

BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

42 Broadway - 6th floor  
Commissioners' Hearing Room

New York, NY 10004

May 25, 2021

1:30 p.m. - 2:26 p.m.

May 25, 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  
Sherwin Suss, Chief Contracting Officer  
Valeria Diaz, Communications Director

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2 (The meeting commenced at 1:34 p.m.)

3 MS. DAWN SANDOW: Good afternoon, today  
4 is Tuesday, May 25, 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: Here.

16 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Marmorato?

17 COMMISSIONER GINO MARMORATO: Present,  
18 good afternoon.

19 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Michel?

20 COMMISSIONER MICHAEL MICHEL: Good  
21 afternoon, present.

22 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Pepe-Souvenir?

23 COMMISSIONER RODNEY L. PEPE-SOUVENIR:  
24 Good afternoon, present.

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2 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Shamoun?

3 COMMISSIONER SIMON SHAMOUN: Present,  
4 thank you.

5 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Taylor?

6 COMMISSIONER PATRICIA ANNE TAYLOR:  
7 Present, good afternoon.

8 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Townsend?

9 COMMISSIONER TIFFANY TOWNSEND: Present,  
10 good afternoon, everyone.

11 MS. SANDOW: Commissioner Zaccone?

12 COMMISSIONER JOHN WM. ZACCONE: Good  
13 afternoon, everyone, present.

14 MS. SANDOW: Also joining us today from  
15 executive management is Pamela Green Perkins,  
16 administrative manager, Georgea Kontzamanis,  
17 operations manager. Ken Moltner and Steven  
18 Denkberg, counsels to the commissioners joins us,  
19 as well as general counsel Hemalee Patel and  
20 deputy general counsel Raphael Savino. Before we  
21 begin with today's agenda, commissioners, we have  
22 two volunteers for cover sheet review committee  
23 immediately following executive session and they  
24 are Commissioner Jose Araujo --

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2 PRESIDENT UMANE: And me.

3 MS. SANDOW: -- and Commissioner Fredric  
4 Umane. So I just want to put that on the record.  
5 Before we begin the agenda, I would like to  
6 introduce Sherwin Suss. He will present finance  
7 items for full board ratification.

8 MR. SHERWIN SUSS: Good afternoon,  
9 commissioners.

10 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Good afternoon.

11 MR. SUSS: There was a meeting of the  
12 finance committee yesterday and three items were  
13 presented to the committee. The first item was  
14 Environmental Systems Research Institution, you  
15 may know them as ESRI, as we refer to them here  
16 in the board. This is a contract for licenses and  
17 software that is used for the creation of maps,  
18 which is especially important with the  
19 reapportionment coming up. And also licenses for  
20 electronic surveys that are used in our poll pads  
21 for the ABA checklist on the tablets.

22 This was procured through a New York  
23 State Office of General Services, OGS contract.  
24 This service has previously been provided to this

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2 board by this company. This is a two-year  
3 contract for a total not to exceed \$384,734.  
4 Okay. Any questions on that matter?

5 The second matter is for Coranet  
6 Corporation. This is a contract for maintenance  
7 of the hardware and software of the agency's  
8 phone system. This is procured through the  
9 Minority Women Business Enterprise Program.  
10 Requests from companies who are prequalified by  
11 the MIS department because we need to find  
12 vendors that can provide service to our 3Com  
13 phone system which is an older system, as you all  
14 know. And they had to be certified technicians in  
15 order to perform work on our system. We have a  
16 one year contract and we selected the lowest  
17 price vendor. It's not to exceed \$144,670. The  
18 board and the MIS department is actively working  
19 with DoITT on getting a new phone system in here,  
20 and working, getting a vendor through the DoITT  
21 MSA master service agreement contracts.

22 The last item is actually a DCAS  
23 contract for printed election supplies. DCAS  
24 actually handles three contracts for the board.

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2 They do the ballot. They do also the supply  
3 contract and this printed election supply  
4 contract. So they do the entire solicitation.  
5 They advised us that they had one bid response  
6 from Vanguard Direct who currently was holder of  
7 the same contract. And this contract provides the  
8 printing of the poll signage, the poll worker  
9 manuals, the annual report, and things that are  
10 used in our election day supply bags and our poll  
11 sites. This is a four year contract with a one  
12 year renewal. The not to exceed price of this  
13 contract is \$4,139,904. As this is DCAS  
14 requirements contract, this is more of a request  
15 of a ratification from the commissioners to  
16 proceed, you know, and they'll certify the  
17 contract and use the services.

18 PRESIDENT UMANE: At our committee  
19 meeting, the contracts were reviewed and  
20 discussed at length. And the committee on a  
21 unanimous basis recommends all three to the full  
22 board for approval and ratification as  
23 appropriate. And because this is a committee  
24 report, there's no need for a motion and a

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2 second. If anybody has any questions or comments,  
3 please comment now.

4 SECRETARY CAMILO: I just want to  
5 confirm, it's two matters? Two matters that --

6 PRESIDENT UMANE: Three.

7 SECRETARY CAMILO: Is it three?

8 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: Three.

9 SECRETARY CAMILO: Okay, three, sorry --

10 MR. SUSS: Three.

11 SECRETARY CAMILO: -- about that.

12 PRESIDENT UMANE: Two for approval and  
13 one for ratification. The Environmental Systems  
14 Research Institution, The Coranet Corp. which is  
15 the phones, and the printed elections supply  
16 contract, which is Vanguard. Vanguard also does  
17 the supply for each of these on election day and  
18 they do a lot of work with this agency. Anybody  
19 have any questions or comments or concerns? If  
20 not, I would move the approval / ratification of  
21 three agreements. All in favor?

22 MULTIPLE: Aye.

23 PRESIDENT UMANE: All opposed? All  
24 abstentions? So it's carried. Thank you, Mr.



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2 Suss.

3 MR. SUSS: Thank you, commissioners.

4 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay.

5 MS. SANDOW: Let us begin with today's  
6 agenda. Item one on the agenda is update for the  
7 June primary, absentee ballots. We are continuing  
8 to process and send out absentee ballots. To  
9 date, 126546 absentee ballots have been sent out,  
10 which includes the vendor uploads to NYS Ballot  
11 System and any in-person absentee issued by the  
12 borough offices. We continue our refresher  
13 training classes for poll workers reinforcing  
14 what is new with ranked-choice voting and the  
15 two-page ballot. As an update, we have trained  
16 over 39 percent of our early voting and election  
17 day workforce and remain on track to have all  
18 poll workers receive a refresher class online or  
19 in person before the June primary.

20 Testing of ballots is underway across  
21 all boroughs citywide. As you all know, the  
22 Appellate Division Second Department ruled on a  
23 Queens County case to put 18 candidates back on  
24 the ballot and last Tuesday, the Board of Appeals

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2 refused to hear our appeal. The staff have been  
3 working tirelessly to rebuild ballots as one of  
4 the candidates was a borough wide candidate. The  
5 vendor has reprinted and is delivering test  
6 ballots.

7 Queens borough is substantially behind  
8 the testing schedule. We are in daily  
9 communication with the relevant units and borough  
10 staff to monitor daily progress and ensure we  
11 meet our delivery deadlines. We will be  
12 regrouping with the borough managers to tomorrow  
13 as there may be a need to remain open on Memorial  
14 Day.

15 A few reminders, today is the last day  
16 to file independent nominating petitions for the  
17 November general election. The general office is  
18 open until midnight to accept petitions. The last  
19 day to register to vote for the June primary  
20 election is this Friday, May 28th. Registration  
21 forms may be hand delivered or postmarked by  
22 Friday, the 28th to be eligible to vote in the  
23 June primary. The general office will remain open  
24 until midnight on the 28th and the borough

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2 offices will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

3 In regards to ranked-choice voting, the  
4 State Board of Elections met today and we are  
5 pleased to announce that the commissioners  
6 unanimously voted to approve the ranked-choice  
7 voting tabulation software.

8 Now that the tabulation software is  
9 approved, our team will finalize our draft  
10 procedures, which we have been working on for the  
11 last few weeks with the state board operations  
12 team to ensure that the security concerns  
13 mentioned by the state board are addressed. We  
14 will present the procedures for your approval at  
15 the next meeting. Item number two I'm going to  
16 turn over to Commissioner Umame.

17 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay.

18 MS. SANDOW: Post election information.

19 PRESIDENT UMANE: Yeah. In part, this is  
20 a little tricky subject because this is ranked-  
21 choice voting. It's new as everybody knows. And  
22 in order to sort of process and tabulate the  
23 election, we are operating either a new system  
24 with a new program that was just approved a few

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2 minutes ago.

3 In order to do this process in the best  
4 way, we need to balance the public's right to  
5 know who won the election and the individual  
6 voters' rights to cast absentee and affidavit  
7 ballots that will be counted in an anonymous  
8 manner. We are subject to a few systemic issues  
9 in terms of reporting the votes and what I would  
10 propose commissioners is that on election night  
11 that we provide as best we can, as quickly as we  
12 can, the initial first place votes for all of the  
13 candidates.

14 Due to some system and systemic issues,  
15 we are not going to be able to run a ranked-  
16 choice voting tabulation until about a week after  
17 the election because we need to get all of the  
18 scanners back to the borough offices and upload  
19 the information from the scanners. It is not  
20 possible we were advised to run the ranked-choice  
21 voting program based upon the initial runs done  
22 by that tablet.

23 And we're also going to try and start  
24 the processing of affidavit ballots and absentee

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2 ballots a little earlier this year, but the  
3 soonest we are able to do that is likely to be  
4 Monday, the 28th of June because we need to get  
5 all the information in from the tablets to make  
6 sure that no one will be voting twice. And it  
7 takes us a certain amount of time to upload that  
8 information and then we can start processing  
9 those absentee and affidavit ballots on or about  
10 the June 28th day, and we would not probably be  
11 able to run the ranked-choice voting program  
12 until maybe that Tuesday or in and around that  
13 period of time.

14 So in the event that the race is close  
15 and nobody gets 50 percent plus one vote in the  
16 initial run, we're not going to be as an agency  
17 able to provide the ranked-choice voting program  
18 with at least the early voting and election night  
19 results until the first week after the election.  
20 Probably, hopefully, that Tuesday, depending on  
21 how things go, but that would be the earliest.  
22 And I would propose that we update that on a  
23 weekly basis based on the returns that we're  
24 getting from the absentee and affidavit voters.

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2 And for those of you who don't know,  
3 under the new and current laws, people who vote  
4 absentee and they make an error on the ballot the  
5 board will review it and in certain instances,  
6 resend the ballot to the voter to be revoted, so  
7 that their vote can count. And that's a process  
8 that will delay the ultimate certification. And I  
9 would propose that periodically after the initial  
10 RCV run, that we periodically, if not perhaps  
11 weekly, but periodically update the public on a  
12 set time and date with that information so that  
13 people can see where the votes are going.

14 It's important that we maintain the  
15 anonymity of the vote and to make sure that  
16 people who have voted absentee know and  
17 understand that their vote is important and will  
18 be counted and will be counted in the final and  
19 be considered in the final tabulations. And that  
20 after we're able to certify, which may be several  
21 weeks after the election, it is our intention to  
22 provide the voter information, information from  
23 the actual machines to the public on a request  
24 basis, either FOIL or we'll work that out. But

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2 after all the votes are tabulated and the vote is  
3 certified, it is our intention to make that  
4 information available to the public.

5 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Commissioner  
6 Umane --

7 PRESIDENT UMANE: And I would propose as  
8 our proposal. Yes, Commissioner Zaccone?

9 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: If I could ask, I  
10 just wanted to clarify, when you say the voting  
11 information you get, talking about the cast vote  
12 record?

13 PRESIDENT UMANE: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: Okay. I just  
15 wanted to use the term, understand --

16 PRESIDENT UMANE: Sure, I'm sorry.

17 MS. SANDOW: I would just like to  
18 clarify that our operations manager and her team,  
19 now that everything is approved, is in the  
20 process of putting together a schedule which will  
21 be announced so that we can be a little bit more  
22 specific next week on what we're going to be  
23 releasing and when. This, everything is approved  
24 with the software, there are no issues. It's

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2 operationally the results on election night are  
3 done by the first stick and those are the  
4 unofficial election results. We then have to wait  
5 for all scanners to be returned to take the  
6 second PMD to upload into our ERM system. And  
7 that's when we will proceed with the first round.  
8 Thereafter, we will then, as the absentees are  
9 coming in, we will be updating. But we will have  
10 more specific dates next week, so that our  
11 operations team can put that in place and there  
12 will be a little bit more information and more  
13 specific dates given to the public.

14 SECRETARY CAMILO: And I just want to  
15 reiterate, I want to jump in, thank you,  
16 Commissioner Umane, for outlining the thought  
17 process because what we commissioners are doing  
18 is considering the operations of holding this  
19 election. That's what we need to do, to work with  
20 our staff, our boroughs and understanding the  
21 balance and importance of letting the public know  
22 the status as quickly as possible of the election  
23 results but making sure that we protect each  
24 individual voter.



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2 So to be clear, election night, we  
3 report as always unofficial results of early  
4 voting and election day. That is what we will  
5 always do and we will do this primary.  
6 Thereafter, knowing that we have to now embark on  
7 ranked-choice voting, we want to come back with  
8 more specific information as to how operationally  
9 that's going to operate, for the public's sake.  
10 And we will outline that on our website with all  
11 detail. And thereafter, once we certify this  
12 election, which we will, as quickly as possible,  
13 then we will give, upon request, the voter data,  
14 the cast vote records will be provided after  
15 certification.

16 That is the thought process of our  
17 office to best meet the needs of the public and  
18 to ensure that our staff can actually meet those  
19 needs. So the commissioners have given a lot of  
20 thought to this. I know personally, I have spoken  
21 individually to a lot of you, making sure that we  
22 all feel comfortable that this is an ongoing  
23 process that we have to detail. So that is what  
24 we are proposing today for our public meeting.

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2 Hopefully, I have a consensus from all of you and  
3 that we can agree with Commissioner Umane that  
4 that's how we are going to proceed. If there's  
5 any questions or discussions?

6 PRESIDENT UMANE: No, when it's  
7 important is we need to manage expectations, that  
8 we're not going to be able to do the ranked-  
9 choice voting analysis until sometime after  
10 [unintelligible] [00:23:18] and that's not going  
11 to be available on election night.

12 SECRETARY CAMILO: Absolutely. But on  
13 election night, we will get the unofficial  
14 results and that will be reported to the public  
15 once we collect from our sites, the information  
16 from early voting and election day. And then we  
17 will report regularly as to the ranked-choice  
18 voting process. But we will give more detail on  
19 that next week.

20 MS. SANDOW: On Tuesday, yes.

21 SECRETARY CAMILO: Okay.

22 MS. SANDOW: Next Tuesday, we will have  
23 more of a detail schedule for everyone.

24 COMMISSIONER ZACCONE: This is

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2 Commissioner Zaccone. I just want to thank the  
3 committee [unintelligible] [00:24:03] and moving  
4 the process forward as best we can under these  
5 special circumstances. I agree with the thought  
6 process and urge the board to [unintelligible]  
7 [00:24:19] and when we have the final date next  
8 week, we can formally adopt it. Thank you both.

9 SECRETARY CAMILO: Thank you,  
10 commissioner. Any other discussion? Okay. Is that  
11 the last item?

12 MS. SANDOW: That is the last item.

13 PRESIDENT UMANE: I move that we go into  
14 executive session for personnel and possibly  
15 litigation.

16 SECRETARY CAMILO: I would second.

17 MR. SAVINO: Ms. Sandow, or Commissioner  
18 Umane?

19 PRESIDENT UMANE: All in favor?

20 MULTIPLE: Aye.

21 PRESIDENT UMANE: All opposed? All  
22 abstentions? Our next meeting will be next  
23 Tuesday, I guess it's June 1st.

24 MS. SANDOW: The next meeting is June

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2 1st. I'm going to hand, could we just hold off  
3 one minute? Legal is requesting volunteers,  
4 commissioners.

5 SECRETARY CAMILO: Apologies,  
6 commissioners. We have other days that we need  
7 for the cover sheet review committee. Mr. Savino,  
8 can you tell us those days?

9 MR. SAVINO: Certainly, we're requesting  
10 a team for May 27th, that's Thursday, at 3:00  
11 p.m. and also Friday May 28th at 3:00 p.m. It if  
12 it turns that a meeting is not necessary, we will  
13 notify the commissioners and the public.

14 SECRETARY CAMILO: Well, Thursday, the  
15 27th, is anyone available?

16 COMMISSIONER PEPE-SOUVENIR: I'm not  
17 available on either day, I'm traveling.

18 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: I'll handle --  
19 Commissioner Marmorato, I'll handle for the  
20 Republicans on Thursday, May 27th.

21 COMMISSIONER TOWNSEND: I believe I can  
22 do Thursday the 27th as well.

23 SECRETARY CAMILO: Thank you,  
24 Commissioner Townsend. Okay. So we have

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2 Commissioner Marmorato and Commissioner Townsend  
3 for the 27th. For the 28th, Friday at 3:00 p.m.,  
4 is anyone available?

5 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Commissioner  
6 Michel will be available.

7 PRESIDENT UMANE: Thanks, Mike.

8 SECRETARY CAMILO: I can make myself  
9 available -- anyone else? Any Dem available at  
10 3:00 p.m.? No? Okay. I'll make myself available.

11 COMMISSIONER MICHEL: Oh, I can do both.  
12 I can be a Dem and a -- only joshing, only  
13 kidding.

14 MS. SANDOW: Anything more? That's it?

15 PRESIDENT UMANE: Okay. So I guess  
16 that's done.

17 MS. SANDOW: We'll move into executive  
18 session.

19 COMMISSIONER MARMORATO: I wish  
20 everybody a great weekend, Memorial Day coming  
21 up.

22 SECRETARY CAMILO: Yes, thank you.

23 MS. SANDOW: Thank you.

24 [EXECUTIVE SESSION]

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2 MS. SANDOW: Good afternoon, I'd like to  
3 close out today's meeting. Nothing to report from  
4 exec session. Our next meeting will be next  
5 Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 1:30. Thank you, and  
6 have a good day.

7 [COVER SHEET COMMITTEE REVIEW]

8 MR. SAVINO: Hello, commissioners, thank  
9 you for volunteering for today's cover sheet  
10 committee review, May 25, 2021. We have  
11 Commissioner Araujo and Commissioner Umane. There  
12 is one matter to present. It was a cure, an  
13 attempted cure, or depending on what your ruling  
14 is, the first cover sheet just listed 26 volumes  
15 and did not list the petition numbers. And the  
16 amended does not say amended on top, which is in  
17 our rule book. There was also the issue that the  
18 sample form has designating and independent  
19 petitions on it, but that is the sample form that  
20 is in our rules and provided by the state. And  
21 that was mentioned by the team, but really their  
22 purpose was to see if the cover sheet was  
23 corrected.

24 PRESIDENT UMANE: So I would think that

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we should rule it as a valid -- a valid cure.

COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: I'll second that.

MR. SAVINO: Alright, thank you,  
commissioners.

MS. SANDOW: Okay, thank you,  
commissioners.

MR. SAVINO: That concludes everything  
for today's cover sheet committee. With your  
permission, I will initial the defect sheet --  
well, actually, I'll, I'm sorry, I'll stamp the  
cure and write your initial next, along with  
mine.

COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Yeah.

PRESIDENT UMANE: Thank you. Have a  
great weekend all.

MS. SANDOW: Thank you, commissioners.  
Alright. Thank you, you too.

PRESIDENT UMANE: We will.

COMMISSIONER ARAUJO: Bye, Fred.

(The meeting concluded at 2:26 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 May 25, 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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