

MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF ELECTIONS
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 AT 1:00 P.M.
42 BROADWAY, 6th FLOOR, COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM
NEW YORK, NY 10004

PRESENT: President Rodney L. Pepe-Souvenir
Secretary Frederic M. Umane

Commissioners Jose M. Araujo, Michael J. Coppotelli, Carol R. Edmead, Gino A. Marmorato, Jodi Morales, Michele A. Sileo, Keith Sullivan

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director
Vincent M. Ignizio, Deputy Executive Director
Georgea Kontzamanis, Operations Manager
Michael D. Corbett, Administrative Manager
Raphael Savino, Deputy General Counsel
Eric Butkiewicz, Associate Counsel
Steven B. Denkberg, Counsel to the Commissioners
Kenneth Moltner, Counsel to the Commissioners

Ariel Merkel, ADA Coordinator
John Naudus, Manager – Electronic Voting Systems
Carlos Rodriguez, Chief Voting Machine Technician
Tom Sattie, Director – Candidate Records Unit

New York County	Stephen Evans III, Chief Clerk Rhonda Evans, Acting Deputy Chief Clerk
Bronx County	Brendaliz Candelaria, Deputy Chief Clerk
Kings County	Daniel Ortiz, Deputy Chief Clerk
Queens County	Amanda Berinato, Chief Clerk Bart Haggerty, Deputy Chief Clerk
Richmond County	Daniel Lavelle, Chief Clerk Anthony Andriulli, Deputy Chief Clerk

GUESTS: Kathleen Hale, JD, PhD., The Election Center
Tom Wilkey, The Election Center
Susan Lerner, Common Cause New York
Kate Doran, League of Women Voters
Joanna Zdanys, Brennan Center for Justice

Mr. Ryan opened the meeting with item #1 of the meeting agenda, the approval of the minutes of the September 10, 2024 Commissioners Meeting.

Hearing no objections or proposed amendments, the minutes of the September 10, 2024 Commissioners Meeting were adopted.

Mr. Ryan continued with item #2 of the meeting agenda, 6 voter challenges to be presented by the Manhattan Chief Clerk and Acting Deputy Chief Clerk. Mr. Ryan acknowledged Raphael Savino, Deputy General Counsel, to present the matter to the Commissioners.

Mr. Savino stated that we have 6 voter challenges from the Manhattan Borough Managers, that they found to be questionable. Mr. Savino acknowledged the Manhattan Borough Managers, Stephen Evans, Chief Clerk and Rhonda Evans, Acting Deputy Chief Clerk, and asked that they approach the podium. President Pepe-Souvenir administered the challenge oath to the Manhattan Borough Managers, pursuant to NYSEL §5-220.

Mr. Evans and Ms. Evans presented their reasons and supporting facts, and challenged the registrations of the following voters:

1. Alberto Gonzalez (New York County - DOB 1/1/1977) VSN# 414588173

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 1, 2024, was filed with the Board bearing the name of a former U.S. Attorney General and listing the Manhattan Civil Courthouse at 111 Centre Street as the mailing address. No form of identification, such as a driver's license number, social security number, or identifying information as required by state or federal law was provided with the registration form. The listed address is the same as on another registration form received by the Manhattan Borough Office during a similar time period and the form contains similar handwriting to that on other registration forms received during the same time period.

2. Juan Merchan (New York County – DOB 9/18/1962) VSN# 414587843

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 1, 2024, was filed with the Board bearing the name of a sitting NYS Supreme Court Judge who is presiding over the criminal proceedings in *The People of the State of New York v. Donald J. Trump*. No form of identification, such as driver's license number, social security number, or other identifying information as required by state or federal law, was provided with the registration form. The listed residence address is the same as the mailing address listed on other registration forms received by the Manhattan Borough Office during a similar time period and the form contains handwriting

similar to that on other registration forms received during the same time period. For clarity, Mr. Evans stated that this is not the voter registration of that Judge, he has a different date of birth, different signature and he provided identification.

3. Anna Rubin (New York County – DOB 8/24/1974) VSN# 414600482

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 8, 2024, was filed with the Board bearing Trump Tower as the residency address and 7 World Trade as the mailing address. The registration form also contains handwriting that is similar to that on other registration forms received by the Manhattan Borough Office during a similar time period. No form of identification, such as driver's license number, social security number, or other identifying information as required by state or federal law, was provided with the registration form.

4. Majda Nalic (New York County – DOB 6/24/1978) VSN# 414599888

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 12, 2024, was filed with the Board listing Trump Tower as the residency address and a mailing address identical to another registration form received by the Manhattan Borough Office, dated the same day and received during a similar time period. The registration form also contains handwriting similar to that on other registration forms received during the same time period. No form of

identification, such as driver's license number, social security number, or other identifying information as required by state or federal law, was provided with the registration form.

5. Joshua Christophen (New York County – DOB 8/22/1979)
VSN# 414598544

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 14, 2024, was filed with the Board listing Trump Tower as the residency address and a mailing address identical to what was provided on other registration forms received by the Manhattan Borough Office during a similar time period. The registration form also contains handwriting similar to that on other registration forms received during the same time period. No form of identification, such as driver's license number, social security number, or other identifying information as required by state or federal law, was provided with the registration form.

6. Peter Axelrod (New York County – DOB 3/20/1965) VSN# 414601347

A NYS Voter Registration Form, dated August 12, 2024, was filed with the Board listing Trump Tower as the residency address and a mailing address identical to another registration form received by the Manhattan Borough Office, dated the same day and received during a similar time period. The registration form also contains handwriting similar to that on

other registration forms received during the same time period. No form of identification, such as driver's license number, social security number, or other identifying information as required by state or federal law, was provided with the registration form.

Mr. Savino instructed the Manhattan Borough Managers to sign the affidavit and submit it to the Commissioners.

President Pepe-Souvenir and Commissioner Edmead inquired as to how this matter was brought to their attention and what department picked it up.

Mr. Evans stated that the name Juan Merchan is well known throughout the office, and Ms. Evans noted that it was the List Maintenance Department that picked it up.

Mr. Evans also noted that there are more registration matters still under review and may be presented in the coming weeks.

Mr. Ryan stated that once this issue was identified by the List Maintenance Department, both Mr. Evans and Ms. Evans communicated with Executive Management and The Office of the General Counsel was involved. The registrations were reviewed, and it was the recommendation of The Office of the

General Counsel to present it to the Commissioners for those that were in fact registered, because there are others that aren't registered. For the ones that were registered, that they are being offered for the purpose of changing a party's address or party affiliation, and after consulting with The Office of the General Counsel, it was determined under the election law that the way to handle this would be to do it as similar to a voter challenge under other circumstances. Also, to make it clear regarding the actions that were being taken. Once this happens, like with the others, the Manhattan Borough Staff will conduct an investigation to make a determination whether or not these were properly or improperly submitted documents.

Commissioner Edmead also confirmed with the Manhattan Borough Managers that this is a continuing investigation.

Secretary Umame moved to refer this matter back to the Manhattan Borough Office to conduct the investigation. Commissioner Edmead seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Edmead and Secretary Umame thanked Mr. Evans, Ms. Evans and the Borough Office Staff, noting that the Commissioners appreciate the degree to which they make the Manhattan Borough Office and represent all of its employees so very well.

Mr. Ryan continued with the following preliminary announcements:

On Friday, September 20, 2024, the Board successfully met its statutory obligation for Military, UOCAVA and Federal ballots and sent out a total of 31,935 ballots.

Processing has begun, and the distribution of other absentee ballots which began to drop in the mail yesterday, and so far, we have processed a total of 188,546 mail ballots, including early mail and absentee. The deadline to apply for a mail ballot or online is October 26, 2024. However, individuals can still apply in person up until November 4, 2024, which would be the day before the General Election Day.

The Poll Worker recruitment campaign will be ongoing until October 4, 2024. As of yesterday, the Board recruited nearly 22,000 new poll workers and had over 2.1 million hits on the website. Thus far, 23,362 poll workers have completed training, and 42,718 have been assigned to train. We continue to urge any interested individuals to apply to become a poll worker.

The Board would like to remind everyone that this Saturday, September 28, 2024 is the first Local Registration Day for 2024. It's been a while since we've

done it; because of the COVID-19 emergency we did not do Local Registration Day as per an Executive Order in 2020. This will be the first time in eight years that we're doing it, and hope that people will take advantage of that. The Board will open 73 sites across the city, from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM. You can visit any site to register to vote, apply for a mail ballot, absentee or early mail, or to become a poll worker as well. A list of the sites can be found on the Board's website at vote.nyc or by calling the Board's offices at 1-866-VOTE-NYC.

Secretary Umane asked that any Good Governments Groups that have been soliciting registrations, to please submit whatever you have and not worry about trying to make a big splash with a large number. When you file the latest ones, you can still say that you've gotten the whole number, but to the extent you can provide them to us sooner rather than later, it would help us make sure that all of the people you've been working actually get in the books and are available to vote. As in when they go to a polling place or submit a mail ballot. If it's dropped at the last minute, it creates a problem. That's the sort of problems that come up when you don't do it as and when you get them. You can still take credit for the total number, but please get them in to us sooner rather than later.

Mr. Ryan added, if you have a way to keep a check list of how many people you've encouraged to register, you can have them use the technology and submit them directly to us electronically and it will save them the delivery time, and save

us the scanning time, and still get credit for all of their hard work to ensure people participate. Mr. Ryan further added that those are good options all the way around and hopes they can exercise them.

Commissioner Coppotelli moved to set the date of the next meeting for Tuesday, October 1, 2024 at 1:00 P.M. Secretary Umame seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

Before continuing with agenda item #3, Commissioner Coppotelli moved to convene an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Secretary Umame seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

Following the Executive Session the open meeting resumed.

During Executive Session, the following action was taken by the unanimous decision of the Board of Commissioners:

- Devin Austin, a Senior Voting Machine Technician, was granted 210 hours of an advance of sick time. The effective date of the grant is September 5, 2024. Mr. Austin's agency start date is July 20, 2014.

Mr. Ryan continued with item #3 of the meeting agenda, the Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA) Certification Presentation to BOE Staff.

Mr. Ryan stated that there are 15 BOE staff members that will be getting certificates today, and Dr. Kathleen Hale presided over this program along with other members of the staff at the Election Center.

Mr. Ryan acknowledged Dr. Hale and turned the meeting over to her to make any remarks that she deemed appropriate under the circumstances, and then to the Commissioners, who will make any ancillary remarks once she's completed.

Dr. Hale thanked Mr. Ryan for inviting her and stated that it is an honor to be here and talk about a program in professional development for the election field, and that means a great deal to her personally, as well as the thousands of election officials around the country. Dr. Hale stated that the program is the result of a partnership between the Election Center and Auburn University, which now operates under the heading of The Institute for Election Administration, Research and Practice.

The Institute has been around since 2019 and is operating under a long-term agreement with Auburn. The Election Center has been around since the early 80's,

and the CERA Program, since the early 90's. CERA stands for Certified Election and Registration Administrator. Members include folks from state offices, federal government partners, as well as those who provide professional services in the vendor space. The result of all of that work with the Election Center, is the achievement of designation in a program designed by Auburn faculty and leading election officials around the country. There are approximately 20 faculty members at Auburn who are actively engaged in this work, 5 or 6 are involved in the design, delivery and assessment of the courses that were taken by the NYC Board of Elections staff. The program broadly includes two big components, one is basic public administration and theory administration. The principals of public administration, budgeting, implementation, communication and staffing; all these basic principles of public administration or public service play out in a very unique way in the field of election operations. The course covers that piece, plus, a good dose of election law, policy and history. Dr. Hale stated that those two pillars form the backdrop of their approach to class to courses and there are 12, which Dr. Hale listed and further discussed. Dr. Hale stated that it is an interactive, conversational style program, and having worked in this field since 2006, it is truly a collaborative exchange of ideas. Dr Hale expressed that it was a great experience to work with the staff, the participants all had insightful dialogue and gave thoughtful consideration to both the theory and the practice on the courses that she had mentioned.

On behalf of the Election Center, in the capacity of Executive Director of the Election Center, and for the Auburn faculty, Dr. Hale stated that it is her privilege to recognize this signature achievement and commitment to the field, and welcome today's graduates to the ranks of nearly 1500 CERA graduates working in the field today, noting that they are looking forward to having the NYC BOE staff join and continue to share their ideas and approaches with colleagues around the country in this most significant public service.

Secretary Umane gave remarks, stating that he wanted to take this opportunity on behalf of the Commissioners, to thank Dr. Hale for doing this extracurricular work and expects that it will only add to the regular professionalism showed by each and every employee at this agency on a regular basis, and expressed his congratulations to the 15 BOE staff members receiving certificates today. President Pepe-Souvenir stated that, as president, she fully agrees with Secretary Umane's remarks.

Mr. Ryan acknowledged a member of the public, Susan Lerner.

Ms. Lerner stated that she is with Common Cause New York, and is here as a representative of the Let NY Vote Coalition, with Kate Doran from the League of Women Voters and Joanna Zdanys from the Brennan Center, and they'd like to commend the Board and the employees who are getting certification, and

recognize that this was a significant investment in time and resources, and are delighted that the Board has supported that effort and that the 15 employees stuck it out and are getting certification; on behalf of New York City voters, congratulations and thank you.

Commissioner Coppotelli also added remarks, noting that all of the work that each of the staff put into becoming certified demonstrates the commitment of the execution and the level of that commitment that the employees of the Board of Elections make on a day-by-day basis to ensure the fair and impartial administration of elections.

Tom Wilkey, Election Center, before presenting the certificates also gave remarks and expressed that he is proud as a founding member of the Election Center and as the Vice Chairman of its Board, to present these certificates to the Board staff today.

Mr. Wilkey presented certificates to the following NYC Board staff, listed below in the order in which they were received:

Anthony Andriulli, Deputy Chief Clerk – Richmond County

Amanda Berinato, Chief Clerk – Queens County

Michael Corbett, Administrative Manager

Brendaliz Candelaria, Deputy Chief Clerk – Bronx County

Stephen Evans III, Chief Clerk – New York County

Bart Haggerty, Deputy Chief Clerk – Queens County

Vincent Ignizio, Deputy Executive Director

Georgea Kontzamanis, Operations Manager

Daniel Lavelle, Chief Clerk – Richmond County

Ariel Merkel, ADA Coordinator

John Naudus, Manager – Electronic Voting Systems

Daniel Ortiz, Deputy Chief Clerk – Kings County

Carlos Rodriguez, Chief Voting Machine Technician

Michael J. Ryan, Executive Director

Tom Sattie, Director – Candidate Records Unit

Mr. Wilkey thanked the CERA graduates and stated that they've joined the ranks of 121 people who graduated a couple of weeks ago, and he couldn't be more proud of them.

Commissioner Coppotelli moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Edmead seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next stated meeting of the Commissioners of Elections is scheduled for
Tuesday, October 1, 2024 at 1:00 P.M.