CITY OF CRANSTON
BOARD OF CANVASSERS
Meeting of September 10, 2026 – OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on September 10, 2026, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on August 3, 2026. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Kirk McDonough, at 2:10 p.m. It was held in the Third Floor Conference Room at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anthony Mastantuono, Bill White (for Ms. Moronta); Kirk McDonough

MEMBERS ABSENT: Quilcia Moronta

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Jason Case (Board Alternate), Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), Theresa Bucci (Deputy Registrar)

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 consider any election matter that requires an immediate ruling or determination related to the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election *(votes may be taken)*
  - B. The Board may convene for the purpose of determining the disposition of provisional ballots cast during the Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election of September 9, 2026, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-19-24.3 and 410-RICR-20-00-13 *(votes may be taken)*
  - C. Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-22-5.2 and 17-15-30, the Board may certify the local election and/or nomination results for the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election, with certification contingent and effective upon no valid recount or protest being timely filed in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-34, and receipt of final official results from the R.I. Board of Elections *(votes may be taken)*
- **IV. Updates from the Registrar / Director of Elections** (*no votes taken on any items*)
  - A. Discussion and review of the conduct of the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election
- **V. Adjournment** (*vote may be taken*)

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

Mr. Lima noted Ms. Moronta was unable to attend, so Mr. White would be her designated alternate. Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the agenda as posted.

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

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

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

Mr. McDonough said that minutes from yesterday's election meeting were not yet available for the Board's consideration.

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

A. The Board may hear and consider any election matter that requires an immediate ruling or determination related to the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election *(votes may be taken):*

Mr. Lima said no matters were pending before the Board for consideration.

B. The Board may convene for the purpose of determining the disposition of provisional ballots cast during the Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election of September 9, 2026, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-19-24.3 and 410-RICR-20-00-13 *(votes may be taken)*

Mr. McDonough noted there were about 77 provisional ballots reviewed by the Canvassing Authority staff and presented to the Board for consideration of their disposition, based on the staff's research. Aside from signature matches, for which the Board may choose to override the staff's recommendations, most provisional ballots are clear cut matters of eligibility for which there is no discretion; the voters were either lawfully eligible to cast a ballot, or they were not, based on the information available to us.

Ms. Bucci presented the provisional ballots to the Board and explained the research conducted by the staff for each individual voter record reviewed, such as whether the voter failed to update their registration by the deadline, cast a ballot at the wrong location, or was not registered to vote at all. She reviewed the provisionals with the Board through all 26 precincts.

It was noted some provisional ballots were pending a staff determination, because the voter had requested a mail ballot but did not receive it in time. For these, the staff would inform the state Board of Elections to tabulate the provisional only if no mail ballot is received, pending authorization from the Board of Canvassers to do so. There were similarly provisionals requiring additional information from the Dept. of State Elections Division and DMV before the staff could make a final recommendation to the Board, which the staff asked to be conditionally qualified pending verification of the needed information if the voters were otherwise eligible.

Mr. Lima noted that during the presentation from staff, if any Board member disagrees with the staff determination on a particular provisional, discussion and a roll call vote from the Board will be required to adjudicate that specific provisional ballot.

Ms. Bucci explained the relevant circumstances for each provisional ballot from the information available to the Canvassing Authority office, and the Board accepted the staff's recommendations.

Mr. White noted for the record that he would be recusing from any votes or discussion specifically related to individual provisional ballots cast in Ward 5 precincts.

Mr. McDonough noted for the record that he would be recusing from any votes or discussion specifically related to an individual provisional ballot cast by his mother in Precinct 0714.

No separate discussions or votes were necessary by the Board in either case. For the omnibus votes taken by the Board concerning the disposition of all provisional ballots, it was noted for the record that Mr. White's votes applied to all provisional ballots except those from which he had recused himself, and that Mr. McDonough's votes likewise did not apply to the individual provisional ballot from which he had recused himself. In each instance, a quorum of the Board remained present and voting in the affirmative, and the outcome was not affected.

Mr. Lima noted the Board should take motions to authorize the staff to complete the qualification or disqualification of those matters that remain pending the receipt of more information, to reflect the will of the Board for the dispositions reviewed today.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Mr. White to qualify or disqualify all provisional ballots by unanimous consent of the Board.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Mr. White, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Mr. White to authorize the staff to qualify or disqualify any provisionals that are noted as pending receipt of a mail ballot, as the case may be, where the voters are otherwise eligible.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Mr. White, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Mr. White to authorize the staff to qualify or disqualify any provisionals that are noted as pending additional research conducted by the staff while awaiting follow-up and confirmation of information from the Dept. of State Elections Division and/or state Board of Elections.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Mr. White, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

MOTION: By Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to authorize the staff to qualify or disqualify any provisionals that contain a clear clerical error in order to reflect the intent of the Board.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Mr. White, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

In primaries, it was noted that many provisionals are related to party issues, such as voters who wish to cast a ballot in one party but are only eligible, because of their registration with a different party, to cast a ballot with their eligible party because they did not disaffiliate or change parties by the 30-day deadline. The Board members noted that, because of passage of the automatic disaffiliation law for unaffiliated voters two years ago, the quantity of provisionals due to party issues has been significantly reduced.

The Board thanked Ms. Bucci for her and the staff's diligent work.

C. Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-22-5.2 and 17-15-30, the Board may certify the local election and/or nomination results for the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election, with certification contingent and effective upon no valid recount or protest being timely filed in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-15-34, and receipt of final official results from the R.I. Board of Elections *(votes may be taken):*

Mr. McDonough noted the local certification will be contingent on final official results being certified by the state Board of Elections and no valid recount requests being timely filed by 4 p.m. Mr. Lima said we must certify now, with certification contingent upon these factors, because our deadline to submit candidates to the Secretary of State is 4 p.m. tomorrow, and ballots have to be proofed this weekend under federal law. He listed the various categories of uncounted ballots that remain outstanding, which once tabulated will be included in the official results published by the BOE.

MOTION: By Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to certify local results for all contests contingent and effective upon no valid recount or protest being timely filed in accordance with state law, which shall reflect final, official results received from the R.I. Board of Elections.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Mr. White, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

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

A. Discussion and review of the conduct of the September 9, 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election

Mr. McDonough said the work done by the staff and new Board members was fantastic, and that any issues that did arise were well-supported by our field personnel. Mr. Lima noted that the Primary functions in part as a training ground for new poll workers who will in a few weeks be working a much busier and more impactful General Election.

Mr. White said he would like to review the training materials he was provided in class last month, now that he has seen how the procedures actually work in practice on an Election Day.

Mr. Mastantuono noted there were a few individual poll workers who were not in the best positions for their skillsets, and Mr. McDonough agreed. Mr. Lima said he had similar observations and would be working with our staff to reassign some poll workers accordingly, including promoting some poll workers to moderator or clerk roles who seem to have the experience and skills to handle them.

Mr. McDonough noted some locations had trouble closing down efficiently after polls closed, in part because many poll workers were new this year. Mr. Lima noted that opening and closing are the two most hectic parts of the day, especially for new poll workers, because there is so much paperwork and various tasks that have to be undertaken simultaneously. Some poll workers struggle with the multi-tasking required during these times, especially during closing, where inexperienced poll workers may not know how best to triage priority items – like transmitting results – from lower priority orders, such as accounting for signage.

Mr. Lima noted that many of our election supplies, such as power cords, were left behind at polling places. This is in part because of the new multi-outlet cords used for the PollPads, which were pre-positioned under the check-in tables before poll workers arrived, so many likely did not know they needed to be returned. Mr. Lima said we retrieved the missing cords from several school buildings this morning, and others we know were packed into state return bins that are sealed and will be opened at the BOE later, at which time we should have them all back for the General Election.

Mr. Mastantuono noted he and the other Board members did pass along the instructions to the poll workers while they were visiting sites to put all extension cords back in our local return bags, as we need them back for November. Not all poll workers did so, however, in part because of how hectic the closing process is. Mr. Lima said we will provide a visual checklist for moderators to ensure that the poll workers they supervise get all of our local equipment back to us, as it is time-consuming to hunt it all down post-election and costly to replace if all is not returned.

Mr. McDonough reiterated how valuable it is to the city and the Board to have the staff we do, and thanked Ms. Madonna in particular for her work with recruiting, hiring, and training poll workers under the direction of the Board. He noted that there were many call-outs in the days leading up the election, and Ms. Madonna was able to fill these positions and move personnel accordingly in order to ensure a smooth election. He said it is each Board member's role to also help in the recruitment of poll workers to make Ms. Madonna's job easier. He noted he will be talking to our staff as well about his own assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our poll workers, and encouraged the other Board members to share their observations.

Mr. Lima noted that overstaffing locations continues to be a key aspect of our success. Every location in Cranston had more poll workers assigned than the BOE recommended, which allowed us to absorb attrition and call-outs without impacting operations. These staffing levels were likewise maintained under the conditions of our budget cutbacks this year, and overall we had nearly 50 fewer poll workers assigned than in 2024, but still well above the minimum requirements at each location. He said the work our staff does has been phenomenal.

Mr. Mastantuono said he was concerned about the number of DS-200 tabulators we were provided, particularly since some were not functioning in the morning and had to be replaced by state technicians. He asked if we could have more than one DS-200 at all locations for the General Election.

Mr. Lima said the issue is the state prioritizes giving second DS-200s to precincts in other towns that may have a two-card ballot. Additionally, of the original inventory purchased by the state prior to early voting was the law, there is a finite quantity available, and while in some past elections we have had two or even three DS-200s at all of our larger precincts, because many now need to be assigned to early voting, there simply aren't any extras available.

He noted, however, that precincts such as Hope Highlands are routinely among the top five in the state in terms of both in-person total turnout on Election Day and overall turnout percentage. He said he has noted the views of the Board to the state BOE on many occasions, and also expressed his frustration that a busy location like Hope Highlands that may handle 1,500 or 1,600 voters on Election Day only receives one DS-200, which much smaller and lower turnout precincts in other communities receive two. Mr. Lima said he has provided extensive data in making his

requests to the state BOE, but it has not swayed their operational decision-making on how to allocate this voting equipment.

Mr. McDonough thanked Mr. Lima for advocating for more equipment on behalf of the Board to ensure a smooth Election Day for Cranston's voters. Unfortunately, if we foresee potential problems and try to prepare proactively to solve them, but the BOE sees things differently, we are still left to deal with the consequences if things do not go smoothly for voters on Election Day.

Mr. Mastantuono said he was not thrilled about how Oak Lawn School functions as a polling location. Mr. Lima agreed, and said that using the back entrance of the building to the cafeteria can be confusing for voters, which is why we add about 10 extra directional signs around the neighborhood, given that the front entrance is not ADA-compliant. Mr. Lima said of all the polls in the city to change, that is one of the highest on his list, likewise due to the limited square footage in the voting area, which requires a more confined set-up.

Mr. Lima said that we don't have any choice, however, as there are no other viable alternatives within the precinct area that could be utilized as a replacement. Additionally, we can only change polls once every 10 years, during redistricting, unless a polling location becomes unavailable or falls out of minimum compliance. So it will depend in part on how the General Assembly chooses to draw precinct lines in 2032, which may open up other options, or create a scenario where Oak Lawn isn't even necessary if the precinct aligns to be able to vote at a better location.

V. Adjournment (*vote may be taken*)

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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