

1 MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS

2 * * * *

3 Wednesday, October 17, 2012

4 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

5 * * * *

6 COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- 7 STEPHANIE SINGER, Chairwoman
- 8 ANTHONY CLARK, Commissioner
- 9 AL SCHMIDT, Commissioner
- 10 DENNIS LEE, Deputy Commissioner
- 11 CARLA MOSS, Deputy Commissioner
- 12 DON GARECHT, Deputy Commissioner

13 PRESENT:

- 14 FRED VOIGT, Legal Counsel
- 15 CARMEN SEMINARA, Election Board Supervisor
- 16 PENNY MURCHISON, Train Members of Board of
- 17 Elections
- 18 KEVIN RICHARDSON, Record Imaging Supervisor
- 19 TIMOTHY DOWLING, Documents
- 20 JOSEPH LYNCH, Election Materials
- 21 GARY FERRIS, Polling Material Supervisor
- 22 GREGORY IRVING, Data Support Supervisor
- 23 SETH BLUESTEIN
- 24 GREG KRAVITZ

HELD AT: Delaware and Spring Garden Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

REPORTED BY:

Renée Helmar, Shorthand Reporter

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RICHARD McMANIMON, Obama Campaign
JOSEPH DeFELICE, Republican Party
MARION SNYDER, Libertarian Party
PASTOR GWEN JOHNSON
LUKE McKINSTRY, Committee of Seventy
BILL RUBIN, Controller's Office
TYLER CROSBY
LINDA NELSON HOLMES, Human Relations Department
STEVE BOC
BRIAN LINSON
MIRIAM HILL, Reporter
STEVE TAWA, KYW News Radio

1 (Whereupon, the proceedings
2 commenced at approximately 11:05
3 a.m.)

4 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Good morning, everyone. I
5 call the meeting to order.

6 We will start with old business.

7 Is there any old business from Commissioner Clark?

8 COMMISSIONER CLARK: No. There is no old
9 business.

10 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: From Commissioner Schmidt?

11 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: No, Commissioner.

12 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: No. And no old business from
13 here, either.

14 So, we'll continue to the report of the
15 supervisors, Mr. Seminara.

16 MR. SEMINARA: Good morning, Commissioners.

17 We will start with the absentee count.

18 As of October 16th -- can everybody hear me okay?

19 (Whereupon, there was no
20 response.)

21 MR. SEMINARA: We have a total absentee count,
22 that's civilian absentee, 6,831, our alternative
23 applications are 1,458, we've received 595 military
24 applications and 1,380 civilians overseas. That brings our



1 total to 12,949.

2 Compared to four years ago at the same time we had
3 16,846. So we are approximately 3800 short.

4 Even with the backlog that we -- the exhausting
5 work and the backlog of applications that we've had come in,
6 Greg Irving was still able to feed us absentee ballot
7 applications, so there has not been a lapse. They're still
8 going out. And also help from Joe Lynch with getting that
9 stuff out.

10 We moved the operation down to Delaware Avenue and
11 Spring Garden where there's more room to spread out. And
12 that helped the situation as far as getting people their
13 applications -- their ballots, rather.

14 The call volume has skyrocketed this week in
15 anticipation of the deadline, of course.

16 We are fielding calls. We're letting people know,
17 just be patient, they will get their ballots. We've gotten
18 several calls from civilian overseas that are getting a
19 little impatient. We did field those calls as well. Most
20 of them have called us back and thanked us for doing such a
21 good job. They have eventually received their ballot.

22 I'd like to also remind everyone about election
23 board petitions for vacancies on the election board.

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1 going to have to be submitted to the clerk of courts in Room
2 310, CJC.

3 The deadline for that is before 3 p.m. on
4 Wednesday, October 24th. Following that deadline there will
5 be a hearing to fill vacancies. And that will be in
6 Courtroom 285 in City Hall. And that will be Wednesday,
7 October 31st, at 10 a.m. with Judge Dembe.

8 And that concludes my report, Commissioners.

9 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you very much.

10 MR. SEMINARA: You're welcome.

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Ms. Murchison.

12 MS. MURCHISON: Good morning, Commissioners.

13 Last week we're at Masterman School, our total is
14 376.

15 This week we're at West Catholic for election
16 board members.

17 We're getting a lot of last minute calls. We had
18 two days already.

19 So far we had 315, because they're coming from all
20 over the city because they know that is the last school that
21 we have before make up.

22 That's all I have.

23 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

24 Mr. Richardson.

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1 MR. RICHARDSON: Good morning, Commissioners.

2 As of this morning there were 17,997 electronic
3 applications in the SURE System. Many of those came in
4 after the deadline. So I did a count this morning, and
5 there were approximately 6700 left to process.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: And please clarify what kind
7 of applications are these.

8 MR. RICHARDSON: Department of Transportation,
9 Department of Health.

10 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: So these are voter
11 registration applications?

12 MR. RICHARDSON: Yes. Correct. And count
13 transfers, out-of-county transfers, deceased people that we
14 have to purge from the list.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

16 Mr. Ferris.

17 MR. FERRIS: Okay. Good morning, Commissioners.

18 The first thing we have are three polling place
19 changes that were scheduled to be heard today.

20 The first one is for the 12th Ward; 15th Division,
21 moving the polling place from 68 West Cheltenham Avenue, the

22 library, to 5457 Wayne Avenue, the Germantown House.

23 The reason is to move it closer to the voters in
24 the division into an accessible polling place.

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1 The request is from John Connelly, the Democratic
2 ward leader.

3 And there is no opposition from the Republican
4 ward leader.

5 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: All right.

6 MR. FERRIS: I believe there is no one here to
7 speak on this matter present; correct?

8 Anybody here from the 12th Ward?

9 (Whereupon, there was no
10 response.)

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Commissioner Clark, how do you
12 vote?

13 COMMISSIONER CLARK: This is -- we approve this,
14 there is no opposition, so I approve.

15 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Approve.

16 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. I approve as well.

17 (Whereupon, documents signed by
18 Commissioners.)

19 MR. FERRIS: Okay. The next one is for the 17th
20 Ward; 24th Division, moving the polling place from 1950 West

21 Rockland Street, the Provision of Grace Church, to 5035

22 North 17th Street, the Piney Grove Daycare.

23 The reason is to move the polling place back into
24 the division into an accessible location. And there was a

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1 petition submitted by voters in that division.

2 And there is no opposition from either side.

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Could you repeat the division,
4 please?

5 MR. FERRIS: The 17th Ward; 24th Division.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Commissioner Clark?

7 COMMISSIONER CLARK: That is approved.

8 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Commissioner Schmidt?

9 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Approved.

10 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Approved.

11 MR. FERRIS: Okay. The next one is for the 40th
12 Ward; 26th Division, moving the polling place from 6900
13 Greenway Avenue, the Catherine School Annex, to 64th and
14 Pasqual Avenue, the Roach Post.

15 The reason is to move it closer to the division
16 into an accessible location.

17 The request is from the Democratic Ward Leader Ann
18 Brown.

19 And there is no opposition on the Republican side

20 either.

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Commissioner Clark?

22 COMMISSIONER CLARK: That is approved.

23 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Commissioner Schmidt?

24 COMMISSIONER SCHMIDT: Approved.

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: I approve.

2 MR. FERRIS: Okay. Those three polling places
3 were scheduled to be heard today, and posted to be heard
4 today.

5 Today is the last day the Commissioners can hear
6 any polling place changes. Any future polling place changes
7 have to go to Common Pleas Court.

8 There are still some pending polling places,
9 there's some last minute places that we have to check out
10 today, so everything will be done today. Everything will be
11 put into the system by tonight.

12 Starting tomorrow we will be able to start running
13 polling place printouts for anybody who wants to come and
14 pick them up tomorrow.

15 Also, if they want an electronic copy they can
16 send me an E-mail or put in a request through the
17 Commissioners' Office and I will get an E-mail copy out as
18 soon as that is available to get -- I'm able to get that

19 from the computer room.

20 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Can we also post that
21 electronic copy on the Web site for -- I'm sure that Mr.
22 Veto, if we get him a copy --

23 MR. FERRIS: If you want that done.

24 Mr. Irving, is that okay?

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1 MR. IRVING: If the Commissioners want it on
2 there, yeah. We'll put it on there.

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. FERRIS: And there is one pending polling
5 place that a Court Order was submitted to Common Pleas Court
6 for the 12th Ward; 6th Division.

7 Judge Dembe will hear that petition on Friday and
8 make a decision and sign that Court Order. So I will have
9 that Court Order hopefully after Friday. And then any
10 additional Court Orders that are submitted to her will also
11 be held Wednesday, October 31st, at the same time that she
12 hears the petitions on the appointments to inspectors and
13 judges of election that have vacancies.

14 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: So, would you then repeat for
15 us the list of polling places that are still -- whose
16 location has not been finalized?

17 MR. FERRIS: The first one would be 10;3, the

18 second one is 38;5, next one is 39;33, next one is 43;9, the
19 next one is 50;16, and there are two that were refused that
20 will be -- we have polling places that are being inspected
21 right now.

22 And they are the 1st Ward; 7th Division, and the
23 65th Ward, there are four divisions that were in a church
24 that we're trying to secure. That was the 3rd division, the

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1 5th division, the 6th division and the 9th division.

2 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

3 MR. FERRIS: That's all I have.

4 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Mr. Day.

5 MR. DAY: Right now we got all the ballots are in
6 the machine. We got all the even cartridges, they're all
7 done and in the machine.

8 The odd cartridges were done up to the 53rd Ward.

9 And we have the floor tested up to the 43rd Ward. We should
10 be all done testing by Sunday. So we're right where we're
11 supposed to be.

12 Monday we'll start picking the machines up.

13 And the 26 of October is the open house for people
14 to come up and inspect the machines, 10:00.

15 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: The 26 of October?

16 MR. DAY: Yes.

17 MR. VOIGT: Friday the 26 at 10:00.

18 MR. DAY: That's it.

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

20 Mr. Lynch.

21 MR. LYNCH: Good morning, Commissioners.

22 I have all but six wards printed and packed for
23 the provisional ballots. We're working on them now.

24 And, also, like Carmen said, we moved the absentee

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1 operation for the bulk of the absentee operation down here
2 because there's more room.

3 Mind you, when Greg sends up the trays of
4 applications we have to break them down by ward and
5 division, then we have to label the envelopes. And once we
6 label the envelopes we have to print the ballot, stuff the
7 envelope.

8 And then what's good about it is, we take them
9 down to Timmy, he's got the machine that we can run them
10 through and have them sealed, then we can take them to the
11 post office. So it's a lot better that way.

12 Saturday we were able to process 925 and get them
13 out to the post office. Sunday we did 871, held them off
14 till Monday morning and send them to the post office.
15 Monday 717, got them to the post office Tuesday morning,

16 because it is an all day job to label them and all that.
17 Tuesday we didn't have anything so we hand-wrote out 166
18 that didn't have labels, so we got them out this morning.
19 And Greg sent up about a thousand -- another thousand to me
20 today, and we're starting to process them.

21 Sample ballots, I got a call from the vendor
22 today, I'm hoping I might have them Friday. But I won't be
23 able to distribute them to the public until probably --
24 maybe Monday, because I have to break them down by district

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1 and put them in the slots. So they probably won't be ready
2 for the public until -- maybe Monday. That's if I get the
3 whole city, you know.

4 We're also taking requests for Watchers. They're
5 starting to come in, but they're not coming in, you know,
6 fast enough.

7 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

8 MR. LYNCH: So that's a long process with the
9 Watchers.

10 So, basically, like I said, every week it's first
11 come, first serve, because we have to look them up and write
12 them out.

13 And that's it.

14 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you.

15 MR. LYNCH: Okay.

16 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Dowling.

17 MR. DOWLING: Okay. Since the close of
18 registration we've received another 5,860 applications that
19 were postmarked timely or were transferred from other
20 counties or forwarded from the various state agencies that
21 had up until yesterday to get them to us. So that figure
22 now stands at 196,764 applications that we have received.
23 Of that total, we've already mailed out 3,224 rejected
24 applications, and I have roughly 1,100 that are being worked

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1 on right now that will be out in the mail by tomorrow by 5.

2 The deadline to appeal any rejected application is
3 Monday the 22nd, which is the 15th day before the election.

4 Out-of-county applications that we received from
5 all the groups, we've mailed out 3,774. I still have 143
6 that have to be broken down by county and state, and
7 hopefully will be out in the mail by Friday.

8 And bilingual interpreters, of over the 600
9 letters that we sent out from our database, as of yesterday
10 we received 204 responses; 152 individuals will work and
11 will come to the training seminar, which will be held
12 October 20th, which is this Saturday. And they've all been
13 sent their schedule time to come for their training.

14 We have 21 people that said they will work,
15 they're already certified, so they're not going to come to
16 the training. So that gives us a ballpark of 173 people so
17 far. And then 32 people responded that they cannot work.
18 And then we had 42 that were returned by the post office as
19 bad addresses.

20 So, our training will be held October 20th. First
21 class starts at 9, and they're scheduled every half hour for
22 the refresher training, and then for the assessment of their
23 language skills, and then the ABCs of interpreting in the
24 polling place, that's scheduled at 9:00 and also for 10:30.

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1 And they've all been sent their notices on when to appear
2 and when to come for their time for training is.

3 And that's it.

4 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

5 MR. LYNCH: Can I interrupt?

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Lynch.

7 MR. LYNCH: I'm sorry. Can I clarify just one
8 more thing?

9 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes.

10 MR. LYNCH: I know that I said we moved the
11 absentee operation down here, but that's the bulk.

12 So, Carmen's office is still open for people who

13 want to walk in. If anybody wants to walk in and vote in
14 person, they would still have to go to Room 142, don't come
15 here. And their office is fielding all of the calls and
16 they're separating all of the mail.

17 And then once they separate the mail they give it
18 to Greg Irving.

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

20 MR. LYNCH: I just wanted to let you know.

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Great.

22 And people who want to do a walk-in ballot where
23 they vote right at the counter they must bring in ID?

24 MR. LYNCH: Yes.

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: And if they bring in ID they
2 can --

3 MR. LYNCH: Yes.

4 But, like I said, they have to go to Room 142.

5 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: At Room 142. Thank you.

6 Okay. Mr. Irving.

7 MR. IRVING: Good morning, Commissioners.

8 First off, I wanted to personally thank the entire
9 staff for the fine job that you've been doing throughout the
10 course of this election.

11 We've been pulling people from every department to

12 do data entry and other related duties. And everybody has
13 answered the challenge real well. Thank you again.

14 Also, I want to thank the Commissioners for their
15 support, which we received from them.

16 And a special thanks to Commissioner Al Schmidt,
17 who spent the entire weekend down here with us processing.

18 He didn't come down to just show his face, he came
19 down and said, Greg, what can I do to help?

20 We sat him in a terminal, he did lookups
21 continuously all day long. When absentee ballot
22 applications -- he had an affair to go to, he left, he came
23 back and continued to process more.

24 Thank you, Commissioner.

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1 Also, thanks to the rest of your staff who spent
2 the weekend with us, Don Garecht, Seth Bluestein, Barry
3 Scattin, Linda Day, who had a personal -- excuse me, Linda
4 Gainer, who I understand has had a personal tragedy in her
5 life.

6 When you talk to her, tell her our thoughts and
7 prayers are with her.

8 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: I will.

9 MR. IRVING: Thank you very much.

10 And, also, Greg Kravitz.

11 Sorry, Greg, wherever you are.

12 Okay. Right now we're currently processing work
13 as up to date, the end date of October 3rd, okay.

14 We're processing over 5500 applications a day. We
15 have about 41,000 left to process for this election. Also,
16 during the course of this last week we processed 31,000
17 applications.

18 We've processed 829 address verification notices.
19 And those are people that we sent notices out who may have
20 changed their address and they replied, yes, they did. So
21 we have to have them moved to their new location for this
22 upcoming election. The staff is continuing to process those
23 as we go along.

24 We have additional help which we've recruited from

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1 over the Revenue Department. And those ladies are doing a
2 fine job with us as well.

3 Absentee ballots, I have 850 absentee ballots
4 which haven't been processed yet. We're doing those on a
5 daily basis. We're squeezing everything in as we normally
6 would do during the course of election, to make sure that
7 everyone gets their ballots in as registered.

8 Out of the 3200 rejects that have gone out, 292 of
9 those have come back as appeals. They are also in the midst

10 of being processed.

11 Monday was a rough day because the State system
12 was slow and it was up and down all day long. But we still
13 managed that day to probably crank out about 28,000
14 applications.

15 We're in the bulk of the big groups now for their
16 work. And a lot of them are sending -- it's garbage that
17 they're coming in. And that's consuming a lot of our time
18 because, in accordance with the law, we have to process
19 every application that comes into this office, every
20 application.

21 So, when we get one and we look at it and we see
22 the street on there says Table Street, we know that it
23 doesn't exist, but the law states we must process it so we
24 can have a record of it. And that's a waste of time. There

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1 is no way we can just set those out and do them because
2 they're all mixed in.

3 But the staff, again, is working diligently. And
4 we're going to continue to do what we have been doing to get
5 an election out, which we have been doing religiously for
6 the 25 years that I've been here.

7 Thank you.

8 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you, Mr. Irving. On

9 behalf of the voters of Philadelphia, thank you very much.

10 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Can I ask a quick question?

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes.

12 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Timmy, just about every
13 meeting for the last couple of months you mentioned about
14 the urgency of getting voter registration forms in as
15 realtime as possible without holding onto them for very long
16 because of the system, as you described, where we could
17 potentially get an absentee ballot application before a
18 registration, Martha Washington could register to vote at
19 Broad and Chestnut on the 4th of July, but we -- on the
20 street, and we may not get the registration for months
21 later. And the bulk that came in at the end, the 25 or 28,
22 I don't remember what it was --

23 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Twenty-four thousand.

24 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: -- 24,000, were they pretty

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1 close to realtime, or were they --

2 MR. DOWLING: No.

3 In the group that we got on the last day, the
4 25,000, there was a lot that went back to early September.
5 They were turned in on the 9th, and there was -- when you're
6 going through and opening these, I tell my people to look at
7 the app date to see, just to get a gauge.

8 I mean, there was stuff from September 2nd,
9 September 3rd, in those big groups. And the groups that hit
10 us at 11:00 that night, it was evident in there that a lot
11 of that stuff was back to early September, also.

12 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Could you quantify that a
13 little bit?

14 So, say, of the ones in there that were signed
15 before September 15th, are we talking about tens of
16 applications, hundreds of applications, thousands of
17 applications?

18 MR. DOWLING: Thousands.

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

20 MR. DOWLING: Yeah. So -- I mean, like the
21 Commissioner said, every time these groups would come in, I
22 would make them stand there and I would go through and scan
23 them real quick and say, come on, you can't -- they were
24 holding onto this stuff for a month, sometimes longer. And

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1 I would try to explain to them, now, if there is missing
2 information on there and we send a letter out, they don't
3 respond to the letter, then we have to reject that
4 application.

5 And as they hold onto this stuff longer and
6 longer, that window for that applicant to appeal his

7 rejection in accordance with State Law closed. And now the
8 window is closing even faster now because the deadline is
9 October 22nd, which is the 15th day before the election.

10 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: And in the meantime they
11 potentially register again and again --

12 MR. DOWLING: Correct.

13 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: -- because they haven't
14 received their registration, they're calling our office up,
15 and we say, we have no record of you registering to vote,
16 that potentially compounds the problem.

17 MR. DOWLING: And the perfect point in that is,
18 that I got almost a thousand applications that were missing
19 information the other day. And I had two of my staffers,
20 they went through every application and looked up every
21 application. If there was an application in there, a
22 previous application for that individual and all the
23 information matched, then we would just -- we're voiding
24 that application. I consulted with Mr. Irving, we're going

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1 to void that application so we don't reject it, because if
2 we reject it and send it out, then these people are going to
3 get upset and say, why did you reject me? And then we would
4 look them up and see they're already in the system. And it
5 would be a waste of time and manpower.

6 So we NIS them, which means they're in the system,
7 and we voided that application because they're already in
8 there and already have been voting. So we mark the
9 application NIS, their last change and their last vote. So
10 that way we -- it was solid to just void that application.
11 They're already in there, they're registered to vote,
12 they'll be qualified to vote November 6th.

13 But going back, when these people weren't getting
14 their ID cards and they would reregister with another group,
15 if that person put in a change of address with that group
16 and that group brought the application in first, then the
17 group that registered them first held onto that for 30 days
18 and brings that in after that other group, we move them back
19 to their old place. We process the last application in.

20 And we tried to explain this to the groups, but
21 they do not want to listen.

22 I told them about the urgency of getting this
23 stuff into us.

24 But what they do is, they enter them into their

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1 databases, they make photocopies because they have to send
2 them out to their umbrella groups so that they can get paid
3 for this stuff. And that slows down the process. And it is
4 historic, it happens all the time.

5 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: And I have a question.

6 Do we -- when the people call to inquire about
7 their voter registration card, do we inform them that if
8 they -- that the way to be sure that they're registered is
9 to submit their registration themselves to us; do we remind
10 them of that?

11 Are the staff regularly trained to do that?

12 MR. DOWLING: Yeah.

13 MR. IRVING: Yes.

14 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

15 MR. VOIGT: We always tell people to do it
16 yourself. Don't rely on these groups that holds them
17 forever.

18 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

19 MR. IRVING: Also, a follow up on that,
20 Commissioner. We're mailing out ID cards, about 10,000
21 every two days, we're staying on top of those.

22 So, you know, we'll usually do it two days and
23 we'll send somebody right out to Lindburgh Boulevard to the
24 bulk mail center to get the cards out.

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1 And, Commissioner, you mentioned about the
2 absentees. And with the bulk of applications that we have
3 coming in -- while we are in the course of doing the

4 absentee applications, if we don't have the applicant listed
5 as being a registered voter, we mark them NIS and we hold
6 them off to the side.

7 Once we're completed with all the registrations,
8 we go back through those applications again, the ones that
9 were marked as NIS, not in the system, so that we can give
10 those people a second look to make sure they are, so that
11 they do get their ballot.

12 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: And as of this morning, we are
13 processing voter registrations that came in on what date?

14 MR. IRVING: October 3rd.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: October 3rd. Thank you.

16 MR. IRVING: Yes.

17 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

18 Okay. Commissioners, any other questions for
19 Staff?

20 (Whereupon, there was no
21 response.)

22 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: All right. We move on to new
23 business.

24 Commissioner Clark?

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1 COMMISSIONER CLARK: There is no new business.

2 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Commissioner Schmidt?

3 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: No.

4 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: I have one item of new
5 business, and that is, that we received a letter from Ellen
6 Mattleman Kaplan, with the Committee of Seventy, with three
7 particular questions. And we will provide a timely written
8 response to this letter. We will not answer these questions
9 at this meeting, but we will provide a timely written
10 response to Ms. Kaplan at the Committee of Seventy, and make
11 that available to anyone else who would like to see it.

12 That concludes the new business, and I would like
13 to move onto public comments.

14 So, any comments or questions from the public,
15 please stand up and tell us all who you are and -- sir.

16 MR. McMANIMON: Rich McManimon, with the Obama --
17 Richard McManimon, with the Obama -- and I just had a
18 question for Tim.

19 In terms of the number of applications --

20 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Oh, yeah. Sir -- and I would
21 like to ask everyone to please direct your questions to the
22 Commissioners, and we will either answer or call on Staff as
23 necessary.

24 MR. McMANIMON: Oh, sure. Sure, Commissioner.

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

2 MR. McMANIMON: I was just curious as to whether
3 -- with the number of applications that are still being
4 worked on now, I get the sense that the feeling is, they
5 will all be going through and things will be completed in
6 due course?

7 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Absolutely.

8 MR. McMANIMON: But I was just curious as to
9 whether the comparison, say, 2008, was this a large number?

10 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: No.

11 Thank you for the question.

12 This is absolutely a standard kind of backlog, and
13 we are -- we have a standard operating procedure for
14 addressing it.

15 The first thing we do is increase hours of our own
16 staff, and then we requisition staff from other departments,
17 experienced city employees experienced with data entry. And
18 this is well within the range of normal.

19 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: I just wanted to make
20 reference to one thing. You said, that it is your
21 understanding that now we will be able to do it.

22 This was always the case, as Greg Irving and we
23 assured you, every registration that the office receives
24 before the deadline is going to be processed.

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. DeFelice.

2 MR. DeFELICE: Hi; Joe DeFelice.

3 In 2008, we obviously had, you know, a lot of
4 registrations as well, a lot dropped off at the last minute.
5 At the time, I guess Acorn submitted something like 75,
6 80,000 registrations; were there any particular groups this
7 time around that are submitting volumes?

8 I know Acorn, I don't know if they're around or
9 not --

10 MR. VOIGT: There is nothing comparable.

11 MR. DeFELICE: Nothing comparable?

12 MR. VOIGT: Nothing comparable.

13 MR. DeFELICE: Is there any --

14 MR. VOIGT: Nothing comparable.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: There's nothing comparable --

16 MR. VOIGT: I think he understood.

17 MR. DeFELICE: My next question --

18 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. DeFelice, there is nothing
19 comparable to Acorn's efforts this time around.

20 MR. DeFELICE: That was my first question.

21 Second question would be, then, what is the
22 largest group that has turned in registrations this time
23 around?

24 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Irving, what group has

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1 turned in the largest number of registrations this time
2 around?

3 MR. IRVING: I will relinquish that question to
4 Mr. Dowling.

5 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Dowling.

6 MR. DOWLING: There were three groups that were
7 generating the most activity, that was Obama for America,
8 Grassroots, Voter Outreach and Community Voter Project.

9 Community Voter Project and OFA were pretty tight
10 in their numbers.

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

12 MR. DEFELICE: Thank you.

13 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Miss Snyder.

14 MS. SNYDER: Good morning; my name is Marion
15 Snyder. I am with Advancement Project.

16 And I just had some follow-up questions from the
17 reports that were given earlier today.

18 So, I just -- I just wanted to make sure that I
19 caught the number right for absentee ballot applications is
20 at 12,149?

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Seminara.

22 MR. SEMINARA: Yes, Commissioner.

23 That was 12,949.

24 MS. SNYDER: Oh, 949.

1 And how many actual ballots have they mailed at
2 that number?

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Seminara.

4 MR. SEMINARA: How many actual ballots have been
5 mailed?

6 MS. SNYDER: Yes.

7 MR. SEMINARA: I don't have that number with me
8 now, but I could get it to you.

9 MS. SNYDER: That would be wonderful. Thank you.

10 Earlier you referred to -- that the petitions to
11 fill vacancies in the election boards, the deadline was
12 coming up next Wednesday, and I was wondering if you have a
13 list of election districts in which there are current
14 vacancies, and if I could possibly get such a list?

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes. We can -- I can send you
16 that list.

17 MS. SNYDER: Okay. Great.

18 The rejected -- I wanted to confirm my numbers
19 because they came very quickly and I wasn't sure I wrote
20 these down correctly, but the rejected application
21 numbers --

22 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Are you talking about rejected
23 voter registration applications?

24 MS. SNYDER: I believe -- I believe I am.

1 The number I have is 196,364 applications were
2 received; is that the total?

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Dowling, I think that you
4 gave us those numbers.

5 MR. DOWLING: The total received, not rejected.
6 The total received is 196,764.

7 MS. SNYDER: Seven sixty-four.

8 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes.

9 MS. SNYDER: And then the number rejected, 324 you
10 had received back, I thought; I just wanted --

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Dowling, if you could
12 slowly repeat those numbers.

13 MR. DOWLING: Okay. Of the 196,764, we've already
14 mailed out 3,224 applications that were rejected for the
15 various reasons. I have 1,176 that are being worked on
16 right now. They'll be out in the mail by 5:00 tomorrow.
17 And that will be an overall total of 4,400.

18 MS. SNYDER: Is there -- Commissioners, is there a
19 list of all of the rejected -- of the people whose
20 applications were rejected, and the reason for the
21 rejection; and would I be able to get a copy of that list?

22 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Irving, Mr. Dowling, do we
23 have such a list that would list the names of the people who
24 was -- presumably names and addresses or something like that

1 of people whose absentee -- no, whose voter registration
2 applications have been rejected; do we have such a list?

3 MR. IRVING: I believe that one can be printed up
4 out of the SURE System, but in the system that would also
5 include the source of the application on it, which is
6 confidential.

7 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. So -- and how much work
8 would it require to block out the source?

9 MR. IRVING: How much --

10 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: If you would provide me a copy
11 of that report, I would appreciate it. And I'll see if we
12 can find a way to release it in a way that is consistent
13 with our privacy requirements.

14 MR. IRVING: If it can be done, um-hum.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Great. Thank you.

16 We will attempt, as we don't know the answer right
17 now.

18 MS. SNYDER: Thank you for that.

19 Just a few more questions.

20 Last week at the meeting you reported on how
21 many -- how many applications were on the pending list. In
22 other words, which applications were not rejected but were
23 pending, and I was wondering how many are on that list

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Irving.

2 MR. IRVING: That, I don't know offhand.

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: We will send you an answer.

4 Can we get an answer later today?

5 MR. IRVING: Possibly.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: I'll send you --

7 MS. SNYDER: Also, I was wondering if there is a
8 possibility of getting a list, that the people on the
9 pending list and the reason that they were on the pending
10 list?

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: I will find out if that's
12 possible and let you know.

13 MS. SNYDER: Okay. And the voter registration --
14 thank you for the report that there were 10,000 voter
15 registration cards being mailed every two days, I was
16 wondering if you had a total number of registration cards
17 that have been mailed to date?

18 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Since, when?

19 MS. SNYDER: During -- since you received 196
20 (sic) applications --

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

22 MS. SNYDER: -- I'm wondering how many

23 registration cards have actually been mailed?

24 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Do we have that number?

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1 MR. DOWLING: Yeah. I have that number, but not
2 with me.

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. We'll send that to you,
4 also, later today.

5 MR. DOWLING: That number is also going to include
6 people who called us and just wanted us to reissue an ID
7 card.

8 So, that number is going to be skewed. You're
9 going to have people in there that called the office and
10 wanted a new card, plus the new work that generated to get
11 the cards. So that number is going to be much higher than
12 the 196.

13 MS. SNYDER: Well, that would be good.

14 I just -- what I'm -- what my question is, trying
15 to get my head around, how, if all the registration cards
16 have been mailed for the applications that have been
17 processed to date. That's really what I'm trying to get at.

18 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.

19 MS. SNYDER: And I have a point of clarification
20 on absentee ballots. When you were talking about in person
21 absentee ballots when people come to the counter, why would

22 they have to show ID unless they are first-time voters

23 voting?

24 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Oh, because in order to avoid

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1 the process -- we're required by law either to prove their
2 identity or -- have them prove their identity, or we can
3 mail them their absentee ballot.

4 So it's not that we're denying anyone a ballot.
5 Because anyone who comes to the counter and requests an
6 absentee ballot, even without ID, we would send the ballot
7 out, you know, as long as they provide all the information
8 that is required by law. They would not have to show an
9 identification card.

10 However, if they would like to -- instead of
11 receiving the ballot by mail and sending it back by mail, if
12 they would like to stand at the counter and fill it out --
13 it has been our practice for many years, that for that they
14 would need to identify themselves so that I can't walk in and
15 say, hey, I'm Marion Snyder, and fill out the application;
16 do you see what I mean?

17 MS. SNYDER: I understand.

18 MR. VOIGT: That's the law.

19 MS. SNYDER: I understand what you're saying, but
20 with all due respect there is no ID requirement for absentee

21 voting in Pennsylvania.

22 MR. VOIGT: Yes. There is.

23 (Whereupon, everyone began

24 talking at once.)

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1 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Wait; wait; wait. Could I
2 please have everyone be quiet for a moment.

3 MS. SNYDER: Let me -- can I just frame my
4 question?

5 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Yes. Please.

6 MS. SNYDER: My question is, based on my reading
7 of the Election Code, the absentee ballot application
8 requires either, that the voter must provide their driver's
9 license number if they have one, or their PennDOT driver's
10 license number, not the card.

11 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Correct.

12 MS. SNYDER: They must provide that if they have
13 it. If they do not have that they must provide the last
14 four digits of their Social Security number.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: That's correct.

16 MS. SNYDER: Under Act 18, if they have neither,
17 then they have to produce one of the limited types of ID
18 that are acceptable under Act 18.

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes.

20 MS. SNYDER: However, if there is no requirement
21 that the ID actually be shown --

22 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: That is -- you're correct.

23 And if they come to the counter and requests an absentee
24 ballot and they do not wish to show an ID, we will mail the

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1 ballot to them.

2 MS. SNYDER: The address.

3 In other words --

4 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: To the address.

5 MS. SNYDER: Understand.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: The issue --

7 MS. SNYDER: Got it.

8 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Great.

9 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: And, Miss Snyder, the
10 number, the 196,000, that period is General 2012; right?

11 MR. DOWLING: Correct.

12 MS. SNYDER: Right. So that would be April 25th,
13 until to date?

14 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Correct.

15 MS. SNYDER: Okay. Thank you.

16 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Mr. Lynch, yes?

17 MR. LYNCH: Going back to the question she asked,
18 how many ballots did we send out? From this building, 7,804

19 ballots left this building. And I don't know what left the
20 City Hall, that would come from Carmen that number.

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you.

22 The lady in the back.

23 PASTOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

24 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Good morning.

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1 PASTOR JOHNSON: I was wondering if this --

2 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: If you would like, we would
3 love to know who you are.

4 PASTOR JOHNSON: I'm sorry. Pastor Gwen Johnson;
5 Saint Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

6 Just asking if it was placed on the agenda to hear
7 appeals for polling place changes?

8 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: So, at this point, the proper
9 procedure for polling place changes is to go to the court.

10 And, Mr. Voigt, would you explain, please, the
11 procedure so she will --

12 MR. VOIGT: The Court of Common -- once the
13 decision is made by the Commissioners, all appeals have to
14 go to the Court of Common Pleas. They have no further
15 jurisdiction, that is, the Commission.

16 PASTOR JOHNSON: So I am in the wrong place then?

17 MR. VOIGT: Yes, ma'am.

18 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: However, those -- I believe
19 divisions 50;16 and 10;3 are the ones you're asking about?

20 PASTOR JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

21 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Those are still pending.

22 We had earlier in the meeting a time to discuss
23 that, and that time has gone by.

24 But it is still pending. It is under advisement,

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1 and we will make a decision by the end of the day today.

2 If you would like, after the meeting, to approach
3 any or all of the three of us to discuss it, we would be
4 delighted to hear from you.

5 Okay. Mr. McKinstry.

6 MR. MCKINSTRY: Hi; Luke McKinstry from the
7 Committee of Seventy.

8 You talked a little bit about some of the things
9 the office is doing to increase the voter registration
10 processing voter registration applications, including having
11 employees of the Revenue Department, some of your
12 personal -- some of you spending your own time and staff
13 time, working overtime to process applications, and I'd like
14 to know, is there anything that the office is doing -- is
15 doing differently from previous years to processing
16 applications, or -- just -- because you mentioned a bunch of

17 things, are they all during the normal course of business,

18 or --

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: It's all within the normal

20 course of business.

21 MR. McKINSTRY: Okay.

22 MR. VOIGT: Just like any other election.

23 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

24 MR. McKINSTRY: And just to clarify, is there

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1 anything that is different from, like, a previous -- from

2 a --

3 MR. VOIGT: Presidential Election?

4 MR. McKINSTRY: I want to clarify in two ways.

5 One, is it different from -- you know, from the way you

6 process voter registration applications on, like, a non P

7 period? Say you get voter registrations in September, but

8 also is it different from the way registrations are

9 processed in 2000 -- in, like, another election, 2008, or

10 2004?

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: So, the question of how we

12 process any -- each individual registration that comes in to

13 us, our procedure is exactly the same.

14 Is the question of how we manage the volume of

15 each of those transactions, there is a difference because,

16 this year, as of absolutely typical in a presidential year,
17 there is -- we get hit with a lot of registrations all at
18 once on the deadline.

19 So -- and up to -- so we are hit with a lot all at
20 once.

21 So, the procedure that we have to make sure that
22 we have staff time in place to deal with that volume is
23 different in a presidential year, but it is -- our procedure
24 now is not different from what was four years ago.

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1 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: And those include, as we
2 explained to Miss Kaplan last week, opened until 10 p.m.
3 Processing registrations seven days a week, and additional
4 personnel from the Revenue Department.

5 MR. MCKINSTRY: Okay. Thank you.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. DeFelice.

7 MR. DEFELICE: With respect to Miss Snyder's
8 request for pending -- a list of pending names and a list of
9 denied names, I'm sure you'd grant that request, may I also
10 receive a copy of that?

11 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. And if each of you
12 would do me a favor of also, after this meeting, e-mailing
13 me and reminding me of the full list of what you want, that
14 would be much appreciated.

15 Okay. Any other questions or comments from the
16 public?

17 Mr. McManimon.

18 MR. McMANIMON: Rich McManimon for Obama.

19 I just wanted to say, that this is an extremely
20 informative, well run meeting, and it's amazing to me, just
21 as a citizen, to see. And I mean this. I'm not just saying
22 this. Joe would agree, and everyone else would agree, I'm
23 not saying this in any political way, it's just really
24 amazing to see the competent, committed, you know,

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1 hardworking staff. The citizens are lucky.

2 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you.

3 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you. Thank you.

4 Yes. We see it everyday. And I'm so glad that it
5 is coming through to the public.

6 And thank you to all the staff.

7 Mr. Rubin.

8 MR. RUBIN: Bill Rubin; on behalf of the
9 Controller.

10 Commissions, would it be possible after the
11 meeting just to doublecheck my figures with your staff, or
12 do I need to do that --

13 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: You could do it through us.

14 So, if you would like to come ask --

15 MR. RUBIN: So, my understanding from Mr. Irving
16 was, that there was 850 absentee ballots to be processed
17 left, so that would mean that the 12,949 Mr. Seminara talked
18 about, 12,949 of them have been processed?

19 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Irving, is that correct?

20 MR. IRVING: Yeah. I have 850 downstairs, Mr.
21 Rubin, which have to be put through the computer and
22 generate the labels for them.

23 MR. RUBIN: Subtract that 850 off the 12,949 that
24 have been processed?

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1 MR. IRVING: Yes.

2 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Yes.

3 MR. RUBIN: Okay. And the remaining applications
4 to be processed are 41,000?

5 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: The remaining absentee ballot
6 applications to be processed?

7 MR. RUBIN: The remaining application -- voter
8 registration.

9 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: The remaining voter
10 registration applications to be processed are?

11 MR. IRVING: Forty-one thousand.

12 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Forty-one thousand.

13 MR. RUBIN: And the rate is 5,000 a day?

14 MR. IRVING: Roughly 5500 a day.

15 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Roughly 5500 a day.

16 MR. RUBIN: Thank you.

17 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

18 Any other questions or comments or compliments

19 from the public?

20 (Whereupon, there was no

21 response.)

22 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: If not, we will -- are there

23 any other hearings that we need to announce at this moment,

24 Mr. Voigt?

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1 MR. VOIGT: Not that I am aware of.

2 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Do I hear a motion to adjourn

3 to the call of the Chair?

4 COMMISSONER SCHMIDT: Motion to adjourn.

5 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Second.

6 MADAME CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. We adjourn to the call

7 of the Chair. We will meet again in this room at 11:00 next

8 Wednesday.

9 Have a great week.

10 (Whereupon, the proceeding was

11 adjourned at approximately 11:48

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, RENÉE HELMAR, a Shorthand Reporter, and
Notary, Public, certify that the foregoing is a true
and accurate transcript of the proceedings which
were held at the time, place and on the date herein
before set forth.

I further certify that I am neither
attorney, nor counsel for, nor related to or
employed by, any of the parties to the action in

11 which these proceedings were taken, and further that
12 I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or
13 counsel employed in this action, nor am I
14 financially interested in this case.

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