

BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

42 Broadway - 6th floor  
Commissioners' Hearing Room

New York, NY 10004

May 4, 2021

1:30 p.m. - 2:27 p.m.

May 4, 2021

**PRESENT:**

President Frederic Umane  
Secretary Miguelina Camilo  
Commissioner Jose Araujo  
Commissioner Gino Marmorato  
Commissioner Michael Michel  
Commissioner Simon Shamoun  
Commissioner Rodney L. Pepe-Souvenir  
Commissioner Patricia Ann Taylor  
Commissioner Tiffany Townsend  
Commissioner John Wm. Zaccone

Dawn Sandow, Deputy Executive Director  
Pamela Perkins, Administrative Manager  
Georgea Kontzamanis, Operations Manager  
Kenneth Moltner, Counsel to the Commissioners  
Steven Denkberg, Counsel to the Commissioners  
Hemalee Patel, General Counsel  
Raphael Savino, Deputy General Counsel

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2 (The meeting commenced at 1:33 p.m.)

3 MS. DAWN SANDOW: Good afternoon, today  
4 is Tuesday, May 4, 2021 and this is the  
5 commissioners' meeting of the Board of Elections  
6 in the city of New York. My name is Dawn Sandow  
7 and I am the deputy executive director of the  
8 Board of Elections. I will begin today's meeting  
9 with the commissioners' roll call. President  
10 Umane?

11 PRESIDENT FREDERIC UMANE: Here.

12 MS. SANDOW: Secretary Camilo?

13 SECRETARY MIGUELINA CAMILO: Here.

14 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Araujo?

15 COMMISSIONER JOSE ARAUJO: Present, good  
16 afternoon, everyone.

17 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Marmorato?  
18 Commissioner Marmorato?

19 PRESIDENT UMANE: He's here.

20 MS. SANDOW: He's here. I'll circle  
21 back. Commissioner Michel?

22 COMMISSIONER MICHAEL MICHEL: Present,  
23 good afternoon.

24 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Pepe-Souvenir?

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2 COMMISSIONER RODNEY L. PEPE-SOUVENIR:

3 Good afternoon, present.

4 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Shamoun?

5 COMMISSIONER SIMON SHAMOUN: Good  
6 afternoon, present, thank you.

7 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Taylor?

8 COMMISSIONER PATRICIA ANNE TAYLOR:  
9 Present, good afternoon.

10 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Townsend?

11 COMMISSIONER TIFFANY TOWNSEND: Present,  
12 good afternoon.

13 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Zaccone?

14 COMMISSIONER JOHN WM. ZACCONE: Good  
15 afternoon, everyone, present.

16 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Marmorato?

17 COMMISSIONER GINO MARMORATO: Present,  
18 my apologies, everyone, here.

19 MS. SANDOW: Also joining us today from  
20 executive management is Pamela Perkins,  
21 administrative manager, Georgea Kontzamanis,  
22 operations manager. Ken Moltner and Steven  
23 Denkberg, counsels to the commissioners have  
24 joined us, as well as general counsel Hemalee

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2 Patel and deputy general counsel Raphael Savino.  
3 Before we begin with today's agenda, we are going  
4 to add executive session for personnel.

5 Let us begin, item number one, early  
6 voting hours for the June primary. The proposed  
7 hours for early voting that have been circulated  
8 to all were discussed and agreed upon amongst the  
9 borough chiefs and deputies as well as the  
10 general office. The boroughs hours would increase  
11 the total amount of early voting time from the  
12 last election by a total of ten early voting  
13 hours for a total of 83 early voting hours over  
14 the course of nine days. Would you like me to go  
15 down the hours?

16 PRESIDENT UMANE: Just read it through  
17 for the public.

18 MS. SANDOW: Saturday, June 12, 2021  
19 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., total of nine hours,  
20 Sunday, June 13th, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,  
21 Monday, June 14th, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., a  
22 total of nine hours, Tuesday, June 15th, 10:00  
23 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., a total of ten hours,  
24 Wednesday, June 16th, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.,

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2 total of ten hours, Thursday, June 17th, 10:00  
3 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., a total of ten hours, Friday  
4 June 18th, 7:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m., a total of nine  
5 hours, Saturday, June 19th, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00  
6 p.m., a total of nine hours, Sunday, June 20th,  
7 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., a total of eight hours,  
8 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., total of nine hours,  
9 which brings us to a total of 83 hours over nine  
10 days.

11 The staff will update the hours on all  
12 public materials including our website. Borough  
13 commissioners, if approved, the primary early  
14 voting sites no later than this Friday, as  
15 mandated by law. We will then update poll site  
16 locater as well.

17 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: This is  
18 Commissioner Michel. Dawn, right, but then there  
19 our employees probably at work earlier than that  
20 so it's really 83 plus about 20 hours I would  
21 say, about two hours before, an hour before, an  
22 hour and a half, or something like that. So it's  
23 100, it's over 100 hours in nine days. Am I  
24 correct?

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2 MS. SANDOW: Yes. But this is the public  
3 hours. So yes, our staff does show up an hour and  
4 a half to two hours before opening. These are the  
5 hours that we are open to the public.

6 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Right, right. But  
7 overall, overall, our employees are approximately  
8 12 hours a day they'll be working for nine days  
9 in a row.

10 MS. SANDOW: Yes.

11 SECRETARY CAMILO: So to Commissioner  
12 Michel's point, the amount of hours that our  
13 employees will be dedicating was considered,  
14 along with our chiefs and deputies of our borough  
15 staff and with executive management. With that  
16 said, I would move to approve the hours as  
17 stated.

18 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: Commissioner  
19 Shamoun, I would just like a brief discussion.

20 PRESIDENT UMANE: Simon, go ahead  
21 please. Go ahead.

22 COMMISSIONER SHAMOUN: I think we should  
23 be, it's great that we're expanding the hours,  
24 and this is ten more hours total than it was for

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2 the last election and we, I think all indications  
3 are that the turnout is not obviously going to be  
4 as large as it was last time, but we're still  
5 adding more hours. I think we should continue the  
6 conversation for future election events and see  
7 how we can continue to expand the hours even  
8 further. I'm generally okay with these hours.

9 My only point and it's not a major  
10 point, but a 10:00 a.m. start time on the three  
11 days seems, you know, maybe a little late,  
12 considering that sometimes people like to go  
13 early, and then sometimes the lines accumulate.  
14 So I would generally be in favor of like an 8:00  
15 or a 9:00 a.m. start time, but obviously, I'm not  
16 going to not approve the hours as they are if  
17 there isn't support there for that. But that  
18 would really be my only point.

19 And then maybe in the future, we can  
20 move to more standardized hours across election  
21 events, so that we have minimum open times,  
22 minimum close times, assuming the legislature  
23 doesn't say that, but I think we should be  
24 applauded for increasing the hours. And that's my



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2 point.

3 COMMISSIONER TOWNSEND: I'd like to just  
4 echo Commissioner Shamoun's sentiments. I do  
5 think it's important to note we're expanding  
6 access for voters by an additional ten hours and  
7 I would like us to continue that conversation  
8 around standardizing the hours and continuing to  
9 add more. And I recognize also that that will be  
10 an additional burden that we're placing on staff.  
11 So, I guess my comment is twofold, not losing  
12 sight of that but asking executive management and  
13 our chiefs and deputies to continue thinking  
14 about how in upcoming election cycles we can  
15 balance voter access, but making sure that our  
16 staff has the resources that they need.

17 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: If I may add to  
18 the sentiments addressed. I am happy to consider  
19 additional hours. I do want to point out that we  
20 are limited to the amount we can pay our poll  
21 workers by the New York State legislator and/or  
22 the mayor. If the mayor would consider increasing  
23 the salary, the daily wage that we could pay our  
24 poll workers since we're asking them to put in

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2 more hours, it would be greatly appreciated. I  
3 know he's putting 15 or so million dollars into  
4 public education, but it would be helpful if he  
5 could add funds and authorization to us to pay  
6 our workers a reasonable wage for the amount of  
7 time they're putting in on behalf of the board,  
8 so that we can give more time for the voters to  
9 appear and to take advantage of their franchise.

10 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. So --

11 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: I would like to  
12 follow up on Commissioner Zaccone's statement  
13 about our workers. If you, I'm a bit concerned  
14 about persons working from Thursday at 8:00 p.m.  
15 and back at work on Friday at 7:00 a.m. That's  
16 asking a lot. And I'm looking at the schedule  
17 that we had for the last time. We did close the  
18 Thursday hours at 6:00 p.m. because people were  
19 coming back at 7:00 a.m. And I realize that it is  
20 important to have hours that are all standard,  
21 but 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday and back  
22 at work at 7:00 a.m. on Friday is asking a bit  
23 much of our employees and our poll workers. And I  
24 just wondered whether anyone else might consider

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2 whether we should consider that Thursday date to  
3 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
4 or something. In other words, I know we need to  
5 have a certain number of days in which we go to  
6 8:00 p.m., but I hesitate to ask people to work  
7 until 8:00 p.m. on Thursday and be at work again  
8 at 7:00 a.m. on Friday.

9 SECRETARY CAMILO: Commissioner Taylor,  
10 that --

11 MS. SANDOW: You're mandated to have two  
12 early days during the week as well,  
13 commissioners.

14 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: We do. We have  
15 Friday and we have Monday. That's not the  
16 problem. I know that we have to have also some  
17 late days. But are we required to have three late  
18 days?

19 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: But you  
20 have to understand it's not going to be the same  
21 people because they do rotate. They're in shifts.  
22 So the person who might have worked late the day  
23 before is not the same person who is coming in  
24 early the next day.

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2 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: That's not  
3 necessarily the case. There are some that do  
4 work.

5 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: Yes. I'm  
6 not saying it's not. But I'm just saying it's not  
7 like a whole slew of people who are working until  
8 8:00 o'clock coming in again the next day at  
9 7:00.

10 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: It is that way in  
11 Staten Island.

12 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: Because  
13 we're so much bigger and we have a bigger lot of  
14 poll workers, it's a little bit different. They  
15 do do shifts.

16 SECRETARY CAMILO: If I may,  
17 commissioners, again, once I put my motion to  
18 approve the hours, I stated, and I know we all  
19 are aware of this, that all our borough chiefs  
20 and deputies across the five boroughs, got  
21 together with executive management, looked at  
22 these hours, considered the needs to the staff,  
23 the availability of the workers and put these  
24 hours together. And while we certainly want to

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2 explore increasing the hours, no one is talking  
3 about decreasing or changing, right now, we have  
4 three different frames of times that we're  
5 beginning and starting.

6 So I would still move to approve the  
7 hours as is, considering that our chiefs and  
8 deputies had a firsthand look to put these  
9 together and found consensus in these hours.

10 COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: I agree with  
11 Commissioner Camilo and I second her motion.

12 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. Is there any  
13 further discussion? Hearing none, we'll call for  
14 a vote. All in favor of adopting the list as  
15 proposed, signify by saying aye.

16 MULTIPLE: Aye.

17 PRESIDENT UMANE: All opposed? All  
18 abstentions?

19 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: I'm  
20 abstaining.

21 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. I'm sorry, who's  
22 abstaining?

23 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR:  
24 Commissioner Pepe-Souvenir.

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2 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. Okay. So there's  
3 one abstention and I guess everybody else was in  
4 favor. Okay. What's next on the agenda?

5 MS. SANDOW: Yes, I'm going to pass the  
6 item number two on to legal.

7 MR. RAPHAEL SAVINO: Good afternoon,  
8 commissioners. As we've seen before, we have  
9 another request for a name change as to the way  
10 it appears on the ballot compared to the  
11 registration. It is by Devi Nampiaparampil, New  
12 York public advocate candidate, Republican. I  
13 have been told that there is no opposition so  
14 there wouldn't be a primary. That's what I was  
15 told by CRU.

16 PRESIDENT UMANE: So --

17 MR. SAVINO: And they're asking --

18 PRESIDENT UMANE: -- my question, which  
19 I asked, is the name going to be too big to fit  
20 in the box, because she wants to add Elizabeth,  
21 so it's Devi Elizabeth and that last name I'm not  
22 going to try and pronounce.

23 MR. SAVINO: You're correct. It would  
24 definitely be over the 15 characters.

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2 PRESIDENT UMANE: I thought 15  
3 characters was for party. I didn't know it was  
4 for candidate name as well. I think her last name  
5 itself is more than 15 characters.

6 MR. SAVINO: It is for the name of the  
7 candidate as well. In the past, I'd have to talk  
8 to the ballot manager in CRU, but I know there's  
9 some way that they shorten names or adjust it  
10 down in some way. But yeah, adding Elizabeth  
11 would only make it that much harder.

12 PRESIDENT UMANE: There certainly is no  
13 confusion as to who the candidate is, and she's  
14 looking to add a middle name. So I don't think  
15 that anybody would object to that. It's just the  
16 practicality of it. So if you could check on  
17 that. I would move that we permit it subject to  
18 the space limitations of her name.

19 MR. SAVINO: Alright. And just to make  
20 it clear, again, this would be for the general  
21 election. There's no primary for this race.

22 PRESIDENT UMANE: No, I understand. But  
23 she's asked, so we need to --

24 MR. SAVINO: Right, understood.

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2 PRESIDENT UMANE: -- it would be nice to  
3 respond to the request, which is a reasonable one  
4 under the circumstances. It's just that we may  
5 have to go back to her and say instead of  
6 increasing your name, you really need to shorten  
7 it.

8 MR. SAVINO: Right.

9 PRESIDENT UMANE: And we should find  
10 that out and then sort of do it. So maybe we can  
11 table this until next week and we can just  
12 determine how many, sort of the letters, you  
13 know, what she wants there on the ballot, because  
14 her last name may exceed on its own, the total if  
15 it's just 15. I thought it was more than that.  
16 And there may be an option of reducing the size  
17 of her name. So maybe you could ask the ballot  
18 committee to look at that, to see how we could  
19 best accommodate the request.

20 MS. SANDOW: Okay.

21 MR. SAVINO: Yeah, the last name is 14  
22 characters, so you're right, commissioners.

23 MS. SANDOW: Okay. Before we --

24 PRESIDENT UMANE: After ten, I have



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2 trouble, after ten.

3 MS. SANDOW: Before we go into executive  
4 session, I would like to provide two quick  
5 updates to the full board. Ranked-choice voting  
6 in terms of software approval, the state board is  
7 still in the process of working with their  
8 testing partners to finalize the testing reports  
9 for review. Concurrently, our operational team is  
10 working with the state board team to update our  
11 procedures to incorporate the use of the  
12 software. We are going at a good pace and see no  
13 issues thus far with the state board taking  
14 action at their May meeting, which has been set  
15 for May 25th.

16 Absentee ballots, staff visited our  
17 absentee print vendor, Ft. Orange, last  
18 Wednesday, April 28th and toured their Albany  
19 printing facility. Ft. Orange showed our staff  
20 additional automated and manual checks, along  
21 with those already in place to ensure ballots,  
22 outgoing envelopes, return envelopes and OATH  
23 envelopes are all being matched properly in their  
24 secure offsite location. Most notably, additional

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2 cameras on the insertion equipment have been  
3 added, as have large screens that display  
4 progress and alert employees of any issues that  
5 require immediate attention. They have also added  
6 redundant machines to increase production,  
7 alleviate any concerns with large scale machine  
8 breakdowns and have been working with our staff  
9 to continue improving workflow and reporting  
10 capabilities. The staff is confident that Ft.  
11 Orange is up to the task of providing absentee  
12 ballots to all voters who request one for this  
13 election.

14 This Friday, May 7th, is the deadline to  
15 mail all military and UOCAVA ballots. We will  
16 meet this deadline. I'm happy to report that we  
17 will be mailing all ballot requests received in  
18 our system to date this Friday, specifically.  
19 10,086 citywide military and UOCAVA ballots,  
20 43,671 citywide permanent absentee voters, 19,858  
21 citywide temporary applications. This is a total  
22 of 73,615 absentee ballots being mailed this  
23 Friday, May 7th. The tracking portal will then be  
24 live this weekend as well and we'll have updates

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2 to share next Tuesday on the tracking portal. Now  
3 commissioners, this concludes today's agenda. Go  
4 into executive session for personnel?

5 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. I would move  
6 that we adjourn the meeting subject to coming  
7 back next Tuesday, May 11th at 1:30 on our  
8 regularly scheduled meeting and that we go into  
9 executive session for personnel --

10 MS. SANDOW: Personnel.

11 PRESIDENT UMANE: -- and potentially  
12 litigation.

13 SECRETARY CAMILO: Second.

14 PRESIDENT UMANE: All in favor?

15 MULTIPLE: Aye.

16 PRESIDENT UMANE: All opposed? All  
17 abstentions. Okay, thank you all, see you next  
18 week.

19 [EXECUTIVE SESSION]

20 MS. SANDOW: This concludes our meeting  
21 for today. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May  
22 11, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. Thank you.

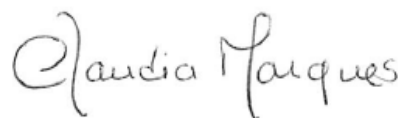
23 (The meeting concluded at 2:27 p.m.)

24

CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Claudia Marques, certify that the foregoing transcript of the Board of Elections in The City of New York on May 4, 2021 was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By



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Date: November 30, 2021

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