

*Commissioners*

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

**CHARLES HOLIDAY, JR.**, *Executive Director*



**Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago**  
**Minutes of the Regular and Organizational Board Meeting**

**January 25, 2022, 10:00 a.m.**

**69 West Washington Street, 8th Floor Conference Room, Chicago, Illinois 60602**  
**via WebEx video conference**

**Board Members:**

Marisel A. Hernandez, Chair  
William J. Kresse, Commissioner/Secretary  
June A. Brown, Commissioner

**Staff:**

Charles Holiday, Executive Director  
Sandra Aspera, Assistant Executive Director [absent]  
Adam Lasker, General Counsel  
Max Bever, Director of Public Information  
Aneta Turek, Manager – Human Resources  
Lance Gough, Consultant  
Trish Sheehy

**Guests:**

Helene Gabelnick, League of Women Voters of Chicago (LWV Chicago)  
C. Betty Magness, Rainbow P.U.S.H.  
Danielle Matzdorf, Arrow Messenger  
Clifford Helm  
Brian Whiteley, ES&S  
Rev. Dr. Jeanette C. Wilson, Rainbow P.U.S.H.  
Bishop Tavis Grant

- I. Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
- II. Roll Call: All members of the Board were present via WebEx video conference. The Chair welcomed new Board member June A. Brown to her first Regular Board meeting as a Commissioner.
- III. Consideration of Agenda: The agenda was accepted as presented.
- IV. Organization
  - A. Election of Chair: Commissioner Kresse said that it was his honor to move to nominate Commissioner Marisel Hernandez to continue in the roll of Chair of the Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago. Commissioner Brown, stated that it was her honor as her 1<sup>st</sup> duty, to second the motion. Commissioner Hernandez accepted the nomination. Commissioner Hernandez was elected Chair of the Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago by unanimous vote of the Board.
  - B. Election of Secretary: Chair Hernandez took the pleasure of nominating Commissioner William Kresse as the Secretary of the Board. The Chair added that Commissioner Kresse has done an excellent job and thanked him for everything that he has done. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion to nominate Commissioner Kresse Secretary. Commissioners

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Hernandez and Brown voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Kresse abstained from voting. By majority vote of the Board, Commissioner William Kresse was elected Secretary of the Board.

C. Adoption of By-Laws:

The Chair pointed out that the adoption of the By-Laws is done at every reorganization. To adopt the By-Laws as presented, the Chair called on General Counsel Adam Lasker to speak on the matter.

General Counsel Adam Lasker pointed out that, as the Chair stated, the Board does adopt its By-Laws at every Organizational Meeting, so that's essentially once a year.

Mr. Lasker stated that these are the same By-Laws as have been used in many prior years, the only change that Mr. Lasker is suggesting is that the Board add a provision to mention the statutory authority to hold virtual video meetings whenever a State or local disaster is declared. Because it is statutory authority, Mr. Lasker doesn't think it's absolutely required to be in the By-Laws, but because the By-Laws mention the Open Meetings Act (OMA) provisions for remote attendance he felt that the clarification would be good. Other than that Mr. Lasker notes that Commissioner Brown's name is added. There were no other changes presented.

Commissioner Kresse moved to approve the By-Laws as presented. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The By-Laws were adopted as presented by unanimous vote of the Board.

V. Approval of Minutes:

- A. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 11, 2022: Commissioner Hernandez moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 11, 2022. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 2:0 vote of the Board with Commissioner Brown abstaining as she was not present at that meeting.

VI. Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director Charles Holiday reported:

Mr. Holiday began his report by welcoming new Commissioner June Brown and stating that he is looking forward to working with her and will be meeting with her following the Board meeting.

Mr. Holiday provided the status of the redistricting projects. We are working on automating the reduction of precincts process. We're continuing to proof the data that we received to ensure that it is correct.

We are accommodating the General Public with the use of our computers to check nominating petitions that have been circulated. We are using our lower level conference room for this process. That conference room has a large space where we can continue to follow all COVID protocols.

Our staff is handling requests from the General Public for current district maps, "walk-sheets" and district schedules.

Last week we received 5 bids for cartage for the upcoming election cycle. The Board's Procurement Officer Opal Walls and her staff, are reviewing the bid responses now. We intend to bring a recommendation to the Board at its next meeting for approval.

We are working to update all forms for our upcoming election cycle.

Assistant Executive Director Sandra Aspera is not available today. She's taking some well-deserved time off.

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- A. Assistant Executive Director's Report:  
Assistant Executive Director Sandra Aspera was absent. No report was given.
- B. Public Information Director's Report:  
The Chair asked the Board members if the Public Information Director's report could be deferred. The other two Commissioners agreed to defer. Mr. Holiday stated that he has spoken with Max Bever, the Public Information Director and that if Mr. Bever arrives before the meeting is adjourned he would like to present his report. The Board agreed that if Mr. Bever arrives before the end of the meeting, he could present his report.

VII. Old Business:

- A. Infrastructure Projects and Changes in Election Administration
- B. Electronic Poll Books
- C. Voting Equipment

Executive Director Holiday covered items A, B and C of the Old Business category by stating that all the necessary procedures are being followed to ensure that our equipment is ready for the upcoming election cycles.

D. Legislation

General Counsel Adam Lasker provided the Legislative report:

We are following several bills that are pending in the legislature for this Winter session, which runs until early April. The Legislature has canceled most of its January sessions. They are still having virtual meetings for their committees. Mr. Lasker has heard that the talk around Springfield is that there will be nothing controversial passed during this session. Because of the time limitations they're feeling that they just have to take care of urgent legislation.

Mr. Lasker did note that there are a few bills pertaining to voter registration changes. One bill would establish an automatic voter registration system with the Illinois State Police (ISP), adding the ISP to the government agencies where any application or change of address for a Firearm Owners Identification Card (FOID) or a Concealed Carry License would automatically get sent to the Illinois State Board of Elections (ISBE) for voter registration purposes. Similarly, a different bill (HB4310) would require the Jury Administrator from each county to send change of address information to the election authorities at least every three months, so as to allow changes in voter rolls. That same bill (HB4310) would also require a voter registration canvass to be conducted following the odd year municipal elections and prior to the beginning of petition circulation for the following Spring General Primary; it's just a bit of a timing change. The State Law currently requires those canvasses to be done only every two years. Our Board has historically been doing them every year, and within the time frame that is currently proposed. So, this change in the statute would not have any effect on us.

There's an old bill that's resurfaced that would allow 16-year-olds to register to vote. Their registration would be held in abeyance until they're actually old enough to cast a ballot.

Regarding Vote by Mail, there's a proposal that the ISBE create a statewide policy on chain-of-custody for Vote by Mail ballots with an emphasis on procedures for destroying a ballot when the voter already voted in person the reporting requirements for those particular ballots.

There are some other bills that we're watching. For example: one bill would require that nomination papers include a statement that the candidate is not affiliated with any Socialist organization. It is Mr. Lasker's opinion that the 1973 opinion of the State Supreme Court that

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found similar “Loyalty Oaths” to be unconstitutional, would also make this proposal unconstitutional.

House Bill 4467 (HB4467) concerns the order of candidate names on ballots. It would require randomized order. The ISBE would be required to hire a contractor or a vendor that would prepare computer software to randomize ballot names.

There are a few bills pending that would require voter id at the polls. One would allow for an actual voter ID card for those people who don’t have any other form of acceptable voter ID. It doesn’t specify who would issue that voter ID card.

House Bill 4485 (HB4485) would have the ISBE perform a random one percent audit of the signatures on ballot applications. Following every election, the ISBE would chose at random one percent of jurisdictions’ ballots and then want to compare the signatures on those ballot applications.

Mr. Lasker will keep the Board posted of any movement on these.

At this point of the meeting the Chair called upon Mr. Max Bever to provide his Public Information Director’s report.

Mr. Bever apologized for his delay which was due to winter weather public transportation issues.

Today we are celebrating National Poll Worker Recruitment Day. While our web portal is not up yet, we are celebrating with the rest of election agencies and reminding people on social media that the Primary Election has been pushed back to June 28<sup>th</sup> and that our portal will be open for applications on March 1<sup>st</sup>. We’ll make sure to do another big social media push once that is open.

Mr. Bever also welcomed Commissioner June Brown. Mr. Bever stated that we sent out a press release and Commissioner Brown’s bio to press this morning and we’ll make sure to share any stories or any requests that come our way.

Reiterating what others have mentioned, we are in the process of working on our canvass mailing ahead of the next Primary Election. We are in a design draft and we’ll keep that moving forward and keep the Board apprised of our deadlines once those are set.

At this point the Chair returned the meeting to regular order.

VIII. New Business

- A. Approval of Professional Services Agreement between the Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago and Maritza Buendia:

Mr. Lasker spoke to this item.

Our prior Spanish Language Translator and Community Liaisons have resigned, retired from the Board so Board staff conducted a search for replacements and found a candidate that they believe has strong experience and skills, Maritza Buendia. Ms. Buendia is very excited about the possibility. This is for the Community Services Department and we’d like to get her started with a contract that would begin today. The contract would run for one year until January 24, 2023 at a rate of \$50/hour and capped at \$100,000 for the year.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve a Professional Services Agreement with Maritza Buendia for Spanish language translation and community liaison services, at a rate of \$50/per hour not to exceed \$100,000 over the one-year term of the agreement, which is from January 25, 2022 through January 24, 2023. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 3:0 vote of the Board.

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B. Consideration and Adoption of the Second Revised 2022 Election Calendar

Mr. Lasker explained that earlier this month the State Legislature and Governor enacted Public Act 102-0693 from House Bill 3138 that had some notable things regarding districting for judicial sub-circuits all throughout the State. As previously discussed, the newly remapped Judicial Sub-Circuits within Cook County are not going to become effective, per this legislation, until December of 2024. That is, after the next Presidential General Election. However, this bill also eliminated the ability for voters to make an in-person request for a Vote By Mail ballot within the five days leading up to the election due to the problem that there's not necessarily time for those ballots to make their way back to the Board through the United States Postal Service (USPS). Mr. Lasker's not sure why this provision applies for this upcoming June Primary only. Nonetheless, because that time period for those in-person requests has been eliminated through Statute we need to take that out of the calendar. We have also added Commissioner Brown's name to this new calendar.

Commissioner Kresse moved to adopt the 2<sup>nd</sup> revised 2022 Election Calendar. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board.

IX. Legal Report

General Counsel Adam Lasker reported that he had a bad/good news kind of report. The bad news first, Mr. Lasker was very sorry to report that the Board of Election Commissioners is losing one of its all-time greatest Electoral Board Hearing Officers and Administrative Hearing Officers who is no longer going to be able to hear any cases because she's going to have to vote on them instead. By joining the Board as a Commissioner, we have unfortunately lost June Brown as a truly tremendous Hearing Officer. Mr. Lasker reminisced about how he started getting to know June Brown in her capacity as a Hearing Officer long before he joined the Board while he was still out in the trenches with the candidates. Mr. Lasker said of Commissioner Brown that she has always been fair, she brings integrity to every piece of every case she handled, a very intelligent attorney who really knows how to identify the issues and has a very nice demeanor, as well. So, the bad news is we are losing her as a Hearing Officer.

The good news is that we will have her on the Board. Mr. Lasker looks forward to working with Commissioner Brown in her capacity as Commissioner.

Mr. Lasker said that he forgot to point out in his Legislation Report, it appears that election legislation at the Federal level is not going anywhere. Congress voted that down last week. Mr. Lasker said that he or Mr. Lance Gough will let the Board if anything new comes up in that area.

Commissioner Kresse added to what Mr. Lasker said about the Federal legislation. The Chicago-based organization, The Uniform Law Commission, has started a Study Committee to look into the possibility of proposing either a model or a uniform "Election Code" that each state could then consider adopting. Commissioner Kresse noted that he is an advisor to that committee. As things progress, Commissioner Kresse will inform this Board.

The Chair asked Mr. Gough if he had anything to add to what had already been stated. Mr. Gough replied that it looks like some Federal legislation is going to be raised. Mr. Gough had a meeting yesterday regarding Military and Overseas Voting and as soon as he gets more information he will share it with the Board.

X. Financial Report

A. Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2021 Appropriation – 21-10 dated January 25, 2022 in the amount of \$ 502,871.04:

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Balance Sheet and Voucher Listings for the City of Chicago – 2021 Appropriation – 21-10 dated January 25, 2022 in the amount of

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§502,871.04. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed by 3:0 vote of the Board.

XI. Public Comment:

The Reverend Jeanette Wilson of Rainbow P.U.S.H. asked to speak. She wished to congratulate Commissioner Brown on behalf of Rainbow P.U.S.H Coalition and the Reverend Jesse Jackson. She told the Board that in Commissioner Brown it has an outstanding lawyer, an outstanding scholar, and a committed community servant who is going to make sure that the rules are enforced properly and equitably.

XII. Executive Session: none

XIII. Adjournment: Commissioner Kresse moved to adjourn until the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting. As Commissioner Brown seconded the motion she thanked everyone for their welcoming and kind words and thoughts. She stated that she is looking forward to working each of them. She also thanked them for all they've done so far and she looks forward to contributing. Prior to the vote on the motion to adjourn, Ms. Betty Magnus of Rainbow P.U.S.H asked the Chair if she could thank Mr. Gough for his support of the P.U.S.H. Excel virtual program. The Chair said she could. The Chair then called for a vote on the motion to adjourn. All members voted in favor of the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Submitted,

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

Commissioner William J. Kresse  
Secretary