

MEETING OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS OF ELECTIONS  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2014  
AT 1:30 P.M.  
42 BROADWAY, 6<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM  
NEW YORK, NY 10004

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PRESENT:       President Gregory C. Soumas  
                  Secretary Michael Michel

Commissioners Ronald Castorina, Julie Dent, Maria R. Guastella, Michael Rendino, Simon Shamoun

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director  
Dawn Sandow, Deputy Executive Director  
Pamela Perkins, Administrative Manager  
Steven H. Richman, General Counsel  
Raphael Savino, Deputy General Counsel  
Valerie Vazquez, Director, Communications & Public Affairs  
Nina M. Crispino, Director, Personnel  
Kenneth Moltner, Counsel to the Commissioners  
Steven B. Denkberg, Counsel to the Commissioners

GUEST:       Monica Bartley, CIDNY  
                  Kate Doran, LWV  
                  David Seitzer, NYC Council  
                  Annette Almazan, DOI  
                  Andrew Brunsdon, DOI  
                  Katherine Loving, CFB  
                  Rachel Fauss, Citizens Union  
                  John D. Smith  
                  Eddie Cuesta, Dominicanos USA

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President Soumas called the meeting to order at 1:42 P.M.

Mr. Ryan requested an Executive Session for purposes of personnel.

Commissioner Dent moved to adopt the minutes of the February 25, 2014 meeting. President Soumas seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Ryan reported on the New York City Council Committees on Governmental Operations, and Oversight and Investigations, held on Friday, February 28, 2014 concerning the recent report of the Department of Investigations (DOI) on the Board of Elections. A copy of the Board's Testimony is in the agenda. Mr. Ryan reported that it is a comprehensive Testimony that addresses all of the concerns raised in the December 20, 2013 DOI Report.

President Soumas recognized Rachel Fauss, a representative of Citizens Union, who inquired if the Commissioners have considered posting employment positions through [www.NYC.gov](http://www.NYC.gov). President Soumas reported that the Commissioners have not considered that yet. Mr. Ryan noted that this inquiry was brought to the Board's attention last Friday at the City

Council Hearing and he will be discussing all questions and concerns from the Hearing with the Commissioners.

Mr. Ryan reported that the New York City Council Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget, Mayor's FY 2014 Preliminary Management Report, and Agency Oversight Hearings are scheduled for Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 11:15 A.M. A copy of the City Council's notice is in the agenda. Mr. Ryan requested for the Board to attend and prepare Testimony. President Soumas moved for the Board to attend and prepare Testimony for the City Council Hearings on March 25, 2014. Commissioner Dent seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Ryan provided an update on webcasting. He reported that for the first time the Board is digitally video recording the public meeting which complies with the December 2, 2013 law signed by former Mayor Bloomberg. The video will be posted to the Board's [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) (YouTube) account on a temporary basis. Mr. Ryan noted that the Board cannot control YouTube's advertisements and requested for the public to notify the Board if they find any inappropriate. The Board will be monitoring

the ads and will report any inappropriate ads to the YouTube administrator. Commissioner Dent recommended posting a disclaimer on the Board's website concerning YouTube's advertisements. Mr. Ryan reported that the Board is currently researching equipment and services for the implementation of webcasting. The Board is complying with the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) Rules.

President Soumas recognized Rachel Fauss, a representative of Citizens Union, who commended the Board for complying with the webcasting law and offered help with the implementation process.

Mr. Ryan provided an update on the disposal of voter registration cards, also known as buff cards, in accordance with the law. He recalled that this issue was discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Ryan presented an example of the Queens Office hard copy print-outs from 2007 through 2011 which contains 80 voter registration records per page; totaling 253,040 buff cards. He reported that approximately 5 million buff cards have to be purged from the five (5) Borough Offices by bi-partisan teams. Executive Management will be working closely with each Borough Office to the end of the process. President Soumas noted that no formal motion was

made last week concerning this matter. President Soumas moved to direct Mr. Ryan to develop a plan to eliminate the buff cards in the Borough Offices in accordance with the law. Commissioner Castorina seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted. Mr. Ryan noted that he will submit the plan to the State Board for approval. Commissioner Shamoun recommended for staff to research archiving certain NYC historic figures' records. He noted that the Brooklyn Office has records dated before the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Commissioner Shamoun recommended for the Board to reach out to local historical societies for assistance. Mr. Ryan reported that he is currently looking into this matter and will report back to the Commissioners.

Mr. Ryan reported that The Wall Street Journal contained an article called "New York City Aiming to Abolish Runoff Elections" in yesterday's newspaper. A copy of the news article is in the agenda. The City Council has indentified instant runoff voting and the end of citywide runoff elections as a budget and legislative priority.

Mr. Ryan reported that the State Board issued the Certification of Offices to be filled at the November 4, 2013 General Election. A copy of the Certification is in the agenda.

Commissioner Shamoun requested for the Commissioners to discuss Voter Cards at the next meeting. President Soumas stated for the record that Voter Cards act as a security measure in poll sites and they should not be eliminated. He noted that there is nothing in the statute for ballot security. Secretary Michel noted that Voter Cards are not always being used as intended in the poll site. Commissioner Castorina noted that there would be cost savings if the Voter Cards were eliminated and requested to continue this discussion at the next meeting. Commissioner Guastella noted that the Board has discussed this issue in the past and moved to eliminate Voter Cards. Before a vote was taken, Mr. Ryan reported that the DS-200 ballots are longer in length now and the current Privacy Sleeves do not entirely cover the ballots. Mr. Ryan presented samples of enhanced Privacy Sleeves which were longer in length to ensure voter privacy and had voting instructions printed on them. These modified Privacy Sleeves would eliminate the need for staff to set-up voting instructions in the Privacy Booths which takes approximately 1,500 man hours to complete. The

enhanced Privacy Sleeves would save on costs and make the agency more efficient. Mr. Ryan stated that the enhanced Privacy Sleeves could act as Voter Cards when the voter goes to the Scanner with their ballot. He noted that Voter Cards slow down the process in the poll site because it takes a poll worker approximately 30 seconds to fill out a Voter Card. Mr. Ryan recommended for the Board to move forward with the enhanced Privacy Sleeve and for Executive Management to develop a plan if the Voter Cards should be eliminated by the Commissioners.

President Soumas recognized Kate Doran, a representative of the League of Women Voters and Coordinator of a poll site, who stated that Voter Cards do not function to prevent voter fraud. Ms. Doran recommended for poll workers to be trained to look at the voter's signature in the poll books and their date of birth to help prevent voter fraud; a poll worker can challenge a voter's signature with the Challenge Oath. Mr. Ryan reported that Board staff is looking at adding a field in the Poll Books indicating the voter's age and tabbing the Poll Books from A – Z.

Commissioner Guastella withdrew her motion.

There was a consensus among the Commissioners for the Voter Card issue to be discussed further at next week's meeting and the public has advance notice to weigh in on the issue as well.

President Soumas moved to convene an Executive Session for purposes of personnel. Secretary Michel seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

Following Executive Session, the regular stated meeting resumed and President Soumas reported that no action was taken in Executive Session.

Commissioner Dent moved to adjourn the meeting. Secretary Michel seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

The next stated meeting of the Commissioners will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 1:30 P.M.