

CITY OF CRANSTON  
BOARD OF CANVASSERS  
Election Meeting of September 10, 2024 – OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on September 10, 2024, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on August 14, 2024. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Kirk McDonough, at 6:01 a.m. It was held in the Canvassing Authority Office, Room 100, at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Piscopiello, Quilcia Moronta (arrived at 6:15 a.m.), Kirk McDonough, Peter Rivelli (Voting for Ms. Moronta until 6:15 a.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), Theresa Bucci (Deputy Registrar), Maria Madonna (Election Operations Coordinator), Emerson Brito (Bilingual Elections Specialist), Michael Pezzullo (Cranston Police Detail Commander)

The chair declared a quorum present.

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER (NO VOTES TAKEN)
- II. THE CRANSTON BOARD OF CANVASSERS WILL CONVENE TO CONDUCT THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION, AND WILL REMAIN IN SESSION THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DAY UNTIL THE CLOSE OF BOARD BUSINESS PERTAINING TO THE ELECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-8-9. THE BOARD MAY HEAR AND CONSIDER ANY ELECTION MATTER THAT REQUIRES AN IMMEDIATE RULING OR DETERMINATION. POLLING LOCATIONS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7 A.M. TO 8 P.M. AT ASSIGNED PRECINCTS. (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- III. THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY EMERGENCY MAIL BALLOT APPLICATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-20-10 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- IV. THE BOARD MAY APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS – 8-20-2024 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)
- V. ADJOURNMENT (VOTE MAY BE TAKEN)

THE CRANSTON BOARD OF CANVASSERS WILL CONVENE TO CONDUCT THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY ELECTION, AND WILL REMAIN IN SESSION THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DAY UNTIL THE CLOSE OF BOARD BUSINESS PERTAINING TO THE ELECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-8-9. THE BOARD MAY HEAR AND CONSIDER ANY ELECTION MATTER THAT REQUIRES AN IMMEDIATE RULING OR DETERMINATION. POLLING LOCATIONS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7 A.M. TO 8 P.M. AT ASSIGNED PRECINCTS. (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

The Board members, Mr. Lima, and field technicians monitored all 26 precinct polling locations throughout the day to respond to any issues, supply shortages, and verify election laws were being complied with.

Turnout across the city was moderate, at less than 20%. Many of the provisional ballots that were cast were noted due to being Democratic voters who wished to vote in the Republican mayoral primary. Some voters expressed a wish to vote in both primaries, because they were undecided whether to vote in the Republican mayoral contest or the various Democratic General Assembly contests in the House and Senate; these voters were informed that they must choose which primary to vote in as voting in both is not an option.

Shortly after 6 a.m., numerous calls were received from polling locations that were not provided enough PollPads by the state Board of Elections for the total number of supervisor pairs. Prior to polls opening, it was learned that the BOE only provided three PollPads per location, when 21 of the locations were supposed to have four PollPads due to having three supervisor pairs scheduled and trained to work, one being needed per pair with the fourth being needed by the clerks at each location.

Mr. Lima contacted the Board of Elections and was told PollPads would be sent out to the locations within a couple of hours. However, the PollPads were not provided to most locations until after 2 p.m. The Board of Canvassers was informed this was because the PollPads had to be programmed and charged by the BOE prior to being sent out. Many poll workers expressed their frustration that they had no PollPad to check in voters for the majority of the day.

Fortunately, the moderate turnout and all polls being opened and fully staffed meant that this issue resulted in no lines or problems for voters, who for the most part were unaware as each poll had at least two of the three check-in stations operating.

Mr. Lima communicated the issues related to the lack of the needed number of PollPads to the state Board of Elections repeatedly throughout the morning and afternoon, until the issues were addressed by the BOE at all locations by 3 p.m. The Board members expressed their significant frustration regarding the issue, delayed response, and delayed communications from the BOE in providing updates regarding the timeframe for correcting it.

A few of the PollPads that were available were noted to have power charging issues, with either defective battery bases or defective charging cords. The BOE was notified and poll workers were instructed to list the PollPads that had issues on discrepancy reports so that they could be replaced or inspected for the next election. One DS-200 scanner at Edgewood Highland School was having difficulty scanning ballots and was repaired by a state BOE technician during the day.

There were no other significant issues reported, and all in all every polling location noted otherwise having the needed number of supplies, seals, and materials to conduct the election aside from the missing PollPad issue.

A power outage occurred at Park View Middle School's polling location, however due to the school having an emergency generator back-up, voting continued uninterrupted. The issue was determined to be caused by a utility crew knocking out a transformer in the neighborhood. A separate utility crew caused a gas main leak in the Knightsville area of the city resulting in the closing of some neighborhood streets temporarily, however this did not affect any polling locations as none were in the immediate vicinity. A utility crew also shut down Pontiac Ave and created a detour, which added to the travel time to the Garden City and Waterman polling locations.

Mr. Lima communicated all three issues caused by utility work to the state Board of Elections, and was told that the state BOE had sent notice to and requested that major Rhode Island utility companies pause utility work on Primary Election Day, however, it appeared that request was not adhered to.

Mr. Lima placed nearly 200 signs around the city at the 26 locations prior to Election Day. This included 48 highway cones with poll distance markers and setting up temporary ADA parking at locations that required them, 10 A-Frame voting signs, over 70 VOTE HERE lawn signs, and dozens of laminated and wall signage, including directional arrows and city-created POLLING PLACE signage. Several informational signs were also placed at the Dutemple School and CLCF Gym, as each location was not being used but was used in the last General Election in 2022.

There were no actions of the Board taken that required the Board to reconvene for a discussion or vote at City Hall during the election. Board members visited polling locations throughout the day and spoke with poll workers, candidates, and voters. The Highway Dept. and Parks and Rec. Dept. assisted in placing 50-foot radius chalk lines at all locations prior to the Election Day to keep candidates and campaign staff outside the marker.

The Board members completed chain of custody documentation to receive mail ballots from polling place receptacles. The Board remained in open session until all returns were received and accounted for from the 26 polling locations and poll workers travelling back to City Hall and all results were transmitted or accounted for. One of the two DS-200s at Orchard Farms failed to transmit, so Mr. Lima and Mr. McDonough transported the physical results from that tabulator along with all others and mail ballots to the BOE at 9:30 p.m., with a police escort.

THE BOARD MAY CERTIFY EMERGENCY MAIL BALLOT APPLICATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.I. GEN. LAWS § 17-20-10 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to certify all emergency mail ballot applications that were received by the deadline.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Mr. Rivelli to certify all emergency mail ballot applications received by the deadline for the Sept. 10, 2024 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Mr. Rivelli, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

THE BOARD MAY APPROVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS – 8-20-2024 (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the minutes of 8-20-2024.

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Mr. Rivelli to approve the minutes of the meeting of Aug. 20, 2024.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Piscopiello, Mr. Rivelli, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

ADJOURNMENT (VOTES MAY BE TAKEN)

MOTION: By Mr. Piscopiello and seconded by Ms. Moronta to adjourn.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY – VOICE VOTE

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

APPROVED by the Cranston Board of Canvassers: October 15, 2024