

CITY OF CRANSTON
BOARD OF CANVASSERS
Meeting of July 6, 2026 – OFFICIAL MINUTES

The Cranston Board of Canvassers met on July 6, 2026, in a meeting advertised in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act on June 16, 2026, and reposted on June 30, 2026. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Kirk McDonough, at 5:33 p.m. It was held in the Third Floor Conference Room at Cranston City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anthony Mastantuono, Quilcia Moronta, Kirk McDonough

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicholas Lima (Registrar / Director of Elections), Jason Case (Board Alternate), Bill White (Board Alternate), David Igliozi (Board Legal Counsel), Richard Ross

Mr. Lima administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Case and Mr. White prior to the beginning of the meeting.

The chair declared a quorum present.

AGENDA (*AS AMENDED)

- I. **Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda** (*votes may be taken*)
- II. **Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings** (*votes may be taken*)
- III. **Items for Discussion, Vote, and/or Other Action** (*votes may be taken on all items*)
 - A. *The Board may hear and decide the eligibility of Democratic Ward 2 Committee candidate Richard Ross in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-1.1 (*votes may be taken*)
 - B. *The Board may hear and decide on filed written objections to the eligibility of candidates or sufficiency of nomination papers for local offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-13 (*votes may be taken*)
 - C. The Board may discuss and approve all default polling locations, including previously adopted relocated polling locations, in addition to modified primary polling locations for 0704 (Hope Church to Orchard Farms double location) and 0703 (Maria Di Prata to George Peters School double location), and early voting sites, for the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election, for submission to the Rhode Island Board of Elections for final approval, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-11-1 et seq., 17-15-5, and 17-15-13 (*votes may be taken*)
 - D. The Board may discuss and approve the use of all default polling locations, including previously adopted relocated polling locations, and early voting sites, for the November 3, 2026 General Election, for submission to the Rhode Island Board of Elections for final approval, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-11-1 et seq. (*votes may be taken*)
 - E. The Board may vote to certify all mail ballot applications that are received to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10 (*votes may be taken*)

- F. The Board may review and complete certifications for all nomination papers that have been validated to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-11 (*votes may be taken*)
- G. The Board may authorize the Election Operations Coordinator to appoint all Statewide Primary and General Election poll workers, including moderators, clerks, supervisors, greeters, field technicians, and early voting personnel, as well as checkers, runners, and watchers, and to issue certificates of appointment and administer oaths on behalf of the Board, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-11-6, 17-11-8, 17-11-11, 17-11-12, 17-11-13, 17-11-15, 17-15-13, and/or 17-15-14, and to utilize the pool of election officials authorized by R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-11-7.1 (*votes may be taken*)
- IV. **Updates from the Registrar / Director of Elections** (*no votes taken on any items*)
 - A. Status of 2026 election preparations to include the following topics:
 - 1. Voter registration deadline
 - 2. Mail ballot application processing and volume
 - 3. Poll worker recruitment
 - 4. Early voting personnel and equipment
 - 5. Poll worker training classes
 - 6. Polling place change and referenda mailings
 - 7. Ballot design and proofing
 - 8. Election equipment
 - 9. Results reporting
 - 10. New BOE regulations on early voting
 - 11. Voter information and legal advertisements
 - 12. Election security
 - B. 2026 General Assembly session legislative recap and new changes in Rhode Island election law affecting 2026 election operations
 - C. United States Election Assistance Commission Standards Board and EAC Local Leadership Council Annual Meetings – April 2026
 - D. PEER Workshop – April 2026
 - E. Auburn University Election Funding Meeting – May 2026
 - F. Election Science, Reform, and Administration Conference (ESRA) – June 2026
 - G. PLEJ Convening – July 2026
 - H. International Association of Government Officials Conference – July 2026
 - I. U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence accreditation program
 - J. Impact of FY2027 budget cuts on election operations
 - K. BOE polling place inspections and layout changes
 - L. RI election official training and certification program (ETAC)
 - M. New England regional association of election officials (NEEOA)
- V. **Adjournment** (*vote may be taken*)

I. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the agenda as posted.

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to approve the agenda as posted.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY – VOICE VOTE

II. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings (votes may be taken)

Mr. McDonough asked for a motion to approve the minutes as officially posted.

MOTION: By Ms. Moronta and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to approve the prior meeting minutes.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

III. Items for Discussion, Vote, and/or Other Action (votes may be taken on all items)**A. *The Board may hear and decide the eligibility of Democratic Ward 2 Committee candidate Richard Ross in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-1.1 (votes may be taken)**

Mr. Lima explained that Mr. Ross was registered as a Republican but declared for Ward 2 Democratic Committee, and under state law, he was ineligible for that office due to being registered with the opposite party within 90 days. He said the CVRS is hard-coded to prevent his declaration from being entered, however, since Mr. Ross was disputing the transaction, the DOS overrode that for now so he can get his nomination signatures while his appeal to this Board is pending. Mr. Ross is unendorsed, so he must turn in 50 valid signatures by this Friday to qualify.

Mr. Lima said because this transaction was from the DMV, the data was received from the DOS directly from the DMV, so there was no error on our end. He said he asked the DOS to contact the DMV for any documentation, and they said there was none because the transaction was made online, electronically, by the customer. Mr. Lima noted that Mr. Ross had previously been registered as a Democrat and only registered as a Republican via this transaction in early March 2026, two weeks prior to the 90-day deadline. However, after he submitted the transaction on March 9, our office processed it on March 10 and sent him a change notice that day indicating the party change from Democrat to Republican. Mr. Lima said Mr. Ross was in attendance and wanted an opportunity to explain his position to the Board.

Mr. Ross said that the DMV transaction online was because he had lost his driver's license. He said he did not intend to register as a Republican, and doesn't recall picking a party at all as part of the transaction. He did recall indicating his interest to work the polls. He did not recall the change notice letter, but noted he has never voted as a registered Republican.

Mr. Lima explained the ward committee election process for the Board, as they are, uniquely among local offices, elected at the September Primary. Mr. Lima introduced four marked exhibits to be included as part of the official record, in the event of an appeal of this matter, and explained the relevance of each document to the Board:

2026-01-A: The March 10, 2026 Change Notice letter to Mr. Ross generated by the CVRS

2026-01-B: The system-generated voter registration form, with confidential PII redacted, for Mr. Ross that resulted from the March 9, 2026 DMV transaction.

2026-01-C: The email from the Dept. of State Elections Division forwarding correspondence received by DOS from the DMV regarding the electronic nature of this transaction.

2026-01-D: The candidate declaration filed on June 24 by Mr. Ross.

Mr. Lima referenced R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-1.1 and explained how the statute prevented Mr. Ross from being eligible to declare for the office, given the timeline. While he acknowledged that Mr. Ross did file an updated voter registration after Mr. Lima notified him of the issue, he said that is only effective going forward, not retroactively, because there is nothing in the record that would support the previous registration being an administrative error on our part. He said that, unfortunately, it seems our hands are tied in this instance as state law is clear.

Mr. Igliazzi supported Mr. Lima's conclusions. Mr. McDonough asked if the Board has a statutory role here. Mr. Igliazzi said the Board does, and that if the Board had discretion – such as if this were an administrative error – it could exercise it and craft a remedy, however, in this instance the law does not provide for such discretion under the facts before us. Mr. Igliazzi noted that the legislature had specific rationale for enacting this statute, including preventing an individual registered with one party from being able to run as a candidate in the opposite party. In this case, Mr. Igliazzi said, the paperwork on file in the Board of Canvassers is accurate, and notice was sent to Mr. Ross, who had an opportunity to change his party affiliation before the 90-day deadline.

Mr. Igliazzi did note that Mr. Ross has the ability to appeal the Board's decision to the state Board of Elections, and asked Mr. Lima if he could provide the relevant regulation to Mr. Ross following the Board's decision tonight. Mr. Igliazzi said the statute is clear, and he could not find relevant case law that would conflict with it.

Ms. Moronta asked if Mr. Ross received the notice. Mr. Ross said while he doesn't recall getting a letter, that doesn't mean he didn't receive it. Mr. Igliazzi asked Mr. Lima if Mr. Ross had been provided a copy of the exhibits he provided to the Board, and Mr. Lima noted he had. Mr. Igliazzi noted that given Mr. Ross' rights to appeal, if he turns in any of his nomination papers, the Board will account for those in the event the expected decision this evening is later overturned, as to preserve his rights to ballot access. Mr. Igliazzi noted that if Mr. Ross did intend to appeal, because of the pending ballot creation process timeline he should contact the BOE right away if he wants to preserve his rights.

Mr. Ross thanked the Board for their time and for considering the matter.

MOTION: By Mr. McDonough and second by Mr. Mastantuono to deny the appeal regarding Mr. Ross's party affiliation as to how it relates to his declaration of candidacy for Ward 2 Democratic Committee.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

B. *The Board may hear and decide on filed written objections to the eligibility of candidates or sufficiency of nomination papers for local offices in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-13 (votes may be taken)

Mr. Lima said no objections have been filed to date. This item will be on the agenda again on July 14 due to the deadline on July 15. He said the deadline to file written objections is July 13 at 4 p.m.

C. The Board may discuss and approve all default polling locations, including previously adopted relocated polling locations, in addition to modified primary polling locations for

0704 (Hope Church to Orchard Farms double location) and 0703 (Maria Di Prata to George Peters School double location), and early voting sites, for the September 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election, for submission to the Rhode Island Board of Elections for final approval, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-11-1 et seq., 17-15-5, and 17-15-13 (votes may be taken)

Mr. Lima showed the Board full-sized maps for the September and November elections indicating the physical locations of all polls in relation to the precincts they serve. Mr. Lima also provided the Board smaller maps and lists of the polls organized by ward, and noted these are available to the public at our office and posted on the city website.

Mr. Mastantuono asked what the reasons for the changes were. Mr. Lima described the relocations of Kelley-Gazzerro VFW to Stone Hill School, and Waterman School to CLCF, due to the closure of both facilities, and further explained why Maria Di Prata and Hope Church were unavailable for the Primary only due to Labor Day week scheduling.

Mr. Lima said Orchard Farms and George Peters School would serve as double locations as a result, and explained to the Board how that would operationally function. Mr. Lima also explained the planned notice process in August and again October to voters, which will include postcard mailers in August for the four precincts with changes, and a city-wide mailer with the bond questions this Fall.

Mr. Lima added that the Pastore Youth Center will once again be our early voting site for both elections, as it was in 2022 and 2024. Steven Piscopiello, who served on the Board for the 2024 elections, is now the Director of Parks and Recreation at Pastore and has offered any assistance necessary to ensure early voting continues to be successful there.

Members of the Board expressed concern about the number of ballot questions, and if that could cause a multi-card ballot. Mr. Lima said he is awaiting a mock-up of the design, and hopes to have it before the July 30 certification meeting to see if there's anything we can do to modify the question format to avoid a second page. Mr. Lima said a two-page ballot in 2020 caused several operational issues at the polling places, including increased paper jams and poll worker error rates, and the need for extra equipment, so it should be avoided if at all possible, but may be unavoidable as there are five state questions and six local questions. We also have very limited discretion in changing the text of the local questions as they are bond acts enacted by the General Assembly, so we don't have authority to shorten and paraphrase them.

Mr. Lima said the City Council Finance Committee meeting, originally scheduled for tonight, will now be on Thursday, which is why we have moved our meeting on Thursday from Council Chambers back to the Third Floor Conference Room. He said one item he submitted to the Council for Thursday's meeting is the authorization to place the six bond questions on the November ballot, which is the final approval we are waiting for, and is expected to go to the full Council on July 20.

That said, Mr. Lima said for November we are opening every polling location in the city with no combinations or consolidations, so at least from that standpoint of the operation, we are as prepared as we possibly can be in terms of space for voting booths and equipment to account for the time it takes for voters to cast ballots including all of the referenda questions.

MOTION: By Mr. McDonough and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to approve all modified, relocated, and previously adopted polling locations and early voting site for use in the Sept. 9, 2026 Statewide Primary Election as presented by Mr. Lima.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

D. The Board may discuss and approve the use of all default polling locations, including previously adopted relocated polling locations, and early voting sites, for the November 3, 2026 General Election, for submission to the Rhode Island Board of Elections for final approval, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-11-1 et seq. (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima said Hope Church and Maria Di Prata would be back online for the November General Election, so all default polling locations would be used. He said he will be sending these lists, as approved by the Board, to the state Board of Elections for final approval tomorrow morning.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve the use of all previously adopted default polling locations and early voting site for use in the Nov. 3, 2026 General Election, as presented by Mr. Lima.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

E. The Board may vote to certify all mail ballot applications that are received to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima said there are no mail ballot application certifications prepared for today's meeting, however we will have an increased volume going forward through until Election Day.

F. The Board may review and complete certifications for all nomination papers that have been validated to date in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-14-11 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima explained the nomination signature validation and certification process for the three new Board members/alternates. He noted that the Board members will also need to sign all of the nomination papers before leaving tonight, after the meeting adjourns.

MOTION: By Mr. McDonough and seconded by Mr. Mastantuono to receive and certify all nomination papers that have been validated to date.
PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

G. The Board may authorize the Election Operations Coordinator to appoint all Statewide Primary and General Election poll workers, including moderators, clerks, supervisors, greeters, field technicians, and early voting personnel, as well as checkers, runners, and watchers, and to issue certificates of appointment and administer oaths on behalf of the Board, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-11-6, 17-11-8, 17-11-11, 17-11-12, 17-11-13, 17-11-15, 17-15-13, and/or 17-15-14, and to utilize the pool of election officials authorized by R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-11-7.1 (*votes may be taken*)

Mr. Lima said that our office staff always perform these operational functions, but they do so under authorization from the Board under various state statutes that govern the recruitment,

training, and assignment of poll workers.

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to approve the authorization as listed on “Item G.” of the posted agenda.

PASSED ROLL CALL VOTE – 3-0 – Mr. Mastantuono, Ms. Moronta, and Mr. McDonough voting aye.

Mr. Igliazzi had to leave to attend another meeting, and thanked the new members for their service and welcomed them to the Board.

IV. Updates from the Registrar / Director of Elections (no votes taken on any items)

A. Status of 2026 election preparations to include the following topics:

1. Voter registration deadline

Mr. Lima explained the 30-day voter registration deadline will be on Victory Day, a Monday holiday, due to the Primary following on a Wednesday. He explained that in the past, when the deadline has been on a Sunday, no new voter registrations have come in, however we do designate the state mail ballot drop box to receive registrations on the deadline day. He said the drop box is open anyway, due to being open 35 days prior to the Primary. The vast majority of registrations come in via the DMV, online, and by mail. Mr. Lima said they will be advertising the deadline in the newspaper, twice, because while the proposed law change to modify the ad to online only did pass the House for the fourth time this session, it did not get a vote in the Senate.

2. Mail ballot application processing and volume

Mr. Lima said there have been less than 50 applications each so far for both the General and Primary, many of whom applied for both elections. He expects that volume to pick up later this month after our permanent mail ballot applications go out to several hundred voters.

Ms. Moronta asked if a U.S. citizen overseas who is not in the military can vote by mail. Mr. Lima said they are eligible for an FPCA, however the category of ballot they get is dependent upon their intent to return. He said most overseas citizens who are not in the military qualify for a federal-only ballot because their residence overseas is permanent and their intent to return is uncertain, so they cannot vote in local elections.

3. Poll worker recruitment

Mr. Lima said poll worker recruitment is going well, and the office has a list of over 700 voters interested in serving as a poll worker that they have sent letters to. We have fewer positions to fill this year as compared to the presidential election in 2024 due to expected lower midterm turnout, one less polling location, and city budget cutbacks that have reduced the number of poll worker positions we expect to hire. There are still several dozen unfilled positions which we will continue to work to fill over the course of the summer.

Mr. Mastantuono asked if we feed poll workers, and Mr. Lima said that caused a lot of logistical problems in the past that distracted from running the actual election, in addition to being a higher

operational cost. He did note that some smaller towns still provide meals, or a meal stipend, to their poll workers, however we do not.

4. Early voting personnel and equipment

Mr. Lima said we have also cut back on the early voting staffing level for 2026 as compared to 2024, although many of the workers who were with us in 2020, 2022, and 2024 for early voting intend to return this August and October, and are among our most experienced Election Day poll workers. We may have new DS-300 tabulation equipment, however, that is dependent upon where the state BOE assigns its limited new inventory.

5. Poll worker training classes

Mr. Lima reminded the Board members they will each need to attend both a supervisor and a moderator/clerk training class this August in preparation for their supervision of the polls for the September Primary. He said all training classes have been scheduled in Council Chambers at City Hall or at the state BOE on Plainfield Pike.

6. Polling place change and referenda mailings

Mr. Lima said he addressed this earlier in the meeting, and that there will be two mailers this year, one to four precincts in August, and a city-wide mailer in October for the bond questions. Both mailers will include variable field polling place information for each household they are sent to.

Mr. Mastantuono asked which polling locations are compensated for use by the city. Mr. Lima said that only Scottish Rite, CLCF, and Hope Church currently charge us a few hundred dollars for use of their facilities in the elections, and the rest provide their locations free of charge. He said sometimes the Schofield Armory sometimes charges a nominal fee of a few dollars for facility use.

7. Ballot design and proofing

Mr. Lima said as soon as the challenge process concludes following candidate nomination papers being certified, we transition immediately to ballot proofing, and will only have two or three days to proof 54 ballot designs for the September Primary. He asked the Board's assistance to review these proofs during that time-sensitive process, and noted that ballot proofing must be a no-error operation.

8. Election equipment

Mr. Lima said that in addition to a few new DS-300 tabulators, the state Board of Elections is deploying brand new PollPads for this election cycle.

9. Results reporting

Mr. Lima said the BOE is also working on new results reporting software for this election cycle. He said we had pilot tested new software in previous special elections that allows for better data

reporting to the public.

10. New BOE regulations on early voting

Mr. Lima said the state Board is discussing the new regulations, which mostly codify existing best practices, at its meeting on Tuesday. He said he and other local clerks have provided extensive feedback already to improve the regulations before they are considered for final adoption. The regulations will include a prohibition on electioneering inside early voting sites and within 50 feet of the entrance to an early voting site, which is already in law for Election Day.

11. Voter information and legal advertisements

Mr. Lima explained to the Board the various legal advertisements and city website postings the Canvassing Authority will run and post in the coming months to alert voters to important registration, mail ballot application, and early voting deadlines, along with the official election warrant that lists all polling locations and ballot questions.

12. Election security

Mr. Lima said many physical security upgrades have been made to our office using the previous \$50,000 grant from the Secretary of State, including motion sensors, and alarm system, new cameras, and upgrades to doors, windows, and secure ballot storage. He will be meeting soon with Cranston Police, Cranston Fire, and city administration to discuss operational security planning for the Fall elections. He did note a new security grant program has been opened by the DOS, which he plans to apply for after meeting with the police command staff and IT.

B. 2026 General Assembly session legislative recap and new changes in Rhode Island election law affecting 2026 election operations

Mr. Lima provided a verbal update to the Board on the bills that were enacted this session, including three bills written by our office. The Board members – particularly Ms. Moronta and Mr. McDonough, who each served through the 2024 election – were especially pleased to hear of passage of the write-in tabulation reform legislation that has been championed by the Board for the last decade.

C. United States Election Assistance Commission Standards Board and EAC Local Leadership Council Annual Meetings – April 2026

Mr. Lima said he is the state's appointee on both EAC FACA boards, and recently attended their annual meetings in Chicago alongside state and local election officials from throughout the country. He said discussions were productive, and there is a lot of talk about the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines for the next generation of voting equipment that will eventually replace the equipment we use at the polls now. His attendance was paid for by the federal government.

Mr. McDonough noted that he also completed the EAC certification and training program online, and Mr. Lima was able to pick up his signed certificate from the EAC commissioners on his behalf and bring it back from Chicago with him.

D. PEER Workshop – April 2026

Mr. Lima said he was invited to attend the first PEER workshop in Chicago and participate as a member of their advisory board. The new organization will build off of best practices learned during Hurricane Helene in North Carolina in 2024, among other disasters that coincided with the administration of elections, to ensure election officials and emergency planners are connected and communicating well ahead of time before a disaster strikes, helping to ensure continuity of operations for voters. Mr. Lima said that PEER paid for his travel costs. He said PEER will look to replicate the success of the cooperation between emergency planners and election officials in North Carolina nationwide as we prepare for future emergencies and disasters that impact elections.

E. Auburn University Election Funding Meeting – May 2026

Mr. Lima was also invited to attend an election funding meeting at Auburn University with key stakeholders from the election administration and academic research community around the country. The brief session was paid for by Auburn and the Election Center at no cost to the city, and discussed new and innovative ideas to fund election administration amid a chronic lack of consistent federal funding support.

F. Election Science, Reform, and Administration Conference (ESRA) – June 2026

Mr. Lima said this was his second time attending the ESRA conference, which this year was held in Phoenix Arizona. He said ESRA reimbursed him for part of the cost of attendance, and he paid the rest out of pocket. ESRA is the premier conference in which academic research around election reform is presented and discussed, and he was encouraged to attend as a local election official to ensure our perspective was shared. He also presented information as part of a panel on CEAL, the Coalition of Election Association Leaders, which met previously in Chicago.

Mr. Lima noted that he gets invited to a lot of national convenings because of his role as Chair of the Rhode Island Town and City Clerks' Association Elections Committee, and he wants other local election officials to have similar opportunities to include their voice in the elections policy and improvement space. Accordingly, Mr. Lima said he is stepping down as Chair effective in December after a number of years, which will allow his colleagues from Newport and Woonsocket to take over as the new co-chairs and take a larger role representing local clerks and election officials on task forces and at the General Assembly when it comes to lobbying for elections legislation.

G. PLEJ Convening – July 2026

Mr. Lima said he will be attending PLEJ this July, which is a two-day conference run by the Partnership for Large Election Jurisdictions, which we are a member of due to our status as the state's second largest city. Mr. Lima said his past participation in PLEJ has been extremely meaningful, and the organization does a wonderful job supporting election offices around the country as we navigate unprecedented challenges in election administration. PLEJ is paying for much of the cost of attendance, with Mr. Lima paying the difference out of pocket.

H. International Association of Government Officials Conference – July 2026

Mr. Lima is a member of IGO and participates in the professional organization's Certificate in Public Leadership program, for which he is attending two classes at the conference this July, being held back-to-back with PLEJ. He is paying for his attendance at his own expense. Mr. Lima said he is the current Rhode Island Delegation Chair for IGO, and serves on their board of directors alongside local election officials, clerks, and treasurers from many local jurisdictions around the country, and some from around the world.

I. U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence accreditation program

Mr. Lima informed the Board our participation in the Pathfinder Cohort for the U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence accreditation program is nearly complete, and that we plan to apply for certification in all eligible standards as soon as funding is available.

J. Impact of FY2027 budget cuts on election operations

Mr. Lima said he discussed this earlier in the meeting, and noted that we accepted more than \$50,000 in budget cuts to our planned operating budget to do our part in supporting recovery from the city's budget crisis. While these cuts are significant, we carefully adjusted our staffing needs to ensure they will have a minimal impact on voters.

Mr. Lima said that as part of our budget cuts, we are also forgoing poll worker salary increases this year for both Election Day poll workers, who will be paid the same as in 2022 and 2024, and the early voting staff, who will be paid at the same rate they have since they first started in 2020. Mr. Lima said that many neighboring cities and towns, which are eligible to recruit our poll workers, have increased their pay rates above our own. Mr. McDonough said we must ensure there is adequate funding to increase our rates in 2028 after holding off for one more cycle this year, in order to remain competitive and ensure poll workers are properly compensated for the long day and training.

K. BOE polling place inspections and layout changes

Mr. Lima said the BOE and Governor's Commission on Disabilities has inspected polling locations over the last year in preparation for the 2026 elections, and one major item to consider as we prepare for September will be the layout changes to polls due to the new PollPads needing to be plugged in. We will be receiving updated layout diagrams from the state BOE, and the Board will have a role in ensuring our poll workers are aware of the need to change layouts that have otherwise been the same for decades to accommodate these equipment changes and ensure polling places remain safe, functional, and ADA compliant.

L. RI election official training and certification program (ETAC)

Mr. Lima said this new state professional training program has been incredibly successful. Ms. Madonna in our office has already completed it, and the rest of our staff, including Mr. Lima, only have one or two classes remaining in the 13-class program.

M. New England regional association of election officials (NEEOA)

Mr. Lima said he has been working with his colleagues in other cities and towns, the state election offices, and the other five New England states to launch NEEOA in order to better connect election officials in our region, who are unique in the country, as most of America runs elections at the county level under very different operational structures. Mr. Lima said he facilitated the first kick-off call, with the help of the Bipartisan Policy Center, in May, and there will be three additional Zoom calls for the New England region later this year. The hope is to eventually transition NEEOA into a permanent, regional professional association that provides training, support, and networking for the thousands of local election officials who work throughout the six New England states and who are amongst the most disconnected from the national election support network.

V. Adjournment (vote may be taken)

MOTION: By Mr. Mastantuono and seconded by Ms. Moronta to adjourn.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY – VOICE VOTE

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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