

CITY OF CRANSTON  
BOARD OF CANVASSERS  
Special Meeting of November 29, 2022 – APPROVED MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on November 29, 2022, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on November 22, 2022. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Randall Jackvony, at 4:40 p.m. It was held in the Canvassing Authority Office, Room 100 at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Randall Jackvony, Quilcia Moronta, Dolores DiMeo Carroll (Board Alternate – Acting Member)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), Alice Petrone (Board Alternate)

The chair declared a quorum present.

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER (NO VOTES TO BE TAKEN)
- II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- III. NEW BUSINESS
  - A. THE BOARD MAY DISCUSS AND REVIEW THE CONDUCT OF THE 2022 ELECTIONS (NO VOTES TO BE TAKEN)
  - B. PURSUANT TO R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-22-5.2, THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY THE CITY OF CRANSTON LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS FROM THE NOVEMBER 8, 2022 GENERAL ELECTION FOR THE FOLLOWING OFFICES AND BALLOT QUESTIONS (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN):
    1. CITY COUNCIL
    2. SCHOOL COMMITTEE
    3. LOCAL BOND REFERENDA
    4. CITY CHARTER REFERENDA
  - C. PURSUANT TO R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-8-5 (A)(4), THE BOARD WILL DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPOINT AND EMPLOY NICHOLAS J. LIMA AS THE REGISTRAR / DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS AND TO FORWARD THE APPOINTMENT TO THE CRANSTON CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- IV. ADJOURNMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Jackvony asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Ms. DiMeo Carroll to approve the agenda as posted.  
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

NEW BUSINESS**A. THE BOARD MAY DISCUSS AND REVIEW THE CONDUCT OF THE 2022 ELECTIONS (NO VOTES TO BE TAKEN)**

Mr. Lima said we just missed 50% turnout, and that it was over 49% overall in Cranston in November. Ms. Petrone said that was pretty good for a midterm. Mr. Lima said several individual precincts were close to 60% turnout, including some of the largest precincts.

He said early voting went pretty smoothly, with the biggest issue being the limitations of the parking lot at Pastore Youth Center. He would like to work out a solution with the Parks and Recreation staff before the 2024 elections, but the biggest challenge would be finding any funding to make improvements. He will be on the lookout for any kind of grant funding to help with either reconfiguring or restriping the lot within the space available.

Mr. Jackvony asked if Cranston has traffic police to help with flow in the lot. Mr. Lima said the problem in 2022 was that details were scheduled, but then canceled by Cranston Police due to lack of manpower, and there were other priority details for construction work on major workways that stretched available officers thin. Mr. Lima noted that in the Primary, a Warwick police officer had to cover the Cranston early voting detail, and in November, there was no one available at all. Mr. Lima will discuss with Cranston Police command staff ahead of the next election cycle, because he said he was frustrated that planned details were not fulfilled. He said there were nearly 1,000 voters in eight hours at Pastore, which is why a detail was requested by the Board of Canvassers, but election officials were left to manage the busy parking lot ourselves. The Board members said they were concerned the operational security plan was not followed.

Mr. Lima said the parking situation at Pastore is the only demerit against the site, and there are few or no other sites in the city that have secure access control, are city-owned, ample interior space, can suspend programming for weeks at a time, are ADA-compliant, and are centrally located for voters. He said we could rent a private facility, but that would add a series of new variables, including availability if a vacant commercial space were to become rented between elections.

Mr. Lima said Election Day operations went smoothly, and he anticipates running similar plans for 2024 due to how effective elevated staffing levels were to handle voters. He said he and the office staff decided to allocate extra poll workers above and beyond the BOE-suggested minimums, which helped with call outs and with staffing busier polls during busy periods.

As for mail ballots, Mr. Lima said the office will pursue legislative changes in 2023 to clarify rejections of mail ballot applications received shortly after the 20-day deadline. Current law has those applications being rejected, only to mail the voter an emergency application requesting they submit identical information. Mr. Lima said we should instead consider those emergency applications, or at the least, add a several-day

transmission period for when applications sent by mail may still be processed accordingly.

Mr. Lima said he would like to pursue other legislative changes, such as modifying some unnecessary newspaper ads that are ineffective uses of limited resources. Another concern is the voter precinct cap, which, if left unaddressed, may require several polls that were used in 2022 to be split in two, sending voters to new, less-ideal polls that they are unfamiliar with in 2024. The Board members said the polls can handle many more voters than are currently utilizing them. They expressed concern that it is possible more polls may need to be added unnecessarily in 2024.

Mr. Lima said Rob Rock has been promoted to Deputy Secretary of State under Secretary-Elect Gregg Amore. He said that Kathy Placencia, Providence's election administrator, will be taking Mr. Rock's position. The Board members were pleased with the announcement. He said that he was offered the position of chair of the RI Town and City Clerks' Association's Elections Committee, which is vacated by Ms. Placencia, but declined. Tracy Nelson, Newport's canvassing clerk, agreed to serve as chair, and Mr. Lima said he would accept the role of vice-chair.

Mr. Lima said the Secretary of State's office would be putting in a bill to add a permanent liaison at the Board of Elections to improve communication and cooperation between the two agencies. They also will be submitting legislation to revert purchasing control of election equipment from the SOS back to the BOE.

He said other projects include going through returns from last summer's redistricting mailer, and that the office will be engaged in removing inactive voters who have been inactive for two federal election cycles, under federal law. There will also be multiple NCOA list maintenance projects in 2023.

He said the staff has not really had a chance to take time off the last eight months, and will be rotating through using up some of their accumulated time in the weeks ahead. Mr. Lima noted that Emerson Brito has volunteered to help decorate the City Hall lobby for the upcoming Christmas Tree Lighting, which the administration is appreciative of. Mr. Lima said the "No Time To Fail" documentary film about the office in the 2020 elections will continue to show and premiere at new theatres this winter. He is hopeful there can eventually be a Cranston showing, as several city councilmembers asked for a chance to see it.

Mr. Lima said inauguration is on Jan. 2, 2023, and that the documents on the table are the official election certificates and individual office-holder certificates of election that need to be signed by the full Board of Canvassers this afternoon for transmission to the City Clerk.

**B. PURSUANT TO R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-22-5.2, THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY THE CITY OF CRANSTON LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS FROM THE NOVEMBER 8, 2022 GENERAL ELECTION FOR THE FOLLOWING OFFICES AND BALLOT QUESTIONS (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN):**

Mr. Lima said that Ms. DiMeo Carroll would be signing for Gary Vierra, who resigned from the Board when he moved out of city last summer. He said there are triplicate original copies for the formal certifications for each category, as well as the certificates of office for the 16 officers-elect. Mr. Lima said the same nine councilmembers were elected, although there were some new members of the School Committee.

Mr. Lima said one original signed copy of the certification would be kept in the permanent Board of Canvassers records in the office vault, another would be transmitted to the City Clerk's office for use at inauguration and kept as a permanent record of the city there, and, in accordance with state law, the third original copy will be hand-delivered to the Secretary of State's office by Mr. Lima tomorrow.

Mr. Lima said recounts and the risk-limiting audit were successful, and the state Board of Elections has already certified all statewide, state, and local results. Mr. Lima said the office participated in both the audit and the recount process. He said the Board of Canvassers must also certify local races and ballot questions, but has no role in certifying any General Assembly, statewide, or federal races or state ballot questions.

Mr. Lima noted that the two City Charter changes that were approved on the ballot will take immediate effect upon the Board's action today.

#### 1. CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Jackvony said that all the motions would be to certify the results as certified and posted by the state Board of Elections.

MOTION: By Mr. Jackvony and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify the results as posted by the state Board of Elections of the Nov. 8, 2022 General Election for City Council.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

#### 2. SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MOTION: By Mr. Jackvony and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify the results as posted by the state Board of Elections of the Nov. 8, 2022 General Election for School Committee.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

#### 3. LOCAL BOND REFERENDA

MOTION: By Mr. Jackvony and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify the results as posted by the state Board of Elections of the Nov. 8, 2022 General Election for Local Bond Referenda.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

#### 4. CITY CHARTER REFERENDA

MOTION: By Mr. Jackvony and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify the results as posted by the state Board of Elections of the Nov. 8, 2022 General Election for City Charter Questions.  
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

Mr. Lima advised the Board to try to avoid smudges on the gel pens prior to the ink drying on the certificates, as they will be presented to and framed by the new office holders.

C. PURSUANT TO R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-8-5 (A)(4), THE BOARD WILL DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPOINT AND EMPLOY NICHOLAS J. LIMA AS THE REGISTRAR / DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS AND TO FORWARD THE APPOINTMENT TO THE CRANSTON CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Jackvony said he sent a letter to the City Council-elect indicating his preference as Chairman of the Board to reappoint Mr. Lima as Registrar / Director of Elections, and that the discussion and action would take place at this meeting.

MOTION: By Mr. Jackvony and seconded by Ms. Moronta to appoint and employ Nicholas J. Lima as Registrar / Director of Elections for a two-year term commencing Jan. 2, 2023, and send to the City Council for approval.

Ms. Petrone, Ms. DiMeo Carroll, and Ms. Moronta said that they approved of Mr. Lima's management of the office and elections. Mr. Lima thanked the Board for their support, and that the office's success is due entirely to the dedicated staff of Ms. Bucci, Ms. Madonna, and Mr. Brito who get all needed work done efficiently and accurately. Mr. Lima said we have the best election staff in the state, and as challenging and frustrating it can be to work in elections, the team we have here makes it all worthwhile.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0

Mr. Jackvony said he would sign the letter to send Mr. Lima's appointment by the Board of Canvassers to the City Council-elect, for the approval at the Jan. 2, 2023 inaugural meeting.

ADJOURNMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Ms. Petrone to adjourn.  
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY – VOICE VOTE

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas J. Lima  
Registrar / Director of Elections  
Cranston Board of Canvassers

APPROVED by the Cranston Board of Canvassers: March 22, 2023