

CITY OF CRANSTON
BOARD OF CANVASSERS
Meeting of July 14, 2026 – OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on July 14, 2026, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on July 6, 2026. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Kirk McDonough, at 6:03 p.m. It was held in Council Chambers, Third Floor, at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anthony Mastantuono, Quilcia Moronta, Kirk McDonough

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill White (Board Alternate), Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), David Igliazzi (Board Legal Counsel)

The chair declared a quorum present.

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda** (*votes may be taken*)
- II. **Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings** (*votes may be taken*)
- III. **Items for Discussion, Vote, and/or Other Action** (*votes may be taken on all items*)
 - A. The Board may hear and decide on filed written objections to the eligibility of candidates or sufficiency of nomination papers for local offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-13 (*votes may be taken*)
 - B. The Board may vote to certify all mail ballot applications that are received to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10 (*votes may be taken*)
 - C. The Board may review and complete certifications for all nomination papers that have been validated to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-11 (*votes may be taken*)
 - D. The Board may review and approve the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election ballot certification to the Secretary of State in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-16 (*votes may be taken*)
 - E. If there is no contest, the Board may vote to dispense with a primary election for uncontested offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-11 (*votes may be taken*)
 - F. If there is no contest, the Board may vote to declare candidates to either be elected or nominated to uncontested offices, as the case may be, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-11 (*votes may be taken*)
 - G. The Board may designate the state Board of Elections mail ballot drop box at Cranston City Hall to receive voter registrations for the deadline for the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election and November 3, 2026 General Election (*votes may be taken*)
- IV. **Updates from the Registrar / Director of Elections** (*no votes taken on any items*)
 - A. Secretary of State election security grant program update
 - B. Poll worker training class attendance for Board members
 - C. Preparations for July 30 election security training exercise
 - D. Status update regarding 2026 city bond questions for November ballot placement

- E. Review of ballot proofing process timeline and opportunities for Board members to review ballot proofs before final sign-off to the Secretary of State

V. Adjournment (*vote may be taken*)

I. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda (*votes may be taken*)

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

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

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY – VOICE VOTE

II. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the prior meeting as officially posted.

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to approve the prior meeting minutes.

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

III. Items for Discussion, Vote, and/or Other Action (*votes may be taken on all items*)

A. The Board may hear and decide on filed written objections to the eligibility of candidates or sufficiency of nomination papers for local offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-13 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima informed the Board that, as of the 4 p.m. deadline yesterday, no objections were filed with the office for consideration by the Board of Canvassers.

B. The Board may vote to certify all mail ballot applications that are received to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima presented the mail ballot applications and certification sheets to the Board for their review.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify all mail ballot applications received to date.

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

C. The Board may review and complete certifications for all nomination papers that have been validated to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-11 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. McDonough said this is the main purpose of the meeting. Before taking a vote, he asked Mr. Lima to explain the nomination papers that are in non-conformity. Mr. McDonough said we had reached out to the Board of Elections, but were not provided any guidance on these.

Mr. Lima said four papers appeared to be in non-conformity, including one that lacked a completed notarial certificate because it was not stamped; one paper that was turned in for Representative District 27 with Cranston voters signed, although that district does not exist in Cranston; one paper that was turned in with Mayor of Woonsocket as the office header with Cranston voters signed; and one form that was time-stamped as received by the East Providence Board of Canvassers, however the time-stamp was crossed out and brought by the candidate or their representative to our office.

Mr. Lima said for the papers that are for offices that aren't in Cranston, we don't have the ability to validate those even if we wanted to, because the Central Voter Registration System is hard-coded to prevent that, and the candidate code digits at the top of the papers would be invalid for us to enter them into the system. Even if we could, none of the Cranston voters on the forms would be eligible to have their signatures count towards those offices. They were clearly submitted to us in error by the candidates.

Mr. Iglizzi asked if the candidates have been notified and if these forms affect their qualification. Mr. Lima said they were, and both candidates in question have already attained the required number of validated signatures to qualify for the ballot. For the Rep. 27 candidate, Mr. Lima said he contacted the West Warwick Board of Canvassers, who were able to provide him with the phone number of the circulator. Mr. Lima spoke to him last week as soon as they received the form, as he wanted to ensure the candidate did not mistakenly believe the district crossed into Cranston and would attempt to turn in more signatures from Cranston, but when he spoke the circulator, they were aware of the error already. One of the signatures on the form was from a neighborhood that overlaps the Cranston/West Warwick boundary, which explains the issue.

Ms. Moronta asked if we had contact information for the candidate who submitted the Woonsocket paper. Mr. Lima said the candidate is running for statewide office so we don't have it on file, but he can get it from the Secretary of State's website. He said he did notify both the BOE and SOS and provided them a scanned copy of all four forms.

Mr. Iglizzi advised that Mr. Lima provide a copy of the form for Mayor of Woonsocket candidate, Martone, to the candidate for governor, Gotra, who submitted it to us believing it would be signatures for his campaign, for Mr. Gotra's records, and the Board agreed the candidate should have a record of that form. Mr. Lima said he would scan and send a copy to the gubernatorial candidate tomorrow so they have a copy of it available; he noted the candidate used the wrong form when attempting to get signatures for his own office.

Mr. Lima said only one signature was on the deficient notary form for candidate Mellor. He said a representative from the campaign had stopped by the office on Monday and asked if they could notarize that form, however, Mr. Lima noted that the form had already been received by our office as an official record, and the deadline had passed on Friday at 4 p.m., so he did not believe we could allow anyone to modify the record past the deadline. Mr. Lima said the candidate's representative appeared to understand that explanation and did not disagree with it, and did not express concern because only one signature was on the form and the candidate had sufficient extra signatures filed. Mr. Iglizzi agreed with the status of this form remaining as non-conforming because it lacks a completed notarial certificate, and that it cannot be modified after the deadline has passed.

Mr. Igliazzi said we should validate the two signatures on the form for U.S. Senate candidate, Bahry, that was initially received by the East Providence Board of Canvassers. Mr. Lima wondered if there were chain of custody issues with doing so, and contacted the East Providence Board of Canvassers, who confirmed that they did receive the form, crossed out their own timestamp, and gave it back to the candidate's representative, so the timestamp was not crossed out by a third party. Mr. Igliazzi said an administrative error should not disenfranchise a candidate, and if this form is to be challenged, it would be up to someone else to pursue that, so out of an abundance of caution we should validate the two signatures. Mr. Lima reviewed and validated the signatures, and reported back to the Board that one signature was for a Cranston voter, and one signature was rejected as the voter was in East Providence, so the Board only has one signature it can certify.

Mr. Lima said the nomination papers before the Board this evening are all that remains to be certified by our office. He will bring the originals for state and federal candidates to the Secretary of State tomorrow, and enter certifications in the CVRS for local candidates.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to certify all nomination papers received to date.

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

D. The Board may review and approve the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election ballot certification to the Secretary of State in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-16
(votes may be taken)

Mr. Lima presented the certification which showed the endorsement status, ballot order, qualified candidates, candidates with no primary, and the form of candidate names as they will appear on the ballot. The certification data also included ward committee candidates who are unopposed and will not appear on the ballot because they are unopposed, and will automatically win their elections upon the Board's certification this evening.

Mr. Lima noted the dates will not match on the system-generated candidate report, as today is July 14 but he will have to run the final certification report in the system tomorrow, July 15, after he enters the Board's certifications tomorrow morning. The letter and signed documents will all reflect today's date of July 14.

Mr. Igliazzi asked if these items could be taken as a block. Mr. Lima said there are separate documents so they probably should be taken separately, and Mr. Igliazzi agreed.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election ballot certification.

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

E. If there is no contest, the Board may vote to dispense with a primary election for uncontested offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-11 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima said the law requires the Board to declare that there is no primary contest for the races where a primary will not be held because there are fewer than the minimum number of qualified candidates. He said the certification letter to the Secretary of State, as required by law, represents these contests.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to dispense with a primary election for the uncontested local offices as listed on the certification letter.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

F. If there is no contest, the Board may vote to declare candidates to either be elected or nominated to uncontested offices, as the case may be, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-11 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima noted on the spreadsheet enclosed as part of the certification letter the list of candidates who are to be either elected or nominated to uncontested local party offices and public offices. The Board reviewed the document, and Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to declare candidates to either be elected or nominated to uncontested offices, as the case may be, as reflected on the enclosure to the certification letter.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

G. The Board may designate the state Board of Elections mail ballot drop box at Cranston City Hall to receive voter registrations for the deadline for the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election and November 3, 2026 General Election (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to designate the drop box. Mr. Lima said the drop box is open already, and by designating it as the location to receive registrations on the deadline day, which is a state holiday, we will not have to open our office when City Hall is otherwise closed.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to designate the state Board of Elections mail ballot drop box at Cranston City Hall to receive voter registrations for the deadline for both the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election and the November 3, 2026 General Election.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

IV. Updates from the Registrar / Director of Elections (*no votes taken on any items*)

A. Secretary of State election security grant program update

Mr. Lima said he has applied for up to \$30,000 for this grant, however, given the amount available statewide for the program, it is likely we will receive less. That said, the grant funding

is a welcome addition to a very tight budget, and we will be able to make some security improvements that enhance our ability to respond to emergencies and add to our continuity of operations abilities thanks to the grant, even if it is only a fraction of the requested amount.

He is exploring purchasing radios, generators, extension cords, and using funding to offset the costs of police details for the Fall 2026 elections, which may free up existing funds in the budget for other security needs.

B. Poll worker training class attendance for Board members

Mr. Lima stressed the importance of Board members attending both a supervisor training class and a moderator/clerk training class in August, as they will directly be supervising the polls in the field on Election Day and need to be aware of the duties of poll workers and operation of voting equipment.

C. Preparations for July 30 election security training exercise

Mr. Lima said the Police Department, Fire Department, and IT Department have all confirmed to send a representative to the TTX on July 30, and that he will also have some surprise scenarios for the Board and attendees to run through as we use the TTX to prepare for the 2026 elections. He said it will be a little unrealistic in terms of how many scenarios happen all at the same time – like a tornado, a fire, and a flood all on the same day – but all of the scenarios will be real-world incidents that have actually happened in elections before in Cranston, in our state, and in other states.

D. Status update regarding 2026 city bond questions for November ballot placement

Mr. Lima the Finance Committee has approved six bond questions as passed by the General Assembly, and the full Council is expected to consider adoption on July 20. The resolution will direct the Board of Canvassers to conduct the election for the bond questions in November, so we have scheduled a meeting to certify those questions to the Secretary of State on July 30, ahead of our August 5 deadline to do so, in anticipation of that possibility.

E. Review of ballot proofing process timeline and opportunities for Board members to review ballot proofs before final sign-off to the Secretary of State

Mr. Lima noted we have a very short, two-day window to proof ballots on Monday and Tuesday following the nomination period. The ballots will be created by the Secretary of State over the weekend and sent to us for our review and approval. He will email all Board members a copy of the PDFs, and have printed versions available in the office if Board members would like to review them individually. Mr. Lima has to sign off on the ballot proofs Tuesday afternoon, and asked for assistance from Board members as another set of eyes on them before submitting the proof certification.

V. Adjournment (vote may be taken)

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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