

Meeting of the Commissioners Elections
October 14, 2020

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COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

LISA DEELEY, CHAIRWOMAN
AL SCHMIDT, COMMISSIONER
OMAR SABIR, COMMISSIONER

HELD AT:

Pennsylvania Convention Center
1101 Arch Street, Hall E
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

REPORTED BY: Patricia Slater

Strehlow & Associates, Inc.

(215)504-4622

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2 PROCEEDINGS

3 - - -

4 CHAIRWOMAN DEELEY: Hello.

5 I cannot be there in person.

6 However, Vice Chairman Schmidt

7 will be handling the meeting.

8 But before we get to that, I

9 would just like the to make a

10 brief announcement, if I may.

11 I would like to thank my

12 fellow Commissioner's, both

13 Commissioner Schmidt and

14 Commissioner Sabir, for their

15 administrative over-site of two

16 very important pieces of this

17 puzzle that is election operations

18 in Philadelphia.

19 First, Commissioner Schmidt,

20 you and your staff for the

21 outstanding job of administrative

22 over-site of the polling place,

23 unit. I think we are going to

24 close the loop on that today.

1 That has just been a tremendous
2 effort, and I thank you very much.

3 Commissioner Sabir, you and
4 your staff and the administrative
5 over-site of the poll worker unit,
6 we have a little work to do, but I
7 know we are close to closing that
8 loop. And I'm also so grateful
9 that we have that virtual training
10 that's available for our poll
11 workers. And so thank you and
12 your staff for that work.

13 And also I would like to
14 take a minute of personal
15 privilege, if I could, to thank --
16 to first let everybody know that
17 it has been my desire to always
18 have the Commissioner meetings
19 streamed since I've been elected.

20 When we realized that we
21 were losing our courtroom at
22 Delaware and Spring Garden, our
23 plan at that time was to move over
24 to the guest commission meeting

1 room where the technology is
2 present for us to be able to have
3 streamed our Commissioner
4 Meetings.

5 Unfortunately COVID-19 had
6 other plans for us and our
7 meetings as all meetings. It took
8 some effort, but it was always my
9 plan to transition from the
10 warehouse to the Convention Center
11 with the ability to stream.

12 To that end, I would like to
13 take a moment to thank Donna
14 Fitzpatrick, from my office staff,
15 who has worked tirelessly to make
16 this a reality.

17 Donna, if you could stand up
18 so everybody could see you and
19 thank you so much for all of your
20 work, for you allowing these
21 meetings to be streamed is a great
22 feature and your work is greatly
23 appreciated.

24 With that, Commissioner

1 Schmidt, I'll turn the meeting
2 over to you.

3 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: First, just
4 a couple of housekeeping issues.

5 There is a public restroom
6 in the back of the room if anyone
7 needs it. Also if you're here to
8 testify on any of the polling
9 place moves we will be discussing
10 today and voting on today, I ask
11 that you please wait until the new
12 business part of the meeting when
13 we will be handling all polling
14 place changes.

15 We will know move to public
16 comment. Commenter's shall state
17 where they live, or if they are
18 not a resident -- a resident of
19 Philadelphia, that they are a
20 Philadelphia taxpayer. Public
21 comment is not an opportunity for
22 dialogue or Q and A. It is public
23 comment; a chance for you to tell
24 us what you think. Each speaker

1 shall have two minutes, however,
2 we may extend this time at my
3 discretion. All public comments
4 must be relevant or germane to
5 board business.

6 Finally, it's my
7 responsibility to preserve the
8 order and decorum of the meetings
9 as such; profane, slanderous,
10 discriminatory, or personal attack
11 will not be tolerated.

12 Anyone wish to offer public
13 comment may please step forward.

14 MR. MCCARTHY: Good morning.
15 My name is Scott McCarthy. I'm a
16 Philadelphia resident and a member
17 of Protect Our Vote Philly.

18 I just would like to add
19 that I quite disagree with your
20 point that public comment is not
21 an opportunity for dialogue or Q
22 and A. It absolutely is. Your
23 choice as Commissioners to not
24 engage in dialogue and not answer

1 questions is your decision and
2 your choice, and that is not
3 necessarily -- in fact, not
4 necessary, it is not -- public
5 comment in Sunshine Meetings are
6 an opportunity for those dialogue
7 questions whether or not you chose
8 to engage as much.

9 So, In November of 2019 POV
10 Philly informed the Commissioner's
11 of alarming security lapses at two
12 warehouses which store voting
13 machines, blank ballots, and at
14 that time voted ballots, along
15 with other sensitive materials.

16 Commissioner Deeley or any
17 of the other Commissioner, on
18 October 7th of this year, a week
19 after a burglary and less then a
20 week after a reporter found yet
21 another warehouse opened and
22 unguarded, Commissioner Deeley
23 stated at a Philly for Change Q
24 and A that the security of these

1 facilities is the responsibility
2 of the City and it's property
3 department, not the Commission.

4 If that's the case
5 Commissioner Deeley or
6 Commissioner Schmidt or the other
7 Commissioner, sir, did you inform
8 the City last year of the security
9 lapses and the uncovered
10 unreported?

11 (Pause.)

12 So, again, no dialogue or Q
13 and A, which is your choice and
14 your decision.

15 Second question, why didn't
16 the City insure that the voting
17 equipment was secure?

18 (Pause.)

19 We should all be very
20 disturbed with the lack of answers
21 to these questions, because either
22 way the City was not prepared when
23 they had ample time and
24 information to take action. We

1 urge all City commissioner's to
2 press for the immediate engagement
3 of qualified security consultants
4 to assess the vulnerability not
5 only about warehouse, but of the
6 entirety of Board of Elections
7 Operations during this election
8 cycle.

9 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Sir,
10 your time is up.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. MCCARTHY: Thank you for
13 that dialogue.

14 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Do we
15 have any other public comments
16 this morning?

17 MS. STAUSS: Good morning,
18 commissioners.

19 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
20 morning, ma'am.

21 MS. STAUSS: I'm Sharon
22 Stauss (ph) a resident of 912.

23 Can you hear me okay?

24 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Yes,

1 ma'am.

2 MS. STAUSS: There is a lot
3 of reverb in this in room.

4 Congratulations on getting a
5 pretty much full slate of workers.
6 It's fabulous to see one potential
7 major pick of the verdict (sic),
8 hopefully.

9 Based on my own experience,
10 I am still concerned about poll
11 workers. I applied to be a poll
12 worker in early September. A
13 couple of weeks later, I got a
14 cryptic message saying that you
15 have my application and I may or
16 may not hear more from you again.
17 I got an almost identical message
18 a week later. I called your
19 Elections Office, they asked me a
20 few questions, and verbally
21 assigned me a job in my precinct.
22 Great. But another week went by
23 and I received no confirmation or
24 other information from your

1 office.

2 Unsure of whether I was
3 really signed up, I called back
4 and a new staffer confirmed my
5 assignment. I asked what else I
6 need to know. She went through a
7 very, long list. That was very
8 helpful and I appropriated her
9 time, but it would have been much
10 easier and quicker and more
11 effective to just e-mail or picker
12 mail me a few written informed
13 letters that I was assigned.

14 Maybe other poll workers got
15 more formal notifications. I hope
16 so. But if a large number of them
17 got the same kind of
18 non-communication I did, many
19 so-called confirmed workers may
20 well be no shows simply because
21 they were not sure when or where
22 or even whether to show up.

23 It's not too late to bulk
24 mail all poll workers to confirm

1 assignments, locations, training
2 procedures, and when where to show
3 on up on November 3rd, even at the
4 risk of sending duplicate info to
5 some.

6 We've all heard bad things
7 happen in Philadelphia, let's not
8 have that be poll worker
9 misunderstandings.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
12 you.

13 MS. MCCARTHY: Good morning.

14 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
15 morning.

16 MS. MCCARTHY: My name is
17 Mirelle McCarthy (ph). I'm a tax
18 payer of Philadelphia, and a
19 member of Protect Our Vote Philly.

20 I would like to add to Scott
21 McCarthy's comments that when
22 questions have been posed to you,
23 you never follow-up. It just goes
24 into to this black hole and that's

1 on you guys.

2 At the October 7th meeting
3 of Philly for Change, Commissioner
4 Deeley, you stated that the
5 security of the warehouse where
6 voting machines are stored and
7 where the recent burglary took
8 place is not your responsibility.
9 You said you, quote, don't secure
10 warehouses, end quote, and that
11 "security is the responsibility of
12 the City". We believe the public
13 deserves to hear from you whether
14 you informed the City last
15 November of the security issues we
16 reported to you about unsecured
17 voted ballots and machines and
18 boxes of blank ballots laying
19 around.

20 If the responsibility lies
21 with the City, who specifically is
22 responsible for making sure the
23 physical elements of our
24 election's are protected.

1 Why did it take a burglary
2 of one of the warehouses for Mayor
3 Kenney to implement some security
4 measures, and why did no one plan
5 ahead to secure the warehouse?

6 With respect to other sites
7 or election materials and hardware
8 are stored, have security measures
9 be implemented there as well. The
10 public needs reassurances from
11 you, Commissioner Deeley, as Chair
12 of this board.

13 The Executive Director Joe
14 Lynch is in charge of all
15 operations and answers only to
16 you, that's how you set up it up.
17 You're the only one that really
18 decides anything. The security of
19 our election's should be your top
20 priority, and not something you're
21 assuming will be handled by some
22 other City department.

23 When will you offer the
24 public a full report of the

1 security measures and access
2 protocols you will oversee as
3 Chair of this board so that --

4 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
5 you, ma'am. Your time is up.

6 MS. MCCARTHY: No further
7 breaches of security occur at our
8 election facility.

9 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
10 you, ma'am.

11 MS. MCCARTHY: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Do we
13 with have any other public comment
14 this morning?

15 MR. DEL VALLE: Good
16 morning, Commissioner Deeley,
17 Commissioner Sabir and
18 Commissioner Schmidt.

19 My name is Andre Del Valle.
20 I'm a voting access campaign for
21 Pennsylvania voice. We are
22 non-partisan organization
23 committed to safe and transparent
24 elections for BIPOC voters across

1 Pennsylvania.

2 I'm here on behalf of eleven
3 organizations who signed onto a
4 letter to the Commissioner, which
5 was sent Friday, October 2nd,
6 voicing our concerns and offering
7 recommendations to some of the
8 challenges our respected
9 organizations saw throughout
10 Philadelphia following the primary
11 election, which we hope through
12 collaboration can be rectified for
13 the general election.

14 Here in Philadelphia, we are
15 urging your office to provide
16 transparency around poll worker
17 recruitment by precinct through a
18 dashboard on your website so that
19 the public is aware of any
20 shortages.

21 Committing to a voted
22 educational mailing and text
23 message notification that includes
24 up-to-date deadlines, polling

1 location changes, drop box
2 locations, clear and concise
3 instructions to prevent "naked
4 ballots", along with the county
5 election board website and phone
6 numbers in the top five languages.

7 We are also asking that you
8 commit to safe polling locations
9 by releasing protocols for safety
10 concerns at the polls, ensuring
11 "PPE" is available for all poll
12 workers and committing to posting
13 COVID-19 guidelines at all polling
14 locations with six-foot markers,
15 along with the hotlines for
16 language access and the county
17 election phone numbers also in the
18 top five languages.

19 We are asking that you
20 insure there are enough
21 declarations, provisional ballots,
22 and emergency paper ballots for
23 all voters at all polling
24 locations and request that roving

1 teams are sent out to mitigate
2 long lines and any potential
3 issues at the polls along with
4 Poll workers being trained to
5 report any issues or delays to
6 Commissioners in real-time.

7 We would like the
8 Commissioners to create protocols
9 to ensure all polling locations,
10 drop boxes and satellite election
11 offices are all accessible to all
12 voters now throughout election
13 day. And urge City Council and
14 the Mayor to call on the
15 Philadelphia Gas Works, the water
16 department, and PECO to include
17 mail-in ballots applications and
18 information about Satellite
19 Election offices in all utility
20 bills prior to vote by mail
21 deadline.

22 We applaud the Commissioners
23 efforts through equipment
24 purchases, staffing increases, and

1 adjusting protocols during the
2 COVID-19 pandemic to ensure a
3 fair, safe, and accessible
4 election as we all work to ensure
5 that no voter is disenfranchised
6 in the general election.

7 Thank you for the
8 opportunity to testify today and
9 we look forward to working
10 together.

11 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
12 you, Mr. Del Valle.

13 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Do we
14 have any other public comment?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
17 Hearing none. We will move on to
18 old business.

19 Joe Lynch our Executive
20 Director.

21 MR. LYNCH: Good morning,
22 Commissioners.

23 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
24 morning.

1 COMMISSIONER SABIR: Morning.

2 MR. LYNCH: Today's report
3 from the County Board of
4 Elections; we have processed
5 approximately 363,038 absentee and
6 mail-in applications that were
7 approved.

8 Absentee there were 37,560.
9 2,141 of them were paper and
10 35,419 were online. Mail-in's,
11 there were 321,476. That's
12 144,890 in paper. 176,586 online.
13 Civilian overseas ballots, 1,083,
14 federal voters. 2,419, military
15 500.

16 Total outstanding ballot
17 applications today is about 8,100.
18 Total outstanding ballot
19 applications excluding estimate
20 duplicate applications, there is
21 around 6,100. The voter
22 registration for the election
23 cycle to date, they have processed
24 252,580 registrations, of which

1 40,150 were paper. We have a
2 backlog of 400 paper applications
3 which came in the mail on 10/13.

4 The Election Board Unit;
5 7,652 board workers have been
6 confirmed. 863 are still
7 unconfirmed. 3,390 in-person poll
8 workers were trained to date. And
9 444 people have taken the virtual
10 training since it went live last
11 Friday.

12 Election activities, we are
13 still waiting on material that has
14 to be packed into the election
15 boxes, such as; sample ballots,
16 poll books and a few smaller other
17 items. Other than that, most of
18 the material is here at the
19 Convention Center.

20 Thank you. That's all I
21 have, Commissioners.

22 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Can
23 we now move on to a Deputy
24 Commissioner's report from Deputy

1 Commissioner Nick Custodio.

2 MR. CUSTODIO: Good morning,
3 Commissioners.

4 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
5 morning.

6 MR. CUSTODIO: Last Friday
7 we installed the drop boxes at
8 City Hall what and Delaware and
9 Spring Garden. We are continuing
10 to search for locations elsewhere
11 in Philadelphia beneath video
12 camera surveillance and video
13 retention departments to also
14 install a drop box there.

15 Per the motion last week, we
16 will be opening Julia Ward House
17 School as a drop off only location
18 today. Voters can drop their
19 ballots, registrations, and mailed
20 ballot request forms off at the
21 services such as Ballot On Demand
22 were not be available as of yet.

23 We are announcing that
24 tomorrow will be opening J.

1 Hampton Moore School as a full
2 service location and Alain Lock
3 School as a full service location.

4 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
5 you, Nick.

6 Is there any other old
7 business.

8 (No response.)

9 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
10 Hearing none.

11 Moving onto new business
12 with the polling place report from
13 Charlie Strohm.

14 MR. STROHM: Good morning,
15 Commissioners.

16 COMMISSIONER SABIR: Good
17 morning.

18 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
19 morning.

20 Before I start, I'd like to
21 say that we 1,703 divisions in
22 Philadelphia, and at this time
23 they are all solid. That is a
24 total of 718 locations through

1 Philadelphia. Very proud of my
2 unit. We did a hard three months
3 and we solved everything.

4 Moving forward with the
5 polling places this morning. I
6 would like to move the 74
7 divisions listed on the sheets in
8 front of under consolidated
9 locations to new location for the
10 2020 general election. Copies of
11 this list has been given to each
12 Commissioner and is available at
13 the public comment table. I ask
14 that the list be moved into to
15 record. We will keep it light or
16 I can read through all 74 changes.

17 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: So
18 I'd like to open the floor up to
19 public comment related to polling
20 places now, Charlie.

21 If you have any public
22 comment related to specific
23 polling place locations, you can
24 come up here and state your name

1 and share with us what your issue
2 is.

3 MS. STEVENSON: Hi, my name
4 is Lavern Stevenson.

5 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Good
6 morning.

7 MS. STEVENSON: I'm a
8 Philadelphia taxpayer. I work for
9 4820 -- my number is 4823 and I
10 work for 4811. So we at their
11 address, so it moved to 4811?

12 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: 4811?

13 MS. STEVENSON: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
15 Moving to the university --
16 Universal Charter School.

17 MS. STEVENSON: Yes. That's
18 where we will be?

19 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Yes
20 ma'am.

21 MS. STEVENSON: Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Thank
23 you.

24 Do we have they other public

1 comment related to specific
2 polling places at this time?

3 (No response.)

4 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
5 Charlie, do you mind coming back?

6 MR. STROHM: (Complies.)

7 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
8 Charlie, do you have anything else
9 to add?

10 MR. STROHM: Just to read
11 what we -- the process -- go
12 through the process, so basically
13 the notice of replacement of 2020
14 primary polling place proposed
15 2020 general election place within
16 the division. If the changes are
17 approved, we will update the
18 running list on
19 philadelphiavotes.com and sure
20 system to reach the divisions. I
21 will ask the polling places for
22 the 74 divisions listed on the
23 sheets in front of you to be
24 added.

1 That's all I have.

2 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: I'd
3 like to make a motion that we move
4 the polling place list that
5 Charlie has submitted into the
6 public record.

7 Do I get a second?

8 COMMISSIONER SABIR: Second.

9 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: All
10 in favor?

11 (All respond I.)

12 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: I'd
13 also make a motion to approve the
14 list that Charlie has submitted to
15 us today.

16 COMMISSIONER SABIR: I
17 second that.

18 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: All
19 in favor?

20 (All answer I.)

21 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
22 That's it for polling places.

23 Do we have any other new
24 business this morning?

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1 COMMISSIONER SABIR: Yes,
2 Vice Chair, If I may.

3 On October 10, 1871 Octavius
4 Catto was killed on the election
5 day so that black voters could
6 have access to vote in
7 Philadelphia. And I just think
8 they needed to recognize that, you
9 know, we want to try to make sure
10 we keep voting accessible to all
11 Philadelphian's.

12 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Is
13 there any other new business?

14 COMMISSIONER SABIR: No,
15 sir.

16 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT:
17 Hearing none. This meeting is
18 adjourned to the call of the
19 chair.

20 Thank you.

21 (Whereupon, the meeting
22 concluded at or about 11:23 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, hereby certify that the
witness was duly sworn by me and that the
proceedings is a true record of the
testimony given by the witness.

Court Reporter - Notary Public

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ability 4:11	4:23	black 12:24	chance 5:23	15:17,18	1:15 4:10	22:13	18:12,19
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21:12	assess 9:4	breaches	7:2 8:13	commissio...	19:2	discriminat...	emergency
add 6:18	assigned	15:7	chose 7:7	2:12 7:10	create 18:8	6:10	17:22
12:20 26:9	10:21 11:13	brief 2:10	City 8:2,8,16	9:1 21:24	cryptic 10:14	discussing	engage 6:24
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and/or 29:19	backlog 21:2	case 8:4	15:13 19:14	16:6 17:10	decides 14:18	duplicate	Executive
Andre 15:19	bad 12:6	Catto 28:4	24:13,19,22	concise 17:2	decision 7:1	12:4 20:20	14:13 19:19
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