

MEETING OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF ELECTIONS
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014
AT 1:30 P.M.
42 BROADWAY, 6th FLOOR, COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM
NEW YORK, NY 10004

PRESENT: President Gregory C. Soumas
 Secretary Michael Michel

Commissioners Jose Miguel Araujo, Ronald Castorina, Maria R. Guastella,
Michael Rendino, Simon Shamoun, Frederic M. Umane

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director
Dawn Sandow, Deputy Executive Director
Pamela Perkins, Administrative Manager
Steven H. Richman, General Counsel
Raphael Savino, Deputy General Counsel
John Ward, Finance Officer
Dorothy Delayo, Director, Personnel
Valerie Vazquez, Director, Communications & Public Affairs
Kenneth Moltner, Counsel to the Commissioners
Steven B. Denkberg, Counsel to the Commissioners

GUEST: Kate Doran, LWV
 Kevin Ramnaraine, CFB
 A. Almazan, DOI
 A. Brunsdon, DOI
 David Seitzer, NYC Council
 Alex Camarda, Citizens Union

President Soumas called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

President Soumas abstained on the December 17, 2013 minutes. A quorum was absent for a vote due to the abstention. There was a consensus among the Commissioners to table the minutes of the December 17, 2013, January 7, 2014 and January 14, 2014 meetings.

President Soumas designated the Commissioners' Standing Committees for 2014. The Commissioners' Committees are the following:

- **Executive**
 - President Soumas & Secretary Michel
- **Budget and Finance**
 - Commissioners Umane & Guastella
- **Communications, Voter Registration and Outreach**
 - Commissioners Araujo & Shamoun
- **Management Information Systems and Services**
 - Commissioners Shamoun & Dent
- **Legislative Affairs**
 - Commissioners Guastella & Rendino
- **Investigations**
 - President Soumas & Secretary Michel

- **Ballot Layout Committee**

- Commissioner Araujo & Secretary Michel

President Soumas noted that the Commissioners' Standing Committees are subject to change.

Commissioner Rendino discussed the Board's Poll Worker Applications. He reported that he and former Commissioner Barrera investigated an incident in the Bronx last election which concerned a poll worker whose son was a candidate on the ballot in her poll site's district. Board staff does check last names, but the poll worker had a different last name from the candidate running. It is forbidden for a poll worker to work in the same district that a family member is running in. To prevent this from happening again, Commissioner Rendino recommended modifying the Board's Poll Worker Applications by adding a disclaimer stating that a person is forbidden to work as an election inspector or poll clerk with a spouse/parent/child of a candidate running in that district. Secretary Michel seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

Commissioner Rendino discussed the manual inspection of ballots for write-ins. In the past, technology was not available to pick up a mark to the right of a write-in. He reported that according to Mr. Ryan and Mr. Naudus, the technology to identify write-ins without manual inspection exists. Commissioner Rendino proposed for Executive Management to arrange ES&S staff to work with Mr. Naudus on this matter, and then explain this process to the Commissioners in approximately 4 - 6 weeks.

Commissioner Rendino reported on the following recommendations concerning Election Day Operations:

- Increase management at the poll sites to two (2) Coordinators per poll site. Coordinators should have more responsibility. Coordinators should contact the poll site's Custodian the night before Election Day to arrange a key pick-up for the ED Supply Carts so they can start setting up the poll site's signs;
- Poll Worker Evaluations with a grading system to be implemented before the next election;
- Hire extra personnel during peak periods;
- More training targeted to positions;

- Increase to two (2) Door Clerks. The second Door Clerk could act as a Compliance Officer to ensure voter privacy and that ballots are not being touched;
- Evaluation Surveys for poll workers and voters at the poll sites. An outside company could review these online surveys for the Board.

President Soumas stated that the fiscal impact needs to be identified for these recommendations. Commissioner Rendino requested for Executive Management to look into these recommendations further.

President Soumas noted that Commissioner Castorina was not present and tabled his item.

Mr. Richman presented the draft Designating Petition and Opportunity to Ballot Petitions (OTB) Rules for the June 24, 2014 Federal Primary Election, and the draft Petition Filing Calendar for the June 24, 2014 Federal Primary Election. Mr. Richman recommended scheduling the Hearings on Designating Petitions for Federal Office on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 10:00 AM and continuing on Friday,

April 25, 2014, at 10:00 AM, if necessary. Mr. Richman recommended scheduling the Hearings on OTB Petitions for Federal Office on Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 10:00 AM. Commissioner Umane moved to adopt the Designating Petition and OTB Rules for the June 24, 2014 Federal Primary Election, and the draft Petition Filing Calendar for the June 24, 2014 Federal Primary Election. President Soumas seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted. The adopted Rules and Calendar will be posted on the Board's website today.

President Soumas moved to convene Executive Session for purposes of litigation. Commissioner Umane seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

Following Executive Session, the regular stated meeting resumed.

President Soumas noted that Commissioners Guastella and Castorina joined the meeting.

Commissioner Castorina requested to discuss his item that is on the agenda.

Commissioners Guastella and Castorina noted that they called in advance stating that they will be arriving a little late to the meeting due to work and the snow storm. They requested for the Board to hold the meeting in the future as a courtesy.

Commissioner Castorina proposed for Executive Staff to review the NYC Department of Investigations (DOI) report dated December 2013, and to determine and prepare a report regarding the issues presented in said report regarding the issues presented in said report; to inform as to whether the Board is currently addressing those issues, and if so, in what manner or methodology; and if not, to prepare a proposal as to the methods which should be employed to address same. Commissioner Guastella seconded the motion. Before a vote was taken, Commissioner Umame reported that the Board had already addressed all issues prior to DOI's report, and noted that there was nothing new or innovative in DOI's report. Mr. Ryan added that there was not one new operational issue in the DOI report that was not already addressed by the Board. Commissioner Umame stated that one of his primary concerns are the DOI Investigators who worked as poll workers on Election Day and did not address and correct the violations they witnessed in the poll sites, and worked on the City's payroll twice.

Commissioner Umane stated that the Commissioners' Standing Committees will be working on all Board issues. Issues have been and will continue to be addressed at the weekly public meetings as well. Commissioner Castorina withdrew his motion. He reminded that he is a new Commissioner and requested for an outline of the issues currently listed in the DOI report and how the Board is currently addressing them, as well as any issues that were not addressed and how they can be addressed.

Commissioner Castorina requested to re-open the issue of the elimination of the Voter Cards. He reported that there was discussion on this issue in Albany last week with State Board staff and various Commissioners. There are concerns about the cost of printing, storage, and the time taken at the tables in the poll sites. Commissioner Castorina requested for an outline of the pros and cons of eliminating Voter Cards by next week. He requested to address this issue after the outline has been fully reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Araujo requested for Mr. Ryan to ask the Borough Office Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks for their opinion on this issue as well.

Commissioner Rendino moved to grant five (5) weeks of discretionary time to Shirelle Townes, a Clerk in the Bronx Office. Ms. Townes has been an employee at the Board for over ten (10) years and the request complies with the City's Policies and Procedures. Commissioner Umane seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

President Soumas moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously adopted.

The next stated meeting of the Commissioners will be held on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 1:30 P.M.