

Commissioners

MARISEL A. HERNANDEZ, *Chair*
WILLIAM J. KRESSE, *Commissioner/Secretary*

CHARLES HOLIDAY, JR., *Executive Director*



Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting
October 12, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

69 West Washington Street, 8th Floor Conference Room, Chicago, Illinois 60602
via WebEx video conference

Board Members:

Marisel A. Hernandez, Chair
William J. Kresse, Commissioner/Secretary

Staff:

Charles Holiday, Executive Director
Sandra Aspera, Assistant Executive Director
Adam Lasker, General Counsel
Opal Walls, Purchasing Agent
Max Bever, Director of Public Information
Lance Gough, Consultant
Trish Sheehy

Guests:

Helene Gabelnick, League of Women Voters of Chicago (LWV Chicago)
Brian Whiteley, ES&S
C. Betty Magness, Rainbow P.U.S.H.
Danielle Matzdorf, Arrow Messenger Service

- I. Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.
- II. Roll Call: Both members of the Board were present via WebEx video conference.
- III. Consideration of Agenda: Commissioner Kresse asked that Item IX B, the Current Financial Report for County of Cook, be postponed until a future meeting. The item was postponed.
- IV. Approval of Minutes:
 - A. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 14, 2021: Commissioner Hernandez moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 14, 2021. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed and the Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Board.

V. Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director Charles Holiday reported:

Mr. Holiday participated in the Fall Zoom Conference of the Association of Election Commission Officials of Illinois (AECOI). AECOI had speakers present on the topics of; redistricting, permanent vote-by-mail, Illinois Voter Registration System (IVRS), and election legislation. There was also a presentation of honorary lifetime memberships to Lance Gough, retired Chicago Board of Election Commissioners' Executive Director and Paul Shannon, retired Bloomington Board of Election Commissioners' Executive Director.

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Mr. Holiday provided a brief status on the Board's redistricting projects:

- The geocoding for all voters is 100% completed.
- A list of voters in old and new districts can be produced for some of the districts.
- Unofficial Legislative maps can be produced.
- We are still waiting on input data for Judicial and Congressional districts.
- All voters can be plotted onto ward maps.

Mr. Holiday attended the monthly meeting of the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), where it was mentioned that there have been reports of e-mails with malicious attachments having been sent to election offices. The Board's Security Specialist has checked, and found no e-mails with malicious attachments having been sent to our office.

Mr. Holiday, along with his administrative team, met with the City's Budget Committee to go over our 2022 budget. All went well. Our budget was approved.

A. Assistant Executive Director's Report:

Assistant Executive Director Sandra Aspera reported:

Ms. Aspera had met briefly with ES&S representatives regarding the upgrade and maintenance of the electronic poll books (poll books) ahead of the 2022 elections and will be meeting with ES&S again. The Chair inquired about these meetings. Ms. Aspera stated that we will be recharging the poll books, 2nd phase, and in late November Mr. Brian Whiteley of ES&S will be checking the poll book stands.

Commissioner Kresse asked how much of the work on the poll books will have to wait for redistricting. Ms. Aspera stated that the redistricting should not affect the poll books. Mr. Whiteley confirmed this.

B. Public Information Director's Report

Director of Public Information Max Bever provided the following report:

As the Executive Director noted, we have spent the last few weeks with our attention on the City's budget. We have finalized all budget responses materials and they have been submitted to the City of Chicago, successfully.

We are now preparing remarks and reports for the Cook County budget hearing on Monday, October 25th.

We hosted a booth for National Voter Registration Day at Daley Plaza on September 28th. Mr. Bever thanked the Board's Registration and Community Services divisions for their hard work.

Mr. Bever was excited to say that he is preparing to record the Board's first podcast episode this week.

The Chair stated that she had noticed that we have some new social media activity. She thanked Mr. Bever for that and stated that it's been very good. Mr. Bever stated that our Nation Voter Registration Day were the best posts that we have had since last November.

The Chair took the opportunity to extend kudos to the League of Women Voters and their social media postings. The Chair thanked Ms. Helene Gabelnick and the League.

Commissioner Kresse seconded the kudos to Mr. Bever and Ms. Gabelnick.

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Colloquy ensued between the Chair, Ms. Gabelnick and Ms. C. Betty Magness of Rainbow P.U.S.H.

The Chair stated that the Board and the organizations did a great job with voter outreach in 2020 despite COVID. The Chair praised Ms. Magness for getting the young people registered.

VI. Old Business

- A. Infrastructure Projects and Changes in Election Administration: Nothing new to report.
- B. Electronic Poll Books: Already discussed.
- C. Voting Equipment: Nothing new to report.
- D. Legislation

General Counsel Adam Lasker reported:

Mr. Lasker has been speaking with the Cook County Clerk's office regarding a desire to change legislation on precincts so that we can reduce the number of precincts by increasing precinct size. The Cook County Clerk has met with County Clerks Association members throughout the State, and has obtained approval from the association to move forward with such legislation. We've received unanimous support from AECOI (the Association of Election Commission Officials of Illinois). They have drafted a bill, and Mr. Lasker will send the Board members the language. The plan is to submit it for the Fall veto session with the full support of all the County Clerks and Election Commissions. We are hopeful that that will move forward. The proposed legislation would increase the permissible size of a precinct, uniformly throughout the State, to a maximum target of 1,800 registered voters per precinct. The precinct size is currently measured on actual voters, i.e., people who actually cast a ballot during the Presidential Elections.

The legislation will also address the discrepancy between the maximum size of a precinct in areas having an Election Commissions as compared to those areas where elections are administered by a County Clerk. Mr. Lasker will keep the Board posted.

As there was no New Business on the agenda, Mr. Lasker went directly into his Legal Report.

Mr. Lasker stated while he has a draft calendar ready, but he wishes to hold off on publishing it yet as there are discrepancies in the legislation setting elections for 2022. Specifically, the legislation created two different candidate filing periods for the November General Election: one for State and National offices, and one for County offices. The Illinois State Board of Elections is working on a legislative remedy. The ISBE and the Cook County Clerk's Office are also holding off publishing their calendars at this time. As soon as the Fall Veto Session is finished Mr. Lasker will present a calendar to the Board for formal approval.

Within other matters, Opal Walls, the Board's Procurement Officer has been giving top priority focus on an RFP (Request for Proposal) for ballot printing. Unlike in the recent past when there was only one vendor in the State who could do our ballot printing, there are now three printers who have been certified by Dominion for printing ballots. As such, we will be doing an RFP.

Ms. Walls is also working on a contract extension for the printing and mailing for the pre-election household mailer. Earlier this year, before the Legislature moved the date of the Primary, we did a contract extension on this. That extension expires at the end of March. With the primary now set for June, we are hoping that the vendor would continue under the present terms until June. If not, we will need to issue another RFP.

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Ms. Walls is also working on cartage and temporary staffing RFPs. With the cartage RFP we will need to wait until we receive confirmation from the City as to the warehouse.

Temporary staffing is an issue because due to the COVID pandemic, one of the temp staffing agencies we have used in the past has gone out of business. Ms. Walls is working hard to find an agency that's appropriate for the needs of the Board.

Mr. Lasker added that we have started meetings internally on pre-trial detainee voting at the Cook County jail.

Commissioner Kresse asked Mr. Lasker, with regards to the RFP for the ballot printing, if Dominion has given any guidance as to the problem of Sharpie ink bleeding through the ballot paper. Mr. Lasker first reassured the Board that our ballots were intentionally laid out so that any Sharpie ink bleeding through would not cover an oval on the backside of the ballot. That being said, we have found that fine-point markers work better than medium-point markers. Medium-point markers, with heavier tips, were ordered for that most recent election; we will not be using those again. We'll go with finer-point markers in the future. The Chair noted that in that case we should order pen supplies as soon as possible because a lot of other jurisdictions will want the same pens; let us lock in the necessary pens as soon as possible. The Chair further noted that all supplies should be locked in given the supply-chain issues reported in the news.

- VII. New Business: None.
- VIII. Legal Report: General Counsel Adam Lasker provided the Legal Report at the end of the Legislative Report
- IX. Financial Report
 - A. Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2021 Appropriation – 21-07 dated October 12, 2021 in the amount of \$376,037.34: Commissioner Kresse moved to approve the Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2021 Appropriation – 21-07 dated October 12, 2021 in the amount of \$376,037.34. Commissioner Hernandez seconded the motion. The motion passed by 2:0 vote of the Board.
 - B. Current Financial Report and Trial Balance for the County of Cook dated October 12, 2021: This item was postponed to a future date during Section III – Consideration of the Agenda portion of this meeting.
- X. Public Comment: None.
- XI. Executive Session: None.
- XII. Adjournment: Commissioner Hernandez moved to adjourn. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Submitted,



Commissioner William J. Kresse
Secretary