

Commissioners

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

CHARLES HOLIDAY, JR., *Executive Director*



Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago
Regular Board Meeting

September 13, 2022, 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
June A. Brown, Commissioner

Staff:

Charles Holiday, Executive Director
Sandra Aspera, Assistant Executive Director
Adam Lasker, General Counsel
Max Bever, Director of Public Information
Opal Walls, Procurement Officer/Purchasing Agent
Karen Chin, Director - Human Resources
Kimberly Carrillo Walker, Finance Director
Lance Gough, Consultant
Trish Sheehy

Guests:

Danielle Matzdorf, Arrow Messenger
Helene Gabelnick, League of Women Voters
Brian Whiteley, ES&S
Kim Leung, Asian Americans Advancing Justice
C. Betty Magness, Rainbow P.U.S.H.
Roy J. Gilchrist

- I. **Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
- II. **Roll Call All:** members of the Board were present via WebEx video conference.
- III. **Consideration of Agenda:** The agenda was accepted as presented.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:**
 - A. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of June 28, 2022 which reconvened on July 19, 2022
 - B. Minutes of the Canvassing Board Meeting of June 28, 2022 which reconvened on July 19, 2022The Chair asked to take the approval of both meetings together.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting and the Minutes the Canvassing Board Meeting both of which convened on June 28, 2022 and were reconvened on July 19, 2022. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Board.
- V. **Executive Director's Report**
Executive Director Charles Holiday reported:

This past Friday, each registered voter in the City of Chicago began to receive their new voter's card in the mail. This card contains their updated precinct information as well as the Chicago Police District Council information. The mailing will be done by the end of this week.

The Polling Places Department is filling vacant polling places. This process will finish later this month, in time for the Household Mailing to go out in early October.

We have been contacted by some of the senior facilities that had opted-out of being polling places following the March 2020 Election asking to once again be used as a polling place.

We will be celebrating National Voter Registration Day next Tuesday, September 20th. Community Services will have a table on the Daley Plaza sharing important information including how to become a poll-worker and an Early Voting Official.

We are preparing all materials for our budget hearing with the City of Chicago on October 4th.

Mr. Holiday and Assistant Executive Director Sandra Aspera attended the 37th Annual National Conference of the Election Center in Denver, Colorado.

Preparation for our Early Voting Supersite has begun.

Next week we will begin our weekly staff meetings leading up to the election.

We've inquired about some additional Election Day voting sites. We have submitted a request for use of the United Center Atrium, and are waiting to hear back from them. We have a walk-through at Navy Pier scheduled to see if they have something that's suitable for our use. The NFL (National Football League) has an initiative, so we're talking with Soldier Field about using some part of the facility as an Election Day Voting Center. We are also looking at locations at 120 North Clark and at 1056 West Washington Boulevard.

We have scheduled drop boxes at Wrigley Field and at WinTrust Arena.

The Chair asked Mr. Holiday to explain what the October Household Mailing is about. Mr. Holiday said that the information on the Household Mailing would include the voter's precinct, ward, polling place, closest Early Voting site and the location of our Supersite. Our Public Information Director, Max Bever, will speak more on that in his report.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Holiday regarding the conference he had attended, if there was any new information to share with the Board for Election Administration. Mr. Holiday said that he and Ms. Aspera will forward information to the Board members.

A. Assistant Executive Director's Report

Assistant Executive Director Sandra Aspera reported:

Ms. Aspera had staff apply for the Fiscal Year 2023 Polling Place Accessibility Grant with the Illinois State Board of Elections. Ms. Aspera was happy to report that it was approved. We are waiting for the Acceptance agreement designating the actual amount and allowable expenditures for our request. Ms. Aspera thanked Opal Walls, the Board's Procurement Officer, Kimberly Carrillo Walker, the Board's Finance Manager, and Al Chase, of the Board's IT Department, for their collaboration in submitting the grant proposal. Mr. Chase continues to assist us with grants.

We are hosting a job fair for part-time help at our warehouse this Wednesday, September 14th. The pay is \$17 per hour for up to 30 hours per week. We will also have staff for those who want to apply to be an Election Judge, an Early Voting Official or want to register to vote.

Additional part-time and temporary staff for our office are presently being recruited to assist with operations in preparation for the upcoming November 2022 election.

This week all departments will begin working extended hours.

Last Friday, September 9th was the last day for Committeepersons to assign Judges of Election. As of yesterday, staff has begun assigning over-the-counter judges.

The delivery of Nursing Home packages will start tomorrow and will continue through the rest of the week.

As of this morning the total Vote-by-Mail applications is 131,804. The current totals for Election Judges are: 328 “active assigned”, 2,452 “pending – waiting to be assigned”, 897 applications submitted that are waiting to be reviewed and approved. The current totals for Election Coordinators are: 850 pending waiting to be assigned after they complete their online training, and 451 applications waiting to be reviewed and approved.

Commissioner Brown asked Ms. Aspera whether Board members should send out applications or information regarding Election Judges and Election Coordinators, or should this just be done through workshops or job fairs? Ms. Aspera responded “definitely”. Ms. Aspera said that she and Mr. Bever would be happy to work with the Commissioners on this.

The Chair asked Ms. Aspera about how are we publicizing this job fair. Ms. Aspera mentioned that the Board’s HR Department along with Public Information Director Max Bever have been working on this. Mr. Bever stated that he has been working with the Director of the Board’s Human Resources Department Karen Chin and the HR staff. They have created a flyer and shared that online, on our social media accounts. Mr. Bever sent out a short press release. He has not seen a hit on media yet, but we have another bite at the apple on the 20th for National Voter Registration Day. The table on Daley Plaza will be very visible for foot traffic and we will have all the same information and work it as a *de facto* job fair at that location too. So, we will have two job fairs within the next two weeks.

The Chair asked if there’s been outreach to community organizations about the job fair? Ms. Chin stated that she’s been in contact with Streetwise and they have a workforce program. Ms. Chin has spoken with the workforce coordinator who has sent the flyers to other organizations over the weekend. Ms. Chin emailed the Veterans’ Services Center at the City Colleges as well as their career centers. They are going to forward to their students and to the veterans. Ms. Chin believes some staff has been also posting at their local libraries or at other places near their homes. The Chicago Food Depository has a warehouse bridge program that they have a newsletter. Ms. Chin sent the flyer and they put the flyer in that newsletter that went out. Ms. Chin said that there were other organizations she has reached out to, but could not recall their names at this time. The Chair said that that’s ok, so long as we are tapping into all of these organizations; that’s where we could really get people.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Bever if the flyers could be used by Board members to distribute. Mr. Bever said they absolutely could. Mr. Bever can send the Commissioners the flyers in both PDF form and JPEG form to share as a graphic on social media, too.

B. Public Information Director’s Report

Public Information Director Max Bever provided the following report:

We’ve been taking on every media opportunity to discuss precinct consolidation and we will continue to do so. That is the main message of many of our communications moving

forward, including the Household Mailer, which is our household polling place reminder mailing to all registered voters within Chicago.

As Director Holiday mentioned, everyone will have their new voter card by the end of this week. In early October, as soon as all polling places are finalized, they will get this other mailer. We have redesigned it so the front says, “Attention: your polling place may have changed”. That’s going to be the main messaging of our digital advertising and many of our print news ads ahead of the election. While we will still promote Early Voting, we will have ads and digital ads that start with “Has your polling place changed?” with a link to “Your voter information” so people can check their precinct polling place information as well as all their other voting options: Vote-by-Mail and Early Voting.

September 29th is the opening of Early Voting, as well as the first day that Vote-by-Mail ballots will be put into the mail. We have a press conference scheduled at 10:00 a.m. at the supersite when that opens. We will be following up with the Commissioners.

Mr. Bever thanked Kimi Mehta and our Community Services team. We did our first podcast entirely in Hindi just a few weeks back. Ms. Mehta is already working on a second episode. This time with a guest from Asian Americans Advancing Justice. We’ll work with additional members of our Community Services team; we’d like to have a podcast in Spanish, Chinese and Polish moving forward.

Commissioner Kresse asked Mr. Bever about the mailers that will tell voters where their polling place will be, along with the Early Voting site for their Ward, and a reminder that they can go to any of the Early Voting sites. Commissioner Kresse pointed out that in many cases, an Early Voting site other than their Ward’s site may be closer to the voter. Mr. Bever stated that on the mailer we give the voter two Early Voting locations: their specific ward location but also the geographically closest location.

VI. Old Business

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

General Counsel Adam Lasker reported that the General Assembly is still not in session, and is not planning to go back into session until after the next election.

Mr. Lasker pointed out that he has reached out to the leadership at the Illinois State Board of Elections to discuss the need, at least for Chicago and probably suburban Cook County and other big jurisdictions, to have our Early Voting sites open as Vote Centers on Election Day for the 2023 elections. It sounds like we’re going to get support from the State Board of Elections on that, but we need the General Assembly to go into session before anything can be done. So that’s all Mr. Lasker has to report at this point in time.

Commissioner Kresse asked Mr. Lasker regarding the Police Advisory Councils elections next year, and the need for some sort of reformative legislation to go through City Council. Mr. Lasker has been having some meetings with the Chicago Law Department which is working with the City Council to put forward some amendments. The amendments are rather simple, but they have tremendous impact. For example, there is adding language to the Ordinance that would say that general Election Law will control any aspect of election administration that’s not otherwise set forth in the ordinance. That’s very common for smaller, local

elections like this. Additionally, they're proposing to change the signature requirement, which is a problematic. Instead of it being based on the number of Registered Voters, their current proposal is to have it be based on election results from the preceding Presidential Election. Mr. Lasker will keep the Board informed.

VII. New Business

- A.** Approval of option for contract renewal with Roth & Co. for independent, external audit services

Mr. Lasker spoke to this item. In the Summer of 2021 the Board did a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Independent External Auditing Services. The contract went to Roth & Company. It includes the option for 3 1-year extensions. This current proposal is to extend. The Board would be planning to initiate another audit in 2023, so this would allow them to get started in addition to completing the current audit. So, the request is to exercise the Board's option to renew this particular contract for another year at the exact same terms and conditions which were previously awarded.

Commissioner Kresse moved to approve a one-year contract extension with Roth and Company for Independent external audit services at exactly the same terms and conditions that the Board previously approved. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed by 3:0 vote of the Board.

- B.** Approval of short-term property use agreement with 108 North State Street (Chicago) Owner, LLC (d/b/a "Block 37") for the 2023 elections

Executive Director Holiday stated that the facility at Block 37 will be used to house our Election Day Attorneys, standby Judges of Election, Standby Election Coordinators, and that facility will also be used to proof the ballots.

Mr. Lasker explained the terms. We have a current contract for this November Election, so what we're looking at now is for the 2023 elections both February and April. There will be a one-time flat fee of \$80,000 for suites 260 through 268 and 350. The same space we are currently using. The term would begin on November 14, 2022 and run through April 9, 2023 to get us through that April election.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the short-term property use agreement with 108 North State Street for the 2023 elections in the amount of \$80,000 and for the period of November 14, 2022 through April 9, 2023. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board.

- C.** Adoption of 2023 Advisory Referendum Guidelines

Mr. Lasker explained that the Board does, every election cycle, publish guidelines for advisory referenda proponents. There have been no substantive changes to the relevant laws so we've updated the dates and deadlines in relation to the February 2023 election. After the Board's approval these will be sent out for translations and Mr. Bever will get everything published on our website.

Commissioner Kresse moved to adopt the 2023 Advisory Referendum Guidelines. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was passed by unanimous vote of the Board.

D. Adoption of 2023 Local Option Guidelines

Mr. Lasker stated that there were no substantive changes to the Illinois Liquor Control Act of 1934, so we've just updated the dates and deadlines in relation to the February Election.

As a reminder, these particular Local Option Referenda, which involve a referendum to either prohibit the sale of alcohol or to allow the sale of alcohol in a certain jurisdiction, are filed with the City Clerk's Office. The Board of Elections merely receives ballot certifications from the City Clerk's Office.

Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the 2023 Local Option Guidelines. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by 3:0 vote of the Board.

VIII. Legal Report

General Counsel Adam Lasker provided the following Legal Report.

On Friday of last week, we wrapped up pending Electoral Board cases. Tomorrow is the deadline for filing Judicial Review. Mr. Lasker is not expecting any Judicial Reviews from those pending cases.

We've also received via email service the Complaint in a lawsuit filed by Willie Wilson. There are two primary allegations in the lawsuit. In the opinion of General Counsel Lasker both allegations are factually and legally incorrect. First, they're alleging that the Board's intent was to not publicize, to not go public with the new precinct boundaries until sometime in the middle of October. Yet the Board went public with these in August, before the lawsuit was filed. The second allegation is that the Board is breaking up Ethnic Voting Blocks by redistricting precincts the way it has, which is a legal impossibility. Ethnic Voting Blocks are protected under the U. S. Constitution and redistricting can break them up in unlawful ways, but that only happens with voting districts from which officers are elected. But no one is elected from a precinct, so that's a legal impossibility. Now, if they don't like the change to the sizes of the precincts, that's a complaint properly addressed to the State of Illinois which passed the legislation. Currently the State of Illinois is not a defendant. The Chicago Board of Elections is simply following the new State Statute.

IX. Financial Report

A. Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2022 Appropriation – 22-06 dated September 13, 2022, in the amount of \$3,365,458.64

Commissioner Kresse moved to approve the Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2022 Appropriation – 22-06 dated September 13, 2022, in the amount of \$3,365,458.64. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by 3:0 vote of the Board.

B. Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the County of Cook – 2022 Appropriation – 22-06 dated September 13, 2022 in the amount of \$1,463,013.90. Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the County of Cook – 2022 Appropriation – 22-06 dated September 13, 2022 in the amount of \$1,463,013.90.

Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board.

X. Public Comment:

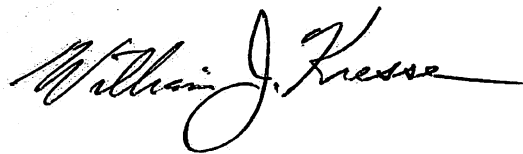
Mr. Holiday mentioned that our office delivered registration materials to Rainbow/PUSH for National Black Voter Registration Day on Sunday, September 18th.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Holiday for the date of the City budget hearing. Mr. Holiday said it's going to be October the 4th. Mr. Holiday said that the budget has been submitted already, but we will be going before the City Budget Committee on October 4th to answer whatever questions they may have regarding our budget.

XI. **Executive Session:** none

XII. **Adjournment:** Commissioner Kresse moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed by 3:0 vote of the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Kresse". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Commissioner William J. Kresse
Secretary