

BOARD OF ELECTIONS
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

42 Broadway - 6th floor
Commissioners' Hearing Room
New York, NY 10004

May 12, 2020

1:04 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

May 12, 2020

PRESENT:

President Patricia Anne Taylor

Secretary Frederic Umane

Commissioner Jose Araujo

Commissioner Miguelina Camilo

Commissioner Gino Marmorato

Commissioner Michael Michel

Commissioner Simon Shamoun

Commissioner John Wm. Zaccone

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director

Dawn Sandow, Deputy Executive Director

Pamela Perkins, Administrative Manager

Georgea Kontzamanis, Operations Manager

Steven Richman, General Counsel

Rafael Savino, Deputy General Counsel

Kenneth Moltner, Counsel to Commissioners

Steven Denkberg, Counsel to Commissioners

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2 (The meeting commenced at 1:04 p.m.)

3 MR. RYAN: Okay. So we're live, on the
4 live stream. My name is Michael Ryan. I'm the
5 executive director. I will proceed with the roll
6 call of the commissioners. President Taylor?

7 PRESIDENT PATRICIA ANNE TAYLOR: I am
8 present.

9 MR. RYAN: Secretary Umane?

10 SECRETARY FREDERIC UMANE: Here.

11 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Araujo?

12 COMMISSIONER JOSE ARAUJO: Present.

13 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Camilo?

14 COMMISSIONER MIGUELINA CAMILO: Present.

15 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Marmorato?

16 COMMISSIONER GINO MARMORATO: Here.

17 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Michel?

18 COMMISSIONER MICHAEL MICHEL: Here.

19 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Shamoun?

20 COMMISSIONER SIMON SHAMOUN: Here.

21 MR. RYAN: And Commissioner Zaccone?

22 That complete, oh, sorry, go ahead.

23 COMMISSIONER JOHN WM. ZACCONE: Present.

24 MR. RYAN: Yes. [laughter] That

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2 completes the roll call of all the commissioners
3 who are expected to be in attendance today. And
4 that is eight. I am, as I said, Michael Ryan.
5 Seated to my left is Dawn Sandow, the deputy
6 executive director, and at a remote location
7 within the building are Ms. Pamela Perkins
8 administrative manager and Ms. Georgia
9 Kontazmanis, operations manager. Seated at the
10 table before me are Steven Richman, general
11 counsel and deputy general counsel Raphael
12 Savino. And remotely as well are Kenneth Moltner,
13 counsel to commissioners and Steven Denkberg,
14 counsel to the commissioners. Good afternoon,
15 everyone.

16 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Good afternoon.

17 MR. RYAN: There is one item on the
18 agenda, one item with an A and a B. A does not
19 require a vote of the commissioners, and it was
20 that we want to, in light of all the changes
21 related to the elections process via executive
22 order and the necessity of having to move forward
23 with mailing absentee ballot applications, and in
24 anticipation of a higher absentee ballot

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2 participation rate, we are in the process of
3 completing the mailing of 3.6 absentee ballot
4 applications, pursuant to the executive order,
5 which includes all eligible voters, and that
6 universe is defined as both active and inactive
7 voters. And that's how we arrived at the 3.6
8 million voters.

9 Since we have no way of gauging what the
10 return of those absentee ballot applications will
11 be, either from those mailed directly from the
12 portal that's been established on the Board's
13 website, from e-mails that already been received
14 and will continue to be received, as well as any
15 phone calls that we may get. All of those ways of
16 getting an absentee ballot are described in the
17 executive order and through guidance from the
18 State Board of Elections.

19 So we're anticipating that a much
20 greater number than usual will participate in the
21 election process by absentee ballot. So we have
22 leveraged an existing print vendor contract to
23 mail out all of the absentee ballot applications.
24 Those will then be returned to the Board,

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2 electronically processed, we will have a .PDF and
3 a data file that will drop into a specially
4 created queue so that the borough offices can
5 complete the bipartisan review of the validity of
6 the absentee ballot applications and then
7 thereafter, that queue will be worked and then
8 populated as completed at the end of each working
9 day and files will be then transferred to two of
10 our three print vendors, Phoenix Graphics and
11 Fort Orange and they will then process the
12 outgoing absentee ballots with a uniform standard
13 so that if there are large volumes of returns,
14 we, they have a greater throughput capacity than
15 the borough offices.

16 And so when you factor in that we must
17 continue to maintain social distancing and we
18 have limited square footage available in all of
19 our work locations, offloading for this go round
20 what would otherwise be a labor intensive process
21 requiring people to work in close quarters was
22 something that was absolutely necessary. And
23 realistically speaking, the only way that that
24 task could be accomplished.

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2 So that's the overall framework of how
3 that's going to work. The receipt of the ballots
4 on the way back and the processing of the ballots
5 on the way back, to our understanding, there have
6 been no executive orders that in any way affect
7 the canvassing process. So we will still have to
8 follow, unless there are some changes moving
9 forward, it is anticipated that we will still
10 have to follow the rules as we know them, so for
11 the commissioners and for any other individuals
12 that are familiar with the absentee ballot
13 processing that is done post election, there, as
14 of this moment, there are no anticipated changes
15 to that process. And it will be a volume perhaps
16 different than we normally are accustomed to, but
17 the process will remain the same.

18 One thing that we are looking into to
19 assist in that regard to see is there any sorting
20 machines that could help in the event that we get
21 a large volume of returns. But we don't have any
22 information on that just yet. We are dealing with
23 the problems or the challenges in the order in
24 which they occur and the first thing that has to

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2 happen is the applications have to go out. Then
3 the ballots have to go out and then we have to
4 get to the point of sorting them and counting
5 them. So we're doing it in the necessary
6 sequence.

7 That's the basic overview and we have
8 had a similar experience with this kind of, not
9 exactly this, but emergency circumstances leading
10 up to an election. Going back to 2018, we had the
11 center perforated two-page ballot. We used two
12 vendors, the same two vendors that had the
13 ability to assist us doing that for the first
14 time, and we're confident, at least from the
15 representations that have been made by the
16 vendors. They have both told us that they have a
17 maximum throughput of approximately two million
18 ballots each. We're only mailing out 3.6 million
19 applications. So it seems that the maximum
20 throughput is not in any jeopardy of being
21 reached. So if we divide the work that way and we
22 get them, the files on a regular basis, they
23 should be able to process them without any
24 difficulty, from what we've been told.

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2 One of the challenges that we are
3 facing, however, with the, with the outgoing mail
4 and as well the processing of absentee -- the
5 outgoing mail for the, for the, uh, for the
6 applications seems to be under control but the
7 outgoing mail for the ballots, there still is an
8 envelope shortage. And so we will be at the
9 mercy, in terms of our ability to mail out
10 absentee ballots, we will be at the mercy of
11 availability of envelopes.

12 My understanding is that both vendors
13 have made their envelope orders and they're
14 waiting on final dates on when they would receive
15 those envelopes. But clearly, the letters will
16 not deliver themselves and they need to be
17 envelopes. And the national envelope shortage is
18 real and is affecting everyone. So that's the
19 reality and any of the large counties in New York
20 State will be similarly situated. Some of the
21 smaller counties that might be able to process
22 locally within their office might not have as
23 much of an issue. But certainly the volume
24 counties are all going to be in the same boat in

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2 that regard.

3 So that's my presentation with respect
4 to the absentee ballot processing, and then of
5 course, if any commissioners have any questions.
6 The only other thing that we do have to add to
7 this is a brief conversation about ordering
8 election day ballots and the volume of those. But
9 does anyone have any additional information on
10 the absentee ballot processing that they wish for
11 me to share with the public?

12 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Do we not at this
13 point in time have an actual date of mailing for
14 the absentee ballots?

15 MR. RYAN: For the absentee ballots
16 themselves?

17 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Yes.

18 MR. RYAN: No, we don't.

19 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: No, no, I'm sorry.
20 Not the ballots, the absentee ballot
21 applications.

22 MR. RYAN: No, the applications, the
23 data was sent to the vendor on Saturday, so
24 they're in the process of that. I know that it

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2 will be done sequentially but I have not read the
3 e-mail that says exactly in what order what
4 counties are going first. But that process is
5 underway.

6 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Okay. So the process
7 is begun?

8 MR. RYAN: Right, the process has begun,
9 yes. And it's, like I said, it's a 3.6 million
10 piece mailer, so it's not like they print them up
11 and drop them in the mailbox. It's going to be
12 quite an undertaking. Alright, yeah.

13 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Thank you.

14 MR. RYAN: And that actually could have
15 been ready to go a week ago, except that there
16 were other changes that were coming via executive
17 order and we were told by the State Board of
18 Elections to pull back and wait for those
19 additional changes, which ended up manifesting
20 themselves not in changes to the application,
21 although that was a possibility, it didn't
22 happen. But it manifested itself in terms of
23 changes to the, to the instruction sheet that
24 went out to the voters, as well as some other

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2 process issues.

3 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Thank you.

4 MR. RYAN: Alright. So, I guess we can
5 do the approval notice to candidates and I'll
6 give that over to Mr. Richman and then we can
7 come back and do, have a brief discussion on the
8 ballots.

9 MR. RICHMAN: Commissioners, as you're
10 aware, you approved the notice to candidates
11 setting forth the relevant dates for the people
12 who are participating in the scheduled June 23rd
13 primary, it's a federal office, state office,
14 local office and party position. Last week, the
15 United States District Court for the Southern
16 District of New York directed that the
17 Presidential Primary be conducted on June 23rd as
18 well.

19 While the matter is being appealed to
20 the Second Circuit and will be heard on Friday,
21 we still have the obligation to get the process
22 moving. So the notice that went out to you is the
23 draft notice to the President candidates and the
24 candidates for delegate.

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2 With the exception of the date for the
3 inspection of both the ballot, the paper ballots
4 and the audio ballot, which has to be five days
5 from the date of the notice, which will be next
6 Monday, all the other dates for activities in the
7 borough offices in terms of the canvas process,
8 the audit process etc., track identically to the
9 remainder of the June 23rd primaries. So it has
10 been prepared by CRU, reviewed by all the
11 relevant managers, and approved by legal and we
12 recommend your approval so it can go out today so
13 that on Monday, we can conduct the public
14 inspection of the ballots here and the audio
15 ballots for the candidates and for anyone who
16 takes advantage of that.

17 MR. RYAN: That presentation having been
18 concluded, a motion is in order. Commissioner
19 Taylor? Commissioner Taylor said so moved. I read
20 her lips, but her mic was --

21 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: I'll second.

22 MR. RYAN: Is there a second?

23 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Second.

24 MR. RYAN: Are there any objections?

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2 Hearing none, the motion carries.

3 MR. RICHMAN: Thank you, commissioners,
4 and also the notice will be posted on the website
5 as well.

6 MR. RYAN: That brings us now to item C,
7 which I apologize, should have been on the
8 printed agenda. But we have to, by the end of
9 this week, in order to meet our processing
10 obligations, order ballots for the election. As I
11 said, we need, there are 3.6 million applications
12 going out, that's the number of registered
13 voters. What the commissioners have been doing
14 for the past several years, since there's no way
15 of us knowing who will actually show up on
16 election day is authorizing 100 percent of the
17 total number of eligible voters and we would
18 order those and have those available for election
19 day. And then I believe on the affidavits, we
20 were ordering 10 percents on the affidavits. And
21 that's what we have been doing.

22 I, uh, we are in very uncertain times. I
23 don't really have a good recommendation one way
24 or the other why we should deviate from the

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2 process that we've been engaging up to now, since
3 there's no way for any of us to know who's going
4 to avail themselves of the absentee process
5 that's been spun up very quickly, or who's going
6 to show up on election day. And by election day,
7 I apologize, I mean to include the nine days of
8 early voting as well, except the nine days of
9 early voting are ballot on demand, so they don't
10 factor into this recommendation of purchase of
11 the ballots.

12 SECRETARY UMANE: I think 100 percent is
13 too many. I think with the global mailing, there
14 are going to be a lot of absentee ballots. I
15 think with early voting, there are going to be a
16 lot of early voters possibly. And because of the
17 virus itself, I think very few people are going
18 to want to come out and vote unfortunately to
19 begin with, given all of the potential health
20 concerns and everything else. So I mean I think a
21 generous number might be 75 percent rather than
22 100. I just think we're essentially wasting tax
23 payers' money that could go to other things, such
24 as masks and other things. So I think for this

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2 primary, I think we don't need to do 100 percent.

3 I think a considerably less number is justified.

4 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Commissioner Zaccone,
5 I know this is an issue of interest to you, but
6 do you have any comment?

7 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: I agree that,
8 that the turnout on election day itself will be
9 drastically different this year than previous
10 years. I think that ordering 100 percent ballots
11 will be far in excess of our needs. I don't know
12 if 75 percent is too much or too little, just
13 because based on the experience, I don't know
14 that -- we have no experience to base it on. I,
15 you know, I would agree that there should be some
16 number less than 100 percent in this particular
17 case. If the consensus of the Board is 75, I'm
18 willing to go along with it. I, that's a prudent
19 number. You know, I would, in my heart consider a
20 slightly lower number like 60 percent, but that
21 may be too low in case we do have a high turnout
22 or in case there is some problems. I would
23 support Commissioner Umame's decision if that's
24 the way the Board goes along with it.

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2 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Commissioner Araujo,
3 any word from you?

4 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Yeah, I mean I'm
5 not comfortable bring it down to 75 percent. I'm
6 more comfortable being at 100 percent. But I
7 understand where we're at, and I just want to
8 make clear that the 100 percent, under the
9 statute, we're supposed to order the minimum
10 amount based on registered voters plus an
11 additional I think it's ten percent or 15
12 percent. What's the right percentage, Mr. Ryan,
13 do you know, above the 100 percent that normally
14 we're supposed to order?

15 MR. RYAN: There has been a standard
16 that's been adopted by the Board, but there is no
17 recommended standard. What you're always trying
18 to balance is, you know, the number of voters,
19 clearly, and then some factor involving potential
20 spoilage, you know, voters can make mistakes and
21 get up to three ballots. There really is no
22 science to it, unfortunately. It really comes
23 down to a guesstimate of how many folks you think
24 are going to show up and then adding some bit of

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2 padding associated with that. I think the
3 difficult thing for all of us now, and
4 ultimately, you know, it's, commissioners make
5 the decision is this entirely new process that
6 has never been done before is being introduced
7 into this upcoming election without any, and
8 we're all flying blind in the sense that we don't
9 know how many people are going to avail
10 themselves of this absentee process versus coming
11 out on election day.

12 And I think that common sense tells you
13 that more people will use the absentee process
14 and that nothing has happened up until today, May
15 12th, that is necessarily giving people the
16 confidence that they want to run out and stand in
17 line anywhere, let alone a poll site. So it's
18 difficult.

19 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Right, no, I
20 understand. It's uncharted territory.

21 MR. RYAN: Yeah.

22 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Especially in the
23 middle of actually using early voting sites for a
24 relatively recent period of time. Did anyone do

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2 the calculation of just to get an idea of what
3 the numbers were for early voting, just so we can
4 have an idea, maybe we deduct that number from
5 the 100 percent to say alright, you know, the
6 last two elections we did early voting, or the
7 last election we did, we had ten percent, 20
8 percent, so then, you know, we're at basically at
9 80 percent if we get a full turnout, you know,
10 doing that type of analysis.

11 MR. RYAN: The short answer is no, but I
12 don't, I don't believe that our early voting was
13 double digits. I'm not recalling off the top of
14 my head. But --

15 MR. RICHMAN: [unintelligible]

16 [00:26:03].

17 MR. RYAN: Right. There was, there was
18 very few contests on the ballot in November. I
19 don't even know, trying to compare a non-
20 citywide, you know, you really had the Queens
21 borough president I believe and the Staten Island
22 borough, I mean the Queens district attorney and
23 the Staten Island district attorney were the only
24 major contests on the ballot. Now you've got

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2 potentially, at least if the court doesn't change
3 anything, a presidential primary.

4 [CROSSTALK]

5 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: No, I understand,
6 I think it's just a factor in a formula, right. I
7 mean --

8 MR. RYAN: Right.

9 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: -- at some point,
10 we'll develop some kind of matrix and that would
11 be one of the factors that we're looking into. I
12 do believe that the statute requires 100 percent
13 plus 10 percent, as we said, for spoilage or
14 incidentals, if a person needs more than one
15 ballot. So if we take that --

16 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: I think --

17 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: [unintelligible]
18 [00:26:57] go ahead.

19 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: I think in a
20 Presidential Primary, I mean it's a big primary
21 and all, but it's 3.6 million people. I don't
22 know, before we had early voting and before we
23 mailed out an absentee if more than 1.8 million
24 people showed up for a primary at any time before

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2 all of this. At 75 percent, if you, 50 percent is
3 1.8, if you go 75 percent, you're still going
4 over two million ballots, plus nine days of early
5 voting, plus everybody is entitled to an
6 absentee. So I'm comfortable with, you know, I'm
7 comfortable with a 60 percent, but I'll go with a
8 75, because just by the odds, it's not going to
9 happen that you're going to use that many
10 ballots.

11 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: No, I --

12 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: If you're stating
13 the law -- if the law is stating that we have to
14 do 100 percent, then it's easy.

15 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: I understand what
16 you're saying. I mean I understand what
17 everybody's saying.

18 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: What's the least
20 amount that we've ordered in the past? For some
21 reason, 80 percent is sticking in my head.

22 MR. RYAN: It, it may have been. I did
23 some quick math, just to put a placeholder in the
24 conversation. On 3.6, 75 percent would be 2.7

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2 million ballots.

3 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: 2.7, what is the
4 cost of each ballot, over a dollar, right?

5 MR. RYAN: No. It's --

6 MR. SAVINO: Forty-eight cents.

7 MR. RYAN: in the 30 cent range if you
8 average it out.

9 SECRETARY UMANE: Twenty-seven,
10 something like that.

11 MR. RYAN: Right.

12 SECRETARY UMANE: We got it down.

13 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Yeah, but we also
14 have, we're using longer ballots.

15 COMMISSIONER CAMILO: Yeah, we're having
16 a two-page ballot.

17 MR. RYAN: Yeah, exactly. The Democrats
18 will all have two pages if there are no further
19 changes to the Presidential Primary, because the
20 President Primary ballot will be on --

21 MS. KONTAZMANIS: Last Presidential
22 Primary, we ordered 110 percent.

23 MR. RYAN: Right.

24 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: If I may, just

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2 one, we can check with counsel to see if there is
3 any statutory obligation, the number we need to
4 order. I don't believe there is, but I'm happy
5 ask him to check. The second thing is, I remember
6 when I first came on the board, we only went to
7 100 percent and 110 percent recently.

8 MR. RYAN: That's true.

9 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Before that, we
10 were at 70 to 80 percent for our elections. But I
11 think some of the other commissioners can speak
12 more to that [unintelligible] [00:29:41].

13 MR. RYAN: So Commissioner Zacccone, you
14 are right. Prior to November of 2018, there was
15 both internal discussions and external
16 speculation that some savings could be realized
17 with a more scientific, if you will, approach to
18 predicting turnout. Well, the events of 2018 and
19 the issues associated with that particular
20 election, as well as what started in September of
21 2018 with this increase in voter participation
22 leaps and bounds over what it had been going
23 backwards and trying to make predictions has led
24 the commissioners since every election after

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2 November of 2018 to err on the side of ordering
3 more ballots and keeping enough cushion in the
4 ballots that are delivered at the poll sites to
5 make sure that we would never run out. We now
6 find ourselves where we are today, which is
7 options available to the public that have not
8 been available before. And that's where I think
9 everyone's source of consternation over what the
10 right thing to do is.

11 I think Commissioner Umane's point is
12 well taken. We're in difficult economic times,
13 much more than we have been in recent memory. And
14 those difficult economic times really shouldn't
15 change our perspective. We should always want to
16 do what is the most prudent and responsible thing
17 for the taxpayers and the taxpayer resources.

18 But that having been said, I think a
19 bigger magnifying glass is on us now since
20 resources, financial resources from the city and
21 state are becoming more scarce.

22 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: This is
23 Commissioner Araujo. I'd be fine anywhere between
24 75 and 80 percent, because I think in the past

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2 we've done 80, but at some point --

3 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: I want to ask a
4 question. Am I correct in understanding that the
5 ballots that we are presently approving the order
6 for are only ballots to be used live on election
7 day?

8 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: That is correct.

9 MR. RYAN: Yes.

10 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Okay. So, if we're
11 going to assume that we're going to have some
12 number of absentee ballot applications, and some
13 number of early voters, I, I propose that we look
14 at 85 percent, the election day order. I'm making
15 that motion. Is there a second?

16 MR. RICHMAN: Commissioner Araujo, we
17 didn't hear you.

18 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: I guess not.

19 MR. SAVINO: I think, Commissioner
20 Araujo, did you try to speak?

21 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: I seconded it.

22 MR. RYAN: Oh, you had a second. It was
23 technical difficulties.

24 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Oh, I'm sorry. I

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2 didn't hear it.

3 MR. RYAN: Nobody did.

4 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: I thought I didn't
5 have a second. [laughter] Maybe you were on mute,
6 Commissioner Araujo. But thank you. So we have a
7 motion and second. Any other questions or
8 discussion?

9 SECRETARY UMANE: Yeah, I just think
10 it's too high. I don't think we're going to need
11 -- I think the actual number is probably going to
12 be between 50 and 60 percent and I thought my 75
13 percent had adequate cushion. I don't think
14 there's going to be a tremendous turnout. And we
15 don't even know yet if there is going to be a
16 Presidential Primary. There may be, there may not
17 be. If the Second Circuit follows appropriate
18 guidelines about leaving it up to the party
19 rules, then there won't be a Presidential Primary
20 and we're just spending money on the ballots and
21 then spending money to store them. I think 75
22 percent is plenty. I mean that's just my view.

23 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: It's welcome.

24 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: I agree.

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2 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: So, let me see if the
3 85 percent passes or fails.

4 MR. RYAN: I'll do a roll call,
5 Commissioner Taylor?

6 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: If you think that
7 that's necessary, yes.

8 MR. RYAN: Okay, let's do that.
9 Commissioner Taylor?

10 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Yes.

11 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Umane?

12 SECRETARY UMANE: No.

13 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Araujo?

14 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Yes.

15 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Camilo?

16 COMMISSIONER CAMILO: Yes.

17 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Marmorato?

18 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: No.

19 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Michel?

20 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: No.

21 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Shamoun?

22 Commissioner Shamoun, can you please unmute?

23 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: No.

24 MR. RYAN: And Commissioner Zaccone?

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2 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: No.

3 MR. RYAN: Okay. So it's by one, two,
4 three, four, five noes and three yeses, the
5 motion does not at 85 percent.

6 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Alright. Can we get a
7 motion please?

8 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: I make a motion
9 for 75, even though I think it should be lower,
10 but I'll compromise with 75.

11 SECRETARY UMANE: Second.

12 MR. RYAN: Okay. We'll, do a roll call -
13 - well, uh, are there --

14 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: [unintelligible]
15 [00:35:47] Mr. Ryan, just to make sure.

16 MR. RYAN: Pardon? I'll do the roll
17 call, it's fine. Commissioner Taylor?

18 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Yes.

19 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Umane?

20 SECRETARY UMANE: Yes.

21 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Araujo? Was that
22 a yes, Commissioner Araujo?

23 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Yes.

24 MR. RYAN: Okay. Commissioner Camilo?

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2 COMMISSIONER CAMILO: This is yes to 75
3 percent?

4 MR. RYAN: Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER CAMILO: Okay.

6 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Marmorato?

7 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: Yes.

8 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Michel?

9 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Yes.

10 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Shamoun?

11 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: Yes.

12 MR. RYAN: And Commissioner Zaccone?

13 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Yes.

14 MR. RYAN: Okay. By a vote of eight to
15 zero, the motion carries at 75 percent.

16 MR. RICHMAN: And ten percent for the
17 affidavits.

18 MR. RYAN: And ten percent for the
19 affidavits, which was kind of dovetailed into
20 that. But that's, uh, alright. Now, the other --
21 I just want to make a clarification. I guess in
22 the universe of these webcasts and live streams,
23 Twitter has become an element of the universe
24 that we have to deal with. I want to be clear

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2 about what I made a statement with respect to the
3 ballots. It will affect the scheduling and we're
4 working with our vendors. It will not affect
5 whether, whether folks get an absentee ballot in
6 the mail. I was simply responding to
7 Commissioner's Taylor question regarding when
8 those ballots will be mailed out. We don't have a
9 firm schedule and I don't want to make a
10 statement as if there's a firm --

11 MS. KONTAZMANIS: Mr. Ryan?

12 MR. RYAN: Yes?

13 MS. KONTAZMANIS: I actually have a
14 confirmed schedule for you, if you'd like.

15 MR. RYAN: Perfect. Go ahead Ms.
16 Kontazmanis. Let's dispel this myth right away.

17 MS. KONTAZMANIS: Great. So this Monday,
18 May 18th we'll begin dropping our absentee ballot
19 application mailing at the post office and we
20 will begin processing all of our applications and
21 begin mailing out ballots at the end of next
22 week, the beginning of the following week, May
23 25th, which would be Memorial Day week.

24 MR. RYAN: Perfect, Thank you very much.

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2 So that should end, that should end some of the
3 rank speculation with respect to this process,
4 but thank you. That is all that we have on the
5 executive side. The one thing I would like to say
6 and I just want to make the commissioners aware
7 that we are, we have had conference calls and
8 numerous discussions with respect to bringing
9 staff back, necessary staff that has to work on
10 the elections process and the commissioners
11 should confer with each of their chiefs and
12 deputies as each borough has different needs,
13 because they have different contests. There is
14 not a uniform process that's going to work neatly
15 across the five boroughs.

16 In other words, the five boroughs are
17 not going to be doing the exact same thing.
18 They're going to be meeting the needs of their
19 counties within the overarching social distancing
20 framework and making sure that all of the
21 employees are adequately provided for. And we
22 will be conferring as well, with the union to let
23 them know the details of the plans and address
24 any concerns that the, the union may have. But

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2 we've got the process down with the social
3 distancing, with the, with the PPE equipment that
4 needs to be made available for the workers in the
5 office and for their commutes to and from the
6 office and the boroughs have worked on individual
7 schedules to meet the elections processing and
8 the elections planning requirements that we have.
9 There will be different needs for the office work
10 versus the warehouse work, but suffice to say and
11 I'm pleased to announce that the chiefs and
12 deputies have worked diligently to meet the needs
13 of the agency, and more importantly, to meet the
14 safety of the employees so that we can have them
15 conduct their work, their necessary work in a
16 safe and secure environment. So I would encourage
17 the commissioners to have those conversations
18 with the, with the chiefs and deputies. And I
19 think that's all I have. Yeah, go ahead.

20 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: No, I have
21 something. I just, you know, under these trying
22 times, I would just like to say and I know we all
23 hear it sometimes, and I don't think we hear it
24 enough that the staff, execs and everybody, the

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2 work that's been piled on them and every day, the
3 courts decide something new that's added on us.
4 and I know a lot of people aren't sleeping.

5 But one of the things that I noticed and
6 my fellow commissioners noticed that we're all
7 getting along, trying to do the best we can and
8 we're supplied with all kinds of stuff, masks, I
9 have water next to me, everybody has different
10 things. And I mean with this streaming here, that
11 is like thrown together and it was a great thing
12 that was done, and I thought that Georgea just --
13 are you there Georgea? You know, Georea --

14 MR. RYAN: She's camera shy, but she's
15 there.

16 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: The camera, you're
17 camera shy, I just want to let you know, Georgea,
18 you know, a lot of people don't hear it, but, you
19 know, you say quiet on the set, we're getting
20 ready. So I just, on behalf of my fellow
21 commissioners and I, I wanted to make sure you
22 get the equipment that you can continue to do
23 this. So, we got you something. So first of all,
24 so you can have it live. [laughter] And now, the

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2 other thing is, is on site, got it, Georgea. And
3 wait, because the hearings I think, and a lot of
4 people think they went off well, I think you got
5 your first award. So on [applause] behalf of the
6 Board of Elections and the voters, thank you,
7 Georgea for everybody put in the time and effort
8 to do all this, but you know, we need a director
9 and you didn't have the equipment to do your job.
10 So we made sure you had yours. Thank you, again,
11 Georgia.

12 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Here, here,
13 commissioner, very well said.

14 MS. KONTAZMANIS: I want to begin by
15 thanking God and my family. [laughter]

16 MR. RYAN: Georgea, I thought you were
17 going to say they like me, they really like me.
18 Oh my goodness, that was very nice. I will now
19 forever be aware when Commissioner Michel shows
20 up with an orange bag. [laughter]

21 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: You should be
22 aware just when Commissioner Michel shows up.
23 [laughter]

24 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: I'm glad you're in

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2 Staten Island. [laughter]

3 MR. RYAN: Alright. So we are still live
4 streaming for those who --

5 [CROSSTALK]

6 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: I make a motion
7 that we enter the executive session for
8 litigation matters, I'd like an update on where
9 we stand.

10 MR. RYAN: Okay. Then we'll go upstairs
11 and then I'll come back down and sign us off,
12 okay. If you give us a couple minutes, alright,
13 thank you.

14 [OFF THE RECORD]

15 [ON THE RECORD]

16 MR. RYAN: There is nothing to report
17 from executive session and the next meeting of
18 the commissioners of elections will be May 19th
19 at 1:30.

20 (The meeting concluded at 2:45 p.m.)

21

22

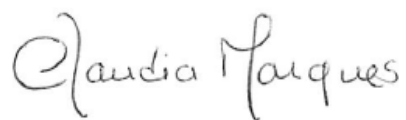
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CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Claudia Marques, certify that the foregoing transcript of the Board of Elections in The City of New York on May 12, 2020 was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By



Date: March 2, 2021

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