

BOARD OF ELECTIONS
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

42 Broadway - 6th floor
Commissioners' Hearing Room
New York, NY 10004
November 10, 2020
1:30 - 1:53 p.m.

November 10, 2020

PRESENT:

President Patricia Ann Taylor

Secretary Frederic Umane

Commissioner Jose Araujo

Commissioner Miguelina Camilo

Commissioner Michael Michel

Commissioner Gino Marmorato

Commissioner Simon Shamoun

Commissioner Tiffany Townsend

Commissioner John Wm. Zaccone

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director

Pamela Perkins, Administrative Manager

Georgea Kontzamanis, Operations Manager

Eleanor Guerrierri, Legal

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2 (The meeting commenced at 1:38 p.m.)

3 SECRETARY FREDERIC UMANE: I think, I
4 think the commissioners are here. So we can --

5 MR. MICHAEL J. RYAN: Yeah, we're now,
6 video is now live. Today is Tuesday, November
7 10th and it's the regular weekly meeting of the
8 commissioners of the Board of Elections in the
9 City of New York. I will start the meeting with
10 the commissioner roll call. President Taylor?

11 PRESIDENT PATRICIA ANNE TAYLOR: Good
12 afternoon, I am present.

13 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. Secretary
14 Umane?

15 SECRETARY UMANE: Here.

16 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Araujo?

17 COMMISSIONER JOSE ARAUJO: Here.

18 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Camilo?

19 COMMISSIONER MIGUELINA CAMILO: Here.

20 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Marmarato?

21 COMMISSIONER GINO MARMORATO: Present,
22 good afternoon.

23 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. Commissioner
24 Michel?

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2 COMMISSIONER MICHAEL MICHEL: Present.

3 MR. RYAN: Commissioner Pepe-Souvenir?

4 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: Good
5 afternoon, present.

6 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. Commissioner
7 Shamoun?

8 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: Present, thank
9 you.

10 MR. RYAN: You're welcome. Commissioner
11 Townsend?

12 COMMISSIONER TIFFANY TOWNSEND: Good
13 afternoon, present.

14 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. Commissioner
15 Zacccone?

16 COMMISSIONER JOHN WM. ZACCONE: Present,
17 good afternoon.

18 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. Okay. That
19 concludes the commissioner roll call. I am
20 Michael Ryan, I'm the Board's executive director.
21 Appearing elsewhere in the building are
22 administrative manager Pamela Perkins and
23 operations manager, Georgea Kontazmanis. As well,
24 I'm going to look at the screen, do I see counsel

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2 for the commissioners?

3 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Are they on
4 assignment today?

5 MS. KONTAZMANIS: No, sir. They're at
6 one of our borough offices today for the recount.

7 MR. RYAN: Okay. So, they will not be
8 appearing, alright, fine. That concludes the
9 totality of the roll call, because I believe that
10 representatives from the general counsel's office
11 are also performing a similar function.

12 So, today, commissioners, we would like
13 to give a portion of the report on the November
14 23rd election, and that would be limited then to
15 the absentee ballots. The staff is still in the
16 process of completing the other reports that we
17 typically share with the public after election
18 day and those should be ready for the meeting
19 next week. I will start then, with the absentee
20 ballots.

21 As of close -- so, before we get to
22 that, as the commissioners, are aware, but for
23 public consumption, the post election canvas
24 process commenced yesterday with the completion

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2 of the preparation work necessary, as well as the
3 public portion of it, observation portion of it
4 commenced today, and it is presently underway by
5 the boroughs. So as progress is made and we meet,
6 we will continue to report back up to and
7 including the completion of the post-election
8 canvass process which culminates with
9 certification of the election.

10 So, as of close of business yesterday,
11 we, the Board received 713,536 absentee ballots
12 returned over the over, just about shy of 1.1
13 million ballots mailed out, 96 percent of those
14 returned were deemed preliminarily valid and of
15 those, that four percent that was deemed
16 potentially invalid, 40 percent of those are
17 eligible for the cure process. And that process
18 is underway.

19 So, the cure process is not a specific
20 fixed moment in time. It is based on when the
21 board determines that a defect, or, that would
22 result in an invalid designation occurs, which
23 can continue to occur during the canvas process,
24 as these absentee ballots are reviewed, and or if

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2 an objection could be made by poll watchers at
3 the table.

4 So this is an ongoing, dynamic process
5 that will continue moving forward until such time
6 as all of the ballots have been reviewed and
7 completed and all of the determinations have been
8 made. So that process is underway, and ongoing.

9 If there are no questions with respect
10 to that, I'm prepared to move on to item 1B and
11 also to add 1C, which is a cover sheet review
12 committee request. So, do any of the
13 commissioners have anything that they would like
14 to add or have any questions with respect to the
15 absentee ballot report that was just given?

16 SECRETARY UMANE: Could you just give us
17 the number again?

18 MR. RYAN: Sure. Received back was
19 713,536.

20 SECRETARY UMANE: Thanks.

21 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: What was the
22 percentage that you said was eligible for cure?

23 MR. RYAN: Four. Single digit --

24 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Four?

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2 MR. RYAN: -- number four, yes.

3 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Oh, that's much
4 better than 40, which is what I was hearing.

5 MR. RYAN: No. What -- just so there's
6 no, just so there's no confusion, 40 percent of
7 the four percent are eligible for a cure.

8 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Oh.

9 MR. RYAN: So, it's only a four percent
10 universe of the overall total.

11 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Ah, because it's the
12 four percent that were deemed in fact
13 [unintelligible] [00:14:13]?

14 MR. RYAN: Correct.

15 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Okay.

16 MR. RYAN: So 96 percent were deemed
17 preliminarily valid.

18 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Got it.

19 MR. RYAN: So, it certainly does appear
20 that the familiarity of the voters with the
21 process, probably newfound familiarity after
22 June, has given some assistance, but also it does
23 appear, to early returns, that the voter
24 education program that we engaged in and the

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2 information that was provided to the voters as
3 well as working with the State Board of Elections
4 to rework the absentee ballot envelope, seems to
5 have, at least preliminarily, borne some
6 significant fruit in that we've seen a lower
7 percentage of invalids.

8 So, I know it was distributed earlier
9 today. And hopefully all of the commissioners
10 received it, but we do now have a special
11 election that will be occurring on February 2,
12 2021 for member of the City Council in the 24th
13 Council District. This vacancy was created by the
14 resignation of City Council Member Rory Lancman
15 to accept a position in state government and the
16 City Board of Elections has received a
17 proclamation from the mayor pursuant to the city
18 charter declaring that the special election occur
19 on February 2, 2021. The --

20 SECRETARY UMANE: Mr. Ryan?

21 MR. RYAN: Yes?

22 SECRETARY UMANE: You may not be
23 prepared today, but maybe next week or so, you
24 can provide an update as to where we stand vis-à-

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2 vis the rank choice voting procedures and
3 whatnot.

4 MR. RYAN: Yes.

5 SECRETARY UMANE: Which I believe will
6 apply in this new City Council race.

7 MR. RYAN: It certainly will, and I can
8 tell you that efforts have been underway for a
9 while, to ensure that we are ready. Now this
10 particular special election could not have been
11 specifically anticipated. However, given the way
12 things have been going lately, special elections
13 are occurring with more regularity perhaps than
14 they had in times past.

15 So I have no doubt that we will be ready
16 to do what is necessary to conduct this election.
17 But certainly, we will be prepared with a more
18 detailed report on that and I have no doubt that
19 we can have that and I have no doubt that we can
20 have that done for next week.

21 SECRETARY UMANE: Thank you.

22 MR. RYAN: Yes. So, the, what I'm
23 looking for approval here is the typical calendar
24 for the independent nominating petitions that was

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2 prepared by staff, and it sets forth all of the
3 different dates by which we have to perform our
4 tasks in order to be ready to have a ballot with
5 candidates on it for the February 2nd election.

6 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: This is
7 Commissioner Araujo. I would make that
8 application, however I do note that the date for
9 the hearings is left off. So that's something
10 that normally counsel will provide us with
11 alternatives. Do you have those dates?

12 MR. RYAN: We don't have them today,
13 however, we can get them together and provide
14 that to the commissioners as soon as is possible.

15 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: So I would move
16 that we adopt the recommendations for those, the
17 calendar presented to us, subject to also
18 ratifying these hearing dates and time.

19 MR. RYAN: Yes.

20 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Second, I second
21 that.

22 MR. RYAN: So we will provide the
23 hearing dates and circulate them as quickly as
24 possible and then if it's necessary, we can seek

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2 executive committee approval to include that in
3 the posting dates, but since this is an election
4 that's wholly contained within the county, that
5 would certainly be subject to consultation with
6 the county commissioners, even if the formal
7 approval comes from the executive committee. Is
8 that acceptable, Commissioner Araujo and
9 Commissioner Michel?

10 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: It is to me.

11 MR. RYAN: Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: I would just ask
13 that you post the calendar up with our website as
14 soon as the meeting is over.

15 MR. RYAN: Yes, that was our intention,
16 but thank you. Okay. So, so now, an e-mail was
17 circulated, I believe it was yesterday, with
18 respect to seeking a cover sheet review committee
19 for tomorrow and that would be related to the
20 special election scheduled for December 22nd, and
21 that's a contest in the Bronx. So I note that
22 both Commissioner Taylor and Commissioner
23 Marmorato have responded back with respect to
24 their availability. And I don't know if, if

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2 that's who the committee is going to be, and
3 that's obviously up to the commissioners. So --

4 SECRETARY UMANE: Yeah, I designated
5 Commissioner Marmorato, so --

6 MR. RYAN: Okay.

7 SECRETARY UMANE: -- he, he's our man.
8 He's our man.

9 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Yeah, I designated
10 myself.

11 MR. RYAN: Okay. Very good.

12 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: So I'm
13 [unintelligible] [00:20:32].

14 MR. RYAN: So that is, that is set, and
15 that gets us halfway home. The next question is
16 what time, keeping in mind that we have to give
17 24 hours notice, and we are at ten minute to
18 2:00. It'll be for tomorrow.

19 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Counsel was concerned
20 about it being somewhat late I think, because
21 he's going to be in Staten Island?

22 MR. RYAN: Yes. Well, either way, with
23 or without counsel's concern, it's going to be
24 somewhat late anyway now, given the hour that we

1 November 10, 2020

2 have, so --

3 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Right, so 3:30?

4 MR. RYAN: -- the question is 3:00
5 o'clock, or 3:30? 3:30?

6 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Commissioner
7 Marmorato, do you have a concern of the time?

8 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: I don't. I'm
9 fine with whatever works for you, Commissioner
10 Taylor.

11 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: Shall we say 3:30
12 then?

13 MR. RYAN: Certainly. And then if, you
14 know, if for some reason, it needs to move a
15 half-hour one way or the other, we'll have time
16 in the day to still accomplish that. Okay, so
17 3:30 p.m. tomorrow. Alright. And Ms. Guerrierri,
18 you're going to take care of posting that on the
19 website? Yes, thank you very much. I, that
20 concludes the agenda for today. I'm not certain,
21 I don't have, executive management doesn't have
22 anything for executive session, but I'm not
23 certain if the commissioners do.

24 PRESIDENT TAYLOR: I do not.

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MR. RYAN: If there are no matters for executive session, then I would ask the commissioners do two things, set a next meeting date, and also to, a motion to adjourn this meeting.

SECRETARY UMANE: I move to adjourn the meeting and have our next meeting at 1:30 on Tuesday, the 17th of November.

COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: I second.

SECRETARY UMANE: At 1:30, at our normal time.

COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: I second that motion.

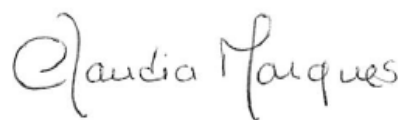
MR. RYAN: Are there any objections? Hearing none, the meeting is, the next meeting of the commissioners is set for November 17th, at 1:30 p.m. and this meeting is adjourned.

(The meeting concluded at 1:53 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Claudia Marques, certify that the foregoing transcript of the Board of Elections in The City of New York on November 10, 2020 was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By



Date: May 17, 2021

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