge procedures that were
18 included in today's agenda.

19 CHAIR SABIR: Second. Secretary Bluestein, please
20 call the roll.

21 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

22 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

23 MR. BLUESTEIN: I vote aye. Chairman Sabir?

24 CHAIR SABIR: Aye. Motion carry. Secretary
25 Bluestein, please put before for your second motion.

1 MR. BLUESTEIN: Per the recommendation of
2 professional staff, I move to hire Cheyenne Delorence
3 in the position of lead GIS analyst.

4 CHAIR SABIR: Is there a second? This motion
5 does not pass the board. Secretary Bluestein, please
6 put forth your third motion.

7 MR. BLUESTEIN: Per the recommendation of
8 professional staff, I move to hire Jada Yates in the
9 position of technical support specialist.

10 CHAIR SABIR: Second. Secretary Bluestein, please
11 call the roll.

12 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

13 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

14 MR. BLUESTEIN: I vote aye, Chairman Sabir?

15 CHAIR SABIR: Aye. Motion carries. We will now
16 move to the other portion of our agenda. Other
17 business. Vice Chair Deeley, do you have any other
18 business to be raised at this meeting?

19 MS. DEELEY: I have none, Mr. Chairman.

20 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, do you have
21 any other business to be raised at this meeting?

22 MR. BLUESTEIN: I have none.

23 CHAIR SABIR: I would like to make a statement.
24 I would like to say Eid Mubarak to the many Muslims in
25 our city and around the world. Muslims have just

1 completed 30 days of fasting, prayer and charity and
2 today concludes our holy month of Ramadan. Thank you
3 for our staff and supervisors that have been
4 understanding and accommodating of our Muslim
5 employees during this month. Thank you. I make a
6 motion that this meeting is adjourned. Is there a
7 second?

8 MS. DEELEY: Second.

9 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, please call
10 the roll.

11 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

12 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

13 MR. BLUESTEIN: I vote aye, Chairman Sabir?

14 CHAIR SABIR: Aye. Aye. Ajit, hit the gavel.
15 Hit the gavel. Hit the gavel. Hit the gavel. Hit
16 it. Are you scared? I got it.

17

18 (End of audio)

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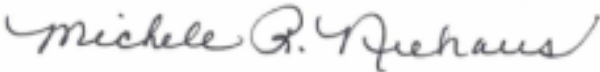
CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST

I, MICHELE NIEHAUS, Legal Transcriptionist, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing is a complete and true transcription of the original digital audio recording of the testimony and proceedings captured in the above-entitled matter. As the transcriptionist, I have reviewed and transcribed the entirety of the original digital audio recording of the proceeding to ensure a verbatim record to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am neither attorney for nor a relative or employee of any of the parties to the action; further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of April, 2024.



MICHELE NIEHAUS

<hr/>	28th	7:24	3:14	ballots
1	8:7,21	87,811	agenda	7:24
1,019	<hr/>	7:16	4:9	beginning
7:21	3	8th	agree	4:1 6:12
1,290	359	7:5,6	6:18	bipartisan
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3:2	5	9:45	apply	Buchholz
12,009	5,150	6:10	8:1	6:14
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7:8	times	4:14	5:8
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