

CITY OF CRANSTON
BOARD OF CANVASSERS
Meeting of August 20, 2024 – OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on August 20, 2024, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on August 6, 2024. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Kirk McDonough, at 4:36 p.m. It was held in the Canvassing Authority Office, Room 100, at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kirk McDonough, Steven Piscopiello, Quilcia Moronta

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), David Igliozi (Board Legal Counsel)

The chair declared a quorum present.

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER (NO VOTES TAKEN)
- II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS – 7-16-2024 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- IV. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – CHAIRPERSON (NO VOTES TAKEN)
- V. PUBLIC COMMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- VI. OLD BUSINESS – NO MATTERS ON THE TABLE
- VII. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. THE BOARD MAY CANVASS THE PRELIMINARY LIST OF CRANSTON VOTERS, HEAR OBJECTIONS TO THE INCLUSION OR OMISSION OF ANY PERSON AS A REGISTERED VOTER, AND MAKE A FINAL CANVASS AND CORRECTION OF THE VOTER LIST FOR THE RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION THAT IS TO TAKE PLACE ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS §§ 17-10-5 AND 17-13-1 ET. SEQ (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
 - B. THE BOARD MAY HEAR AN UPDATE FROM THE REGISTRAR AND DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED POLLING LOCATIONS; EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES; IN-PERSON EARLY AND EMERGENCY VOTING; MAIL BALLOT APPLICATION PROCESSING; POLLING PLACE SET-UP AND LOGISTICS; POLL WORKER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING; MAIL BALLOT DROP BOXES; AND ELECTION SECURITY (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
 - C. THE BOARD MAY ISSUE ITS WARRANT FOR THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION IN

ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-15-17 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

- D. THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY ALL MAIL BALLOT APPLICATIONS THAT ARE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-20-10 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- E. THE BOARD MAY REVIEW AND COMPLETE CERTIFICATIONS FOR ALL NOMINATION PAPERS THAT HAVE BEEN VALIDATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-14-11 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- VIII. UPDATES FROM THE REGISTRAR (ALL ITEMS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY; NO VOTES TAKEN)
 - A. SUMMARY OF FALL 2024 ELECTION SECURITY INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY THE REGISTRAR
 - B. UPDATE ON NATIONAL ELECTION ADMINISTRATION MEETINGS, CALLS, AND CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY THE REGISTRAR
 - C. REPORT ON GIS E911 ADDRESS VERIFICATION STREET RANGE MAINTENANCE PROJECT
- IX. ADJOURNMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

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

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Mr. Piscopiello to approve the agenda as posted.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS – 7-16-2024 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve the minutes of July 16, 2024.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – CHAIRPERSON (NO VOTES TAKEN)

Mr. McDonough acknowledged the attendance of Asst. Solicitor Mr. Igliozi.

PUBLIC COMMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. McDonough noted no members of the public were present or appeared to speak.

OLD BUSINESS – NO MATTERS ON THE TABLE

Mr. McDonough noted no old business items were posted on this agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

A. THE BOARD MAY CANVASS THE PRELIMINARY LIST OF CRANSTON VOTERS, HEAR OBJECTIONS TO THE INCLUSION OR OMISSION OF ANY PERSON AS A REGISTERED VOTER, AND MAKE A FINAL CANVASS AND CORRECTION OF THE VOTER LIST FOR THE RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION THAT IS TO TAKE PLACE ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS §§ 17-10-5 AND 17-13-1 ET. SEQ (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Lima said the Board must meet for a Final Canvass of the Preliminary List 21 days prior to an election, after the 4 p.m. deadline to file objections to a voter's omission or inclusion on that list. He said the list was properly noticed and posted, and a corrected copy was properly reposted. No challenges were filed as of today's 4 p.m. deadline.

There are 21,055 Democrats, 9,268 Republicans, 16 No Labels, and 30,345 Unaffiliated voters, for a total of 60,684, of which 54,783 are Active, 4,523 are Inactive, 468 are Pending, and 910 are Active with NCOA Change. He noted the No Labels voters are unique this year in that party is new but has fielded no candidates, and accordingly those 16 voters are ineligible to vote in any primary in Cranston.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify the Final Canvass for the Sept. 10, 2024 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

Mr. Lima had the Board sign the Final Canvass list as approved.

B. THE BOARD MAY HEAR AN UPDATE FROM THE REGISTRAR AND DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED POLLING LOCATIONS; EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES; IN-PERSON EARLY AND EMERGENCY VOTING; MAIL BALLOT APPLICATION PROCESSING; POLLING PLACE SET-UP AND LOGISTICS; POLL WORKER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING; MAIL BALLOT DROP BOXES; AND ELECTION SECURITY (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Lima said he has been coordinating with numerous city departments including the City Solicitor, Purchasing, IT, School Dept., Parks and Rec., Highway, Public Works, Administration, City Clerk, GIS, Personnel, Auditing, Public Libraries, Cranston Police, and the Senior Center in preparation for the Primary. He described the polling location set-up process and logistics in detail. Mr. Lima reviewed other ongoing election preparations and operations related to the mail ballot drop box, which is open, and early voting, which begins tomorrow at the Pastore Youth Center.

Mr. Lima said Primary voters started receiving their mail ballots this week, and we've had about 1,000 applications so far for the Primary. Under the new law, there is a three-day transmittal period for applications, so anything that is postmarked and received by this Friday will be processed as received by the deadline, which was 4 p.m. today. The emergency mail voting period starts tomorrow, and we received all of the needed supplies from the state, some of which were dropped off today.

We will have a meeting tonight with our early voting poll workers at Pastore at 6 p.m. to go over procedures for opening tomorrow morning and basic ground rules of the operation. They are all seasoned poll workers, many of whom previously worked early voting in past elections, and have city background checks and photo ID badges issued by Cranston Police. Mr. Lima said we are not expecting a huge turnout for early voting but we will have 9 to 10 people working every day and can handle several hundred voters per day without an issue.

Call volume and voter contact has been relatively light compared to previous major primaries. We expect to have our election security operations plan from Cranston Police soon. All of our poll worker slots are filled for the Primary at present with seven back-ups, and we will continue to hire and train back-ups due to expected call-outs. We have back-to-back poll worker training classes tomorrow and several upcoming days both this week and next week, with make-up and moderator/clerk classes thereafter. Mr. Lima stressed the importance of Board members attending class so they can be effective field techs to help troubleshoot at polls on Election Day.

On Sept. 10, we need the board to come in by 6 a.m. to start the meeting, after which members will need to hit the road to start visiting polling locations all day. Each member will have an assigned area but can also float around the city. We will convene the following day for provisional adjudication.

Mr. Piscopiello reviewed the emergency contact sheet for polling locations and noted an update needed to be made for Maria Di Prata. Mr. Lima said he will update it accordingly and reprint.

Mr. McDonough asked about ADA compliance at Hope Church due to the ongoing construction there. Mr. Lima said we will have two greeters stationed there, including one permanently outside all day, to help voters easily get into and out of the building. The state BOE requires us to have one greeter, so the second will be more than is required. Mr. Lima said the construction is almost complete but for now the side entrance is accessible with a new concrete sidewalk and compliant door.

**C. THE BOARD MAY ISSUE ITS WARRANT FOR THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2024
RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I.
GEN. LAWS § 17-15-17 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)**

Mr. Lima showed the warrant to the Board and said it will run for the next two weeks in the Cranston Herald and will be posted at several locations. He said he has incorporated an early voting advertisement into the warrant text.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve and issue the warrant for the Sept. 10, 2024 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

D. THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY ALL MAIL BALLOT APPLICATIONS THAT ARE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-20-10 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Lima said for the record that this vote will include any that are received during the new three-day transmittal period for the remainder of this week since the deadline is 4 p.m. this Friday.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve and certify all mail ballot applications received by the deadline for the Sept. 10, 2024 Statewide Primary and Nov. 5, 2024 General Election.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

E. THE BOARD MAY REVIEW AND COMPLETE CERTIFICATIONS FOR ALL NOMINATION PAPERS THAT HAVE BEEN VALIDATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-14-11 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. Lima said there are nomination papers for independent presidential electors, which is a process that will continue into September. We will be conducting this process concurrently with the Primary due to a very tight timeline immediately after the Primary in which the Board has to certify all nomination papers.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify all independent presidential elector nomination papers that have been validated to date.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

UPDATES FROM THE REGISTRAR (ALL ITEMS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY; NO VOTES TAKEN)

A. SUMMARY OF FALL 2024 ELECTION SECURITY INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY THE REGISTRAR

Mr. Lima said he is meeting with Cranston Police command staff including Col. Winquist and Chief of Staff Moretti tomorrow to go over the \$50,000 grant award from the Secretary of State as Cranston Police will be assessing the office and making recommendations on priorities. Mr. Lima said we will go ahead immediately with any projects he receives a green light on, the most pressing of which will be the installation of additional security cameras covering our office windows and the mail ballot drop box. Other projects, which will by necessity take place after the election, involve physical security upgrades to our office.

We continue to work closely with the Dept. of Homeland Security and the Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency, CISA, on election security partnerships. They will be providing us, at no charge, emergency contact cards and posters for all of our poll workers and polling locations that are customized with Cranston-specific, non-generic emergency contact information and phone numbers. These posters will include quick response guides on what to do if there's a fire, active shooter, bomb threat, and other emergencies. We will also be meeting with Cranston Police again to review police details and our election security operations plan and incorporating many of the guidance bulletins we have received from CISA.

Mr. Igliozi asked about the \$50,000 grant and if it could be used to upgrade the windows. Mr. Lima said that, unfortunately, he has received quotes from vendors and the cost would be over \$100,000 to upgrade to ballistics glass for the six windows. Similarly, the front counter barrier would be a \$100,000-plus project, so there is simply inadequate funding for those projects available at this time, so we will be focusing on smaller-scale security upgrades for the office and our staff. Mr. Lima said we are continuing to look for more grant funding and if we receive any, these projects could be back on the table.

B. UPDATE ON NATIONAL ELECTION ADMINISTRATION MEETINGS, CALLS, AND CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY THE REGISTRAR

Mr. Lima said he is chairperson for the Northeast Region of the federal Election Assistance Commission Local Leadership Council, and we'll be holding a regional virtual meeting this Thursday at 2 p.m. for all of the New England states along with Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. The following week, the EAC LLC will be holding a national virtual meeting which he also plans to attend. In April 2025, the EAC LLC will be meeting in-person in North Carolina. The focus of the upcoming virtual calls is to focus on operational planning and readiness for November.

Mr. Lima said last Friday he was able to attend as an invited observer at an elections seminar at the Harvard Kennedy School with a number of high-level election officials from around the country to discuss current issues in elections. He noted the specific nature of the discussions was confidential due to the Chatham House Rule, however the seminar covered a lot of ground and was very informative.

C. REPORT ON GIS E911 ADDRESS VERIFICATION STREET RANGE MAINTENANCE PROJECT

Mr. Lima said we worked earlier this summer with our GIS and the SOS GIS staff on a street range maintenance project to ensure our ranges, and in particular street names, are properly formatted and coded in the CVRS to match what USPS has and city records. For example, a street such as Lake View Dr could be coded as Lakeview Dr, or vice-versa, which has the potential for election mail delivery and data parity issues if left unaddressed. This project was part of our ongoing effort to improve voter list accuracy and street range maintenance, and includes cohesion with the state's E911 site address database.

ADJOURNMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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