

1 PHILADELPHIA CITY COMMISSIONERS

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ELECTIONS MEETING

10

11 Wednesday, August 28, 2024

12 11:00 a.m.

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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.

4 MS. DEELEY: Good morning.

5 MR. BLUESTEIN: Good morning.

6 CHAIR SABIR: I call to order the meeting of the
7 Philadelphia City Commissioner's Board of Elections
8 for Wednesday, August 28th, 2024. This meeting is a
9 compliance under the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
10 Philadelphia City Commissioners are a three-member
11 bipartisan board of elected officials in charge of
12 elections and voter registration for the county of
13 Philadelphia. Each commissioner is elected to serve a
14 four-year term that coincides with the municipal
15 election for Mayor and City Council.

16 The Commissioners set and enforce
17 departmental policies to administer voter registration
18 and conduct the elections in accordance with federal
19 and state voter registration election laws. The City
20 Commissioners were created by the Pennsylvania
21 assembly in 1711 with a focus on taxation and held
22 various regulatory powers throughout the centuries.

23 The Commissioners started maintaining voter
24 list in 1799 and took on more election-related
25 responsibilities, but didn't emerge into its current

1 form until to the adoption of Philadelphia Home Rule
2 Charter in 1951.

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

13 Finally, it is my responsibility to preserve
14 the order and decorum of the meetings as such.
15 Profane, slanderous, discriminatory, and personal
16 attacks will not be tolerated. If you wish to make a
17 public objection to a perceived Sunshine violation,
18 please raise your hand and I will recognize you.
19 Outbursts will not be tolerated.

20 Anyone wishing to offer public comment,
21 please step forward. Hearing no public comment, we
22 will now move to report from Secretary Bluestein for
23 emailed public comments. Commissioner Bluestein, are
24 there any emailed public comments?

25 MR. BLUESTEIN: There were no public comments

1 emailed by 09:45 a.m.

2 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you very much. We will now
3 proceed to old business. We will hear a report from
4 our director of elections operations and
5 administrations, Joseph Lynch and Stephanie Reed.

6 MR. LYNCH: Morning, Commissioners.

7 CHAIR SABIR: Good morning, Joe.

8 MR. LYNCH: As of Monday, we have approved
9 118,826 vote by mail and absentee applications, which
10 is 3409 added from last week's total. Of those,
11 67,746 are paper applications and 51,080 are
12 electronic applications. This includes military,
13 civilian, overseas, and federal voters. We currently
14 have a total of 1852 applications waiting to be
15 processed. Of those, 750 are paper applications and
16 1102 are electronic applications.

17 Voters who would like to vote by mail for
18 the November 5th general election can apply for a
19 mail-in or absentee ballot at vote.phila.gov. The
20 deadline to apply is Tuesday, October 29th, 2024 at
21 05:00 p.m. For the special election, special election
22 has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 17th, 2024
23 for the 195th and 201st State House Districts. These
24 elections are being held to fill the seats left vacant
25 by resignations.

1 We have sent out a total of 10,679 ballots
2 for the special election. Anyone who is on our
3 permanent mailing list and applied to receive a ballot
4 for this year will receive a ballot for the special
5 election. If you would like to vote by mail for the
6 September 17th special election, the deadline to apply
7 is Tuesday, September 10th at 05:00 p.m. Voters may
8 request a replacement ballot up until 08:00 p.m. on
9 election day.

10 Please note the general election for the
11 next term will still occur on Tuesday, November 5th,
12 2024. If you're not sure if you're eligible to vote
13 in a special election, look up your address at
14 atlas.phila.\voting or visit our website to check out
15 all affected wards and divisions at vote.phila.gov.
16 ID verification letters have gone out to voters that
17 either did not include their required proof of
18 identification or their absentee mail-in ballot
19 application or their proof of identification could not
20 be verified by the county Board of Elections office.

21 Voters who have received this letter may
22 submit their proof of ID to the county Board of
23 Elections via email at Phillyelection@phila.gov, fax,
24 US mail, telephone, or in person. Voters have until
25 05:00 p.m. on September 23rd to return their proof of

1 identification for the special election.

2 Voter registration for the election cycle to
3 date, they have processed 202,192 registration
4 applications, of which 156,900 were papered. They
5 mailed out 27,647 ID cards on Monday, 8/26. For the
6 Board Worker Unit, board workers confirmation calls
7 and emails continue. Total of confirmed board workers
8 is 639. Total of board workers declined 52. For the
9 training sessions for the special elections, total
10 attendance special training was 246.

11 The training sessions for the summer
12 training, total attendance summer refresher course was
13 3486. The polling Place unit continues to monitor
14 locations for September 17th special election. Today
15 is the last day to secure locations for the special
16 election. They are also working closely with the
17 School District on making sure we provide hallway
18 monitors during the special election.

19 The unit is also working on changes for the
20 November 5th general election. The Voting Machine
21 Warehouse, the unit resumed the post primary machine
22 functionality testing after the L&A test for the
23 special election. Satellite offices, they are making
24 steady progress on satellite offices for District one,
25 four and eight. We have been busy working with the

1 vendors to prepare for IT equipment installation and
2 configuration.

3 Major construction is complete for District
4 4, District 5, District 7, and District 10.
5 Construction is in progress for District two, six, and
6 nine. For District eight, the lease execution is
7 still pending. However, we have access to the
8 complete vendor work and -- I'm sorry, we have access
9 to complete vendor work and furnish the offices. We
10 will announce opening dates as soon as possible in the
11 next coming weeks. That's all I have, Commissioners.
12 Sorry.

13 CHAIR SABIR: Vice-Chair Deeley, do you have any
14 questions?

15 MS. DEELEY: I have none.

16 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, do you have
17 any questions?

18 MR. BLUESTEIN: I have none.

19 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you, Joe. Say what?

20 MS. REED: I can't hear. Are you ready?

21 CHAIR SABIR: Oh, we're ready for you, Stephanie.
22 Come on.

23 MS. REED: The sound is weird down here. Good
24 morning, Commissioners.

25 MR. BLUESTEIN: Good morning.

1 MS. REED: I'm pleased to address you today and
2 share updates from our administration report for
3 August 28th, 2024. Our staff have been busy preparing
4 for the special election, the general election, and
5 the opening of permanent satellite election offices.
6 It's a lot to manage and they're doing an impressive
7 job pushing all of these things forward in a timely
8 manner.

9 In our Budget and Procurement Department,
10 the team has been focused on the normal processing of
11 invoices and purchase orders, addressing any related
12 issues as they arise. We continue budgetary planning
13 for the general election, including a mid-year
14 transfer.

15 In communications, we've been designing
16 requested materials, including signage for polling
17 places and facilities, templates for interagency
18 communication, and materials for external
19 communications. Updates were made to our voter
20 guides, FAQ documents, public facing materials, and to
21 water mailers.

22 A new packet was designed for our involved
23 at seven-team program, including all general
24 information, FAQs, and an informative presentation.
25 Regarding engagement, we have held three voting

1 machine demonstrations since the weekend and have two
2 remaining at Independence Library, with one today and
3 one tomorrow, August 29th.

4 We're distributing materials at No. 1 Asian
5 Supermarket, China Gourmet, Everest Urgent Care, and
6 Double Care Adult Day Services. Our efforts also
7 include sharing flyers for poll workers and
8 interpreters, encouraging voter registration,
9 recruiting bilingual interpreters, and engaging with
10 the community through feedback and questions at
11 events.

12 We continue to reach out to local
13 businesses, senior centers, and stores to distribute
14 election materials or host events, and our team has
15 been working on translations for posters needed at
16 polling places and newspaper ads for the special
17 election. In human resources, we're currently hiring
18 for one trades helper and 60 temps.

19 As of now, we filled our total workforce --
20 I'm sorry, excuse me. As of now, our total workforce
21 stands at 176 employees with 142 in civil service and
22 34 exempt. This includes 72 clerk ones, 20 clerk
23 twos, 12 clerk threes, 16 trades helpers, and three
24 temps. We're continuing with new hire activities and
25 preparing for upcoming orientations.

1 Our IT team has completed satellite election
2 office IT installation at SEO one and four and eight
3 is in progress. They've completed special election
4 police routes, stood up the call center testing
5 environment, and prepared for testing. They've also
6 initiated testing of our nips for the special
7 election. This past week, we onboarded our director
8 of safety and security, who has initiated site
9 evaluations, including a fire safety assessment with
10 the Philadelphia Fire Department.

11 Construction on safety improvements
12 continues on scheduled to be completed in time for the
13 November election. The board of election staff
14 continues to impress me with their diligence and
15 attention to detail. Our workers are incredibly
16 talented and committed to ensuring we run the best
17 elections possible. I want to convey my deep
18 appreciation to all our staff for your relentless
19 dedication and unwavering commitment. Thank you.

20 MR. BLUESTEIN: Thank you.

21 CHAIR SABIR: Thank you. Vice-Chair Deeley, did
22 you have any questions?

23 MS. DEELEY: I have none.

24 CHAIR SABIR: Commissioner Bluestein, did you
25 have any questions?

1 MR. BLUESTEIN: I do not.

2 CHAIR SABIR: I guess, it's not a question, it's
3 just a comment for both the administrator and the
4 director of operations. Just the communication. I
5 know it was busy, special election, a lot of things
6 have been going on, but we definitely want to make
7 sure that we got frequent communication between the
8 deputies. The deputies can give that information to
9 the commissioners.

10 If any one of the commissioners has an
11 inquiry about what's going on with the operation, they
12 need that information as soon as possible. That's not
13 just y'all, everybody at the department. If any
14 commissioner makes a request for information, they
15 need to receive that information in a timely manner.
16 Does any commissioner object to that? Thank you. So,
17 thank you. I think that's it. I think we've done all
18 our business here. Do we have any non-agenda items to
19 be added?

20 MS. DEELEY: I have none.

21 MR. BLUESTEIN: I have none.

22 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein? Thank you. I
23 motion that we adjourn this meeting. Is there a
24 second?

25 MS. DEELEY: Second.

1 CHAIR SABIR: Secretary Bluestein, please call
2 the roll.

3 MR. BLUESTEIN: Vice-Chair Deeley?

4 MS. DEELEY: Aye.

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

6 CHAIR SABIR: Aye. Meeting is adjournment.

7 (The meeting was adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST

I, AAD JOY, 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 19th day of September, 2024.



Aad Joy

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August 28, 2024

11:00am

City Commissioners
City Hall, Room 653
1400 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA 19107

- I. Call to order the meeting of Wednesday, August 28, 2024
- II. Public Comment
 - a. In-Person Public Comments
 - b. Report from the Secretary – Emailed Public Comment
- III. Old Business
 - a. Election operations and administration report
- IV. New Business
 - a. Additional non-agenda items
- V. Adjourned to the call of the chair