

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

*** AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION ***

Philadelphia City Commissioners 08122026 Sunshine
Meeting.mp34
for Public Meeting Agenda

* * *

Transcribed

By: Smita Manoharan

Job No.: 1756655

1 SPEAKER 1: Good morning. I call to
2 order the meeting of the Philadelphia City
3 Commissioners Board of Elections for
4 Wednesday, August 12, 2026. This meeting is
5 in compliance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine
6 Act.

7 The Philadelphia City Commissioners are a
8 three-member bipartisan board of elected
9 officials in charge of elections and voter
10 registration for the City of Philadelphia.

11 Each Commissioner is elected to serve a
12 four-year term that coincides with the
13 municipal election cycle for Mayor and City
14 Council.

15 The Commissioners set and enforced
16 departmental policies to administer voter
17 registration and conduct elections in
18 accordance with federal and state voter
19 registration and election laws.

20 The City Commissioners were created by
21 the Pennsylvania assembly in 1711 where they
22 focused on taxation and held various
23 regulatory powers throughout the centuries.

24 The Commissioners started maintaining
25 voter lists in 1799 and took on more election

1 related responsibilities, but didn't emerge
2 into a current form until the adoption of
3 Philadelphia's Home Rule Charter in 1951.

4 We will start off with public comments.
5 Before beginning their comments, commenters
6 will state where they live or if they are not
7 a resident of Philadelphia and that they are
8 Philadelphia taxpayer.

9 Public comment is not an opportunity for
10 dialogue or Q and A. It is public comment, a
11 chance for you to tell us what you think.
12 Each speaker will have two minutes to speak.
13 However, I may extend the time at my
14 discretion.

15 Public comment must concern matters on
16 today's meeting agenda. Finally, it is my
17 responsibility to preserve the order and
18 decorum of the meetings as such profane,
19 slanderous, discriminatory, personal attacks
20 will not be tolerated.

21 If you wish to make a public objection to
22 a perceived Sunshine Act violation, please
23 raise your hand and I will recognize you.
24 Outbursts will not be tolerated.

25 Anyone wishing to offer public comment,

1 please step forward. Herein, we will now move
2 to a report from a secretary for email public
3 comments. Commissioner Bluestein, are there
4 any email public comments?

5 MR. BLUESTEIN: Thank you, Chairman. All
6 comments that were emailed by 9:45 a.m. were
7 shared with the commissioners and the deputies
8 by 10:00 a.m. and have been provided to each
9 commissioner at the beginning of the meeting
10 and are available at the public comment table.

11 We received one comment for this week's
12 meeting from Anthony Christina related to the
13 motion to split a division in the 26th ward.
14 I have reviewed the comment and asked that it
15 be moved into the record.

16 Speaker 2: I've also reviewed them and
17 agree that they should be moved into the
18 record.

19 SPEAKER 1: I have also reviewed them.
20 Please move them into the record. We will now
21 proceed to Old Business. First, we have a
22 report from our Directors Of Election
23 Operation, Mr. Joseph Lynch, and we know Mark
24 Johnson is not here. How are you doing,
25 Mark's report?

1 MR. LYNCH: I just have the operation
2 report, so.

3 SPEAKER 1: So, we'll get Mark's response
4 later.

5 MR. LYNCH: Good morning Commissioners.

6 SPEAKER 1: Good morning.

7 MR. LYNCH: This is our public meeting
8 update for August 12, 2026. At the Election
9 Warehouse, units have been conducting general
10 maintenance and making repairs. As of today,
11 our voter registration unit has processed
12 81,123 voter registration applications.

13 3750 were paper and 77,373 were
14 electronic. All applications are up to date
15 and are being reviewed. They are training SEO
16 personnel and had two petitioners last week.

17 The County Board of Elections has now
18 accepted mail in and absentee ballot
19 application for the 2026 general and special
20 elections. Application date, Tuesday, October
21 27, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Voters may also apply
22 online at vote.phila.gov instead of submitting
23 a paper application.

24 As of yesterday, processing is current
25 and up to date and we have approved 85,286

1 vote by mail applications.

2 Of those, 45,966 are paper applications
3 and 39,320 are electronic applications. This
4 includes civilian, overseas, military and
5 federal voters.

6 On Friday, August 7, 2026, letters were
7 sent to all candidates or committees that are
8 not in compliance with the 2026 Campaign
9 Finance filing requirements.

10 If you have not yet filed, please submit
11 your report to phillyelection@phila.gov.
12 Cycle 4 6th Tuesday Pre-general Campaign
13 Finance Report, all candidate, committees and
14 political committees that have made
15 expenditures to influence a city election must
16 file a report.

17 The Board Workers Unit is conducting our
18 summer training seminars with 1874
19 participants so far. The summer training
20 seminar schedule is available on our website
21 at vote.phila.gov.

22 Satellite election offices are currently
23 assisting the public. Offices are open Monday
24 through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. And
25 thank you. That's all I have.

1 SPEAKER 1: Thank you Joe. Vice Chair
2 Deeley, do you have any questions for Joe?

3 MS. DEELEY: I have none. Thank you.

4 SPEAKER 1: Secretary Bluestein, do you
5 have any questions for Joe?

6 MR. BLUESTEIN: I have none. Thank you.

7 SPEAKER 1: Thank you Joe. As always,
8 definitely appreciate the hard work --

9 MR. LYNCH: Thank you.

10 SPEAKER 1: -- and the service from the
11 operating staff and administration staff are
12 really -- thank you. I really appreciate
13 everything that you all do.

14 We will now proceed to New Business. We
15 will begin by considering our first agenda
16 item. I move to authorize the professional
17 staff of the Philadelphia City Commissioners
18 to plan for and implement five additional drop
19 boxes for the 2026 general election and to
20 evaluate the feasibility and the need of
21 implementing up to five additional drop boxes
22 at a later date. Is there a second?

23 SPEAKER 2: Second.

24 SPEAKER 1: Does any commissioners want
25 to make any comments before we vote?

1 MS. DEELEY: I have none.

2 SPEAKER 1: Secretary?

3 MR. BLUESTEIN: Mr. Chairman, do you mind
4 just rereading the motion so I can hear it
5 before we vote?

6 SPEAKER 1: Sure. I move to authorize
7 the professional staff of the Philadelphia
8 City Commissioners to plan for and implement
9 five additional drop boxes for the 2026
10 general election and to evaluate the
11 feasibility and need of implementing up to
12 five additional drop boxes at a later date.

13 MR. BLUESTEIN: Thank you, sir. And if I
14 may ask a question? For the five drop boxes,
15 how will it be determined where those drop
16 boxes go?

17 SPEAKER 1: Well, our professional staff
18 will come up with a recommendation, and then
19 we'll figure out what the locations are at,
20 like we've done in the past.

21 MR. BLUESTEIN: Because sometimes in the
22 past, we've identified regions where we would
23 want to generally give the professional staff
24 some guidance on where we're looking for. So
25 is the idea that Joe and Vanessa and their

1 teams would determine where the five boxes go?

2 SPEAKER 1: I think ultimately it's a
3 collaboration based off our roles that we sort
4 of agreed on where the professional staff is
5 working in collaboration with the deputies to
6 come up with a determination.

7 MR. BLUESTEIN: Thank you, sir.

8 SPEAKER 1: Secretary Bluestein, please
9 call the roll.

10 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

11 MS. DEELEY: I vote aye.

12 MR. SABIR: I vote aye, Chairman Sabir.

13 SPEAKER 1: Aye, motion pass. We'll move
14 to the next two agenda items. Doesn't appear
15 that there is a move into maybe table items B
16 and C on the agenda, so we can discuss further
17 in detail and come up with a solution for B
18 and C at a later date. Does any of the
19 commissioners have a problem with that?

20 MR. BLUESTEIN: Mr. Chairman, I would
21 like to read my motion for C for the record
22 and even if there's no second or no interest
23 for my colleagues to vote on it, that's fine.
24 But I would at least like to read what I have
25 written, please.

1 SPEAKER 1: Just for the record, we're
2 going to table motion B. Is that suitable for
3 everyone?

4 MR. SABIR: It's your motion, sir. I
5 have no objection.

6 SPEAKER 1: No objection? Okay. Vice
7 Chair Deeley, do you have an objection to us
8 tabling it?

9 MS. DEELEY: I have no objection. I
10 second your motion.

11 SPEAKER 1: Please proceed.

12 MR. BLUESTEIN: Thank you, Chairman.
13 This winter and again last month, the County
14 Board of Elections received formal requests
15 from the 26th Ward Republican Party to split
16 the 23rd Division of the 26th Ward to create a
17 new division.

18 As of this primary, there were 1379
19 registered voters in that division, which is
20 above the 1200 threshold recommended by the
21 Election Code.

22 I think it's important that we respond to
23 such requests and more importantly, I think as
24 a department, we should take a broader look at
25 all of our divisions and try and make sure

1 that we have some level of parity, so that
2 divisions that are above that threshold should
3 be split and divisions that are well below the
4 average size of a division, you may want to
5 look at merging them and consolidating them so
6 we can have a more efficient administration of
7 those divisions.

8 So the motion that I would like to make,
9 even if it's tabled for another meeting, is,
10 having received this request, I move that the
11 Deputy Executive Director for Compliance and
12 Vote by Mail be directed to perform a final
13 analysis of the request and upon a positive
14 determination, petition the Court of Common
15 Pleas on behalf of the board to implement the
16 proposal, and that the final boundaries of the
17 new division may be set by the Deputy
18 Executive Director, even if they don't match
19 the exact request from the original requester,
20 that she should do so at her earliest
21 opportunity and ultimately, if she determines
22 that the request is not reasonable, to bring
23 it back to the board at the next public
24 meeting to discuss it.

25 So that is what I have written. Thank

1 you, sir.

2 SPEAKER 1: Thank you. Is there a
3 second? And no second. Proceed. Vice Chair
4 Deeley, did you have a comment on that?

5 MS. DEELEY: Mr. Chairman, I did have a
6 comment, but we tabled the motion. So I don't
7 really think it's appropriate to comment on a
8 motion that was tabled. I don't know why we
9 read the motion that was tabled, but it was
10 tabled.

11 SPEAKER 1: Yeah, he actually just wanted
12 to read it for the record.

13 MS. DEELEY: I mean, I'm happy to read my
14 comment, but I --

15 MR. BLUESTEIN: I would just say I wasn't
16 tabling the motion. I was reading it forward
17 and understand that if there's no second, then
18 it's effectively tabled.

19 MS. DEELEY: So when I reached out to
20 stakeholders, I contacted the democratic ward
21 leader of the 26th ward, and he indicated that
22 nobody had reached out to him to discuss this
23 matter and we have always done these things in
24 a bipartisan fashion.

25 So, I just want to point out that we want

1 to make sure that whatever we do, we are
2 always cognizant of that. Thank you,
3 Chairman.

4 SPEAKER 1: Sure.

5 MR. BLUESTEIN: Mr. Chairman, I
6 completely agree with that sentiment. I think
7 it would benefit everyone if we brought the
8 Deputy Director for Compliance and the
9 deputies and had conversations with both
10 parties in that ward to make sure that
11 everybody's on the same page, that this is a
12 change that's needed.

13 I think that's a good process, so
14 hopefully that's something that they can work
15 on and, if necessary, bring back to the board
16 at a future date.

17 SPEAKER 1: Sure. This is our last
18 agenda item. Before we adjourn, Vice Chair
19 Deeley, do you have any other business to be
20 raised at this meeting?

21 MS. DEELEY: I have none. Thank you.

22 SPEAKER 1: Secretary Bluestein, do you
23 have any other business to be raised at this
24 meeting?

25 MR. BLUESTEIN: I have none. Thank you.

1 SPEAKER 1: I would like to say again,
2 thank you for all the staff and again, a good
3 friend always sort of reminded me of this,
4 that sometimes the things that we may want as
5 commissioners may not be the best thing for
6 the department, and that we always should put
7 the department first and again, not saying
8 that anything which I said was against the
9 board, but just always remember that as far as
10 leadership, that's the thing that should be at
11 the forefront.

12 Matter of fact, I say Joe told me that
13 one time. Thanks, Joe. I really appreciate
14 you saying that. So, like I said, we make,
15 you know, easier for the voters of
16 Philadelphia.

17 I'll make a motion to adjourn this
18 meeting today. Is there a second?

19 SPEAKER 2: Second.

20 SPEAKER 1: Secretary Bluestein, please
21 call a roll.

22 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice Chair Deeley?

23 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

24 MR. SABIR: I vote aye, Chairman Sabir.

25 SPEAKER 1: Motion passes. This meeting

1 is adjourned.

2

3

4

5 (End of audio recording.)

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

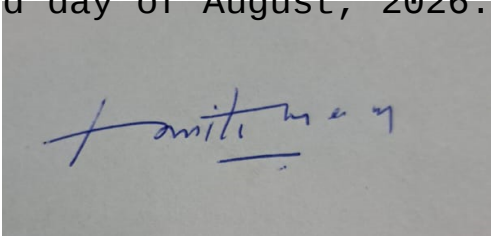
21

22

23

24

25

1 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST
23 I, SMITA MANOHARAN, do hereby certify:
45 That said audio transcription is a true
6 record as reported by me, a disinterested
7 person.
89 I further certify that I am not
10 interested in the outcome of said action, nor
11 connected with, nor related to any of the
12 parties in said action, nor to their
13 respective counsel.
1415 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set
16 my hand this 22nd day of August, 2026.
17
18
1920 Smita Manoharan
21
22
23
24
25

1 1 2:1 4:19 5:3,6 7:1,4,7,10, 24 8:2,6,17 9:2,8,13 10:1, 6,11 12:2,11 13:4,17,22 10:00 4:8 12 2:4 5:8 1200 10:20 1379 10:18 1711 2:21 1799 2:25 1874 6:18 1951 3:3	6 6th 6:12 7 7 6:6 77,373 5:13 8 81,123 5:12 85,286 5:25 9 9:00 6:24 9:45 4:6 A a.m. 4:6,8 6:24 absentee 5:18 accepted 5:18 accordance 2:18 Act 2:6 3:22 additional 7:18,21 8:9,12 adjourn 13:18 administer 2:16 administration 7:11 11:6 adoption 3:2 agenda 3:16 7:15 9:14,16 13:18 agree 4:17 13:6 agreed 9:4 analysis 11:13 Anthony 4:12	application 5:19,20,23 applications 5:12,14 6:1, 2,3 apply 5:21 approved 5:25 assembly 2:21 assisting 6:23 attacks 3:19 August 2:4 5:8 6:6 authorize 7:16 8:6 average 11:4 aye 9:11,12,13 B
2 2 4:16 7:23 2026 2:4 5:8,19,21 6:6,8 7:19 8:9 23rd 10:16 26th 4:13 10:15,16 12:21 27 5:21 3 3750 5:13 39,320 6:3 4 4 6:12 45,966 6:2 5 5:00 5:21 6:24	back 11:23 13:15 ballot 5:18 based 9:3 begin 7:15 beginning 3:5 4:9 behalf 11:15 benefit 13:7 bipartisan 2:8 12:24 Bluestein 4:3,5 7:4,6 8:3, 13,21 9:7,8,10,20 10:12 12:15 13:5,22,25 board 2:3,8 5:17 6:17 10:14 11:15,23 13:15 boundaries 11:16 boxes 7:19,21 8:9,12,14, 16 9:1 bring 11:22 13:15 broad 10:24 brought 13:7 business 4:21 7:14 13:19, 23	

C call 2:1 9:9 Campaign 6:8,12 candidate 6:13 candidates 6:7 centuries 2:23 Chair 7:1 9:10 10:7 12:3 13:18 Chairman 4:5 8:3 9:12,20 10:12 12:5 13:3,5 chance 3:11 change 13:12 charge 2:9 Charter 3:3 Christina 4:12 city 2:2,7,10,13,20 6:15 7:17 8:8 civilian 6:4 Code 10:21 cognizant 13:2 coincides 2:12 collaboration 9:3,5 colleagues 9:23 comment 3:9,10,15,25 4:10,11,14 12:4,6,7,14 commenters 3:5 comments 3:4,5 4:3,4,6 7:25 commissioner 2:11 4:3,9 commissioners 2:3,7,15, 20,24 4:7 5:5 7:17,24 8:8 9:19 committees 6:7,13,14 Common 11:14	completely 13:6 compliance 2:5 6:8 11:11 13:8 concern 3:15 conduct 2:17 conducting 5:9 6:17 consolidating 11:5 contacted 12:20 conversations 13:9 Council 2:14 County 5:17 10:13 Court 11:14 create 10:16 created 2:20 current 3:2 5:24 cycle 2:13 6:12 D date 5:14,20,25 7:22 8:12 9:18 13:16 decorum 3:18 Deeley 7:2,3 8:1 9:10,11 10:7,9 12:4,5,13,19 13:19,21 democratic 12:20 department 10:24 departmental 2:16 deputies 4:7 9:5 13:9 Deputy 11:11,17 13:8 detail 9:17 determination 9:6 11:14 determine 9:1 determined 8:15 determines 11:21	dialogue 3:10 directed 11:12 Director 11:11,18 13:8 Directors 4:22 discretion 3:14 discriminatory 3:19 discuss 9:16 11:24 12:22 division 4:13 10:16,17,19 11:4,17 divisions 10:25 11:2,3,7 drop 7:18,21 8:9,12,14,15 E earliest 11:20 effectively 12:18 efficient 11:6 elected 2:8,11 election 2:13,19,25 4:22 5:8 6:15,22 7:19 8:10 10:21 elections 2:3,9,17 5:17,20 10:14 electronic 5:14 6:3 email 4:2,4 emailed 4:6 emerge 3:1 enforced 2:15 evaluate 7:20 8:10 everybody's 13:11 exact 11:19 Executive 11:11,18 expenditures 6:15 extend 3:13
--	---	--

F fashion 12:24 feasibility 7:20 8:11 federal 2:18 6:5 figure 8:19 file 6:16 filed 6:10 filing 6:9 final 11:12,16 Finally 3:16 Finance 6:9,13 fine 9:23 focused 2:22 form 3:2 formal 10:14 forward 4:1 12:16 four-year 2:12 Friday 6:6,24 future 13:16	held 2:22 Home 3:3 I idea 8:25 identified 8:22 implement 7:18 8:8 11:15 implementing 7:21 8:11 important 10:22 importantly 10:23 includes 6:4 influence 6:15 interest 9:22 item 7:16 13:18 items 9:14,15 J Joe 7:1,2,5,7 8:25 Johnson 4:24 Joseph 4:23	mail 5:18 6:1 11:12 maintaining 2:24 maintenance 5:10 make 3:21 7:25 10:25 11:8 13:1,10 making 5:10 Mark 4:23 Mark's 4:25 5:3 match 11:18 matter 12:23 matters 3:15 Mayor 2:13 meeting 2:2,4 3:16 4:9,12 5:7 11:9,24 13:20,24 meetings 3:18 merging 11:5 military 6:4 mind 8:3 minutes 3:12 Monday 6:23 month 10:13 morning 2:1 5:5,6 motion 4:13 8:4 9:13,21 10:2,4,10 11:8 12:6,8,9, 16 move 4:1,20 7:16 8:6 9:13,15 11:10 moved 4:15,17 municipal 2:13
G general 5:9,19 7:19 8:10 generally 8:23 give 8:23 good 2:1 5:5,6 13:13 guidance 8:24	L laws 2:19 leader 12:21 letters 6:6 level 11:1 lists 2:25 live 3:6 locations 8:19 Lynch 4:23 5:1,5,7 7:9	N needed 13:12
H hand 3:23 happy 12:13 hard 7:8 hear 8:4	M made 6:14	O objection 3:21 10:5,6,7,9

October 5:20 offer 3:25 offices 6:22,23 officials 2:9 online 5:22 open 6:23 operating 7:11 operation 4:23 5:1 opportunity 3:9 11:21 order 2:2 3:17 original 11:19 Outbursts 3:24 overseas 6:4	phillyelection@phila.gov. 6:11 plan 7:18 8:8 Pleas 11:15 point 12:25 policies 2:16 political 6:14 positive 11:13 powers 2:23 Pre-general 6:12 preserve 3:17 primary 10:18 problem 9:19 proceed 4:21 7:14 10:11 12:3 process 13:13 processed 5:11 processing 5:24 profane 3:18 professional 7:16 8:7,17, 23 9:4 proposal 11:16 provided 4:8 public 3:4,9,10,15,21,25 4:2,4,10 5:7 6:23 11:23	read 9:21,24 12:9,12,13 reading 12:16 reasonable 11:22 received 4:11 10:14 11:10 recognize 3:23 recommendation 8:18 recommended 10:20 record 4:15,18,20 9:21 10:1 12:12 regions 8:22 registered 10:19 registration 2:10,17,19 5:11,12 regulatory 2:23 related 3:1 4:12 repairs 5:10 report 4:2,22,25 5:2 6:11, 13,16 Republican 10:15 request 11:10,13,19,22 requester 11:19 requests 10:14,23 requirements 6:9 rereading 8:4 resident 3:7 respond 10:22 response 5:3 responsibilities 3:1 responsibility 3:17 reviewed 4:14,16,19 5:15 roles 9:3 roll 9:9 Rule 3:3
P		
p.m. 5:21 6:24 paper 5:13,23 6:2 parity 11:1 participants 6:19 parties 13:10 Party 10:15 pass 9:13 past 8:20,22 Pennsylvania 2:5,21 perceived 3:22 perform 11:12 personal 3:19 personnel 5:16 petition 11:14 petitioners 5:16 Philadelphia 2:2,7,10 3:7, 8 7:17 8:7 Philadelphia's 3:3	question 8:14 questions 7:2,5	
	Q	
	R	
	raise 3:23 raised 13:20,23 reached 12:19,22	

S Sabir 9:12 10:4 Satellite 6:22 schedule 6:20 secretary 4:2 7:4 8:2 9:8 13:22 seminar 6:20 seminars 6:18 sentiment 13:6 SEO 5:15 serve 2:11 service 7:10 set 2:15 11:17 shared 4:7 sir 8:13 9:7 10:4 12:1 size 11:4 slandorous 3:19 solution 9:17 sort 9:3 speak 3:12 speaker 2:1 3:12 4:16,19 5:3,6 7:1,4,7,10,23,24 8:2,6,17 9:2,8,13 10:1,6, 11 12:2,11 13:4,17,22 special 5:19 split 4:13 10:15 11:3 staff 7:11,17 8:7,17,23 9:4 stakeholders 12:20 start 3:4 started 2:24 state 2:18 3:6 step 4:1 submit 6:10	submitting 5:22 suitable 10:2 summer 6:18,19 Sunshine 2:5 3:22 T table 4:10 9:15 10:2 tabled 11:9 12:6,8,9,10,18 tabling 10:8 12:16 taxation 2:22 taxpayer 3:8 teams 9:1 term 2:12 things 12:23 three-member 2:8 threshold 10:20 11:2 time 3:13 today 5:10 today's 3:16 tolerated 3:20,24 training 5:15 6:18,19 Tuesday 5:20 6:12 U ultimately 9:2 11:21 understand 12:17 unit 5:11 6:17 units 5:9 update 5:8 V Vanessa 8:25 Vice 7:1 9:10 10:6 12:3 13:18	violation 3:22 vote 6:1 7:25 8:5 9:11,12, 23 11:12 vote.phila.gov 5:22 vote.phila.gov. 6:21 voter 2:9,16,18,25 5:11,12 voters 5:21 6:5 10:19 W wanted 12:11 ward 4:13 10:15,16 12:20, 21 13:10 Warehouse 5:9 website 6:20 Wednesday 2:4 week 5:16 week's 4:11 winter 10:13 wishing 3:25 work 7:8 13:14 Workers 6:17 working 9:5 written 9:25 11:25 Y yesterday 5:24
---	--	---