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THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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In Re: :  
:  
Regular Meeting. :

- - -

September 7, 2021

PROCEEDINGS OF

THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

before Chairman Douglas J. Preisse, Director Antone White, Deputy Director David Payne, and Board Members Kimberly E. Marinello, Michael Sexton, and Josh Jaffe, on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, beginning at approximately 3:06 p.m., and concluding at approximately 3:32 p.m.

- - -

*Higgins & Associates*  
*Court Reporting - Legal Video - Videoconference*  
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**APPEARANCES:**

**FRANKLIN COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE**  
**Jeanine Hummer, Esquire**  
**Assistant Prosecuting Attorney**  
**373 South High Street, 13th Floor**  
**Columbus, Ohio 43215,**

On behalf of the Board.

**ALSO PRESENT:**

**Mel Fuhrmann**  
**Erin Gibbons**  
**Jeff Mackey**

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I N D E X

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1 Tuesday Afternoon Session  
2 September 7, 2021  
3 3:06 p.m.

4 - - -

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: I will go  
6 ahead and take roll.

7 Kim Marinello.

8 MEMBER MARINELLO: Here.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Mike Sexton.

10 MEMBER SEXTON: Here.

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Doug  
12 Preisse.

13 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Here.

14 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: And Josh  
15 Jaffe.

16 MEMBER JAFFE: Here.

17 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: We have a  
18 quorum.

19 The first item on the agenda is the  
20 petition certification reconsideration for Roger  
21 Dave George. It's really not so much a  
22 reconsideration. I'll let Jeff Mackey explain what  
23 we have.

24 MR. MACKEY: In the August 16th  
25 meeting staff had indicated that the petition for  
Roger Dave George, a candidate for Canal Winchester

1 local school district board of education was  
2 insufficient. And at that time the staff had found  
3 the petition contained only 24 valid signatures  
4 when 25 were required. But on September 1st after  
5 receiving our letter that he was not certified  
6 Mr. George presented himself at our offices and  
7 reviewed his petition with staff and was able to  
8 identify one individual who signed his petition  
9 that we were not able to identify when we were  
10 reviewing his petition. So we went in and checked  
11 all the records that we had on file for that  
12 individual and were able to find that the signature  
13 matched eventually. So accordingly, staff now  
14 concludes that Mr. George's petition is sufficient  
15 and would recommend that the Board certify his  
16 candidacy to the 2021 General Election ballot.

17 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Sounds  
18 straightforward to me.

19 MEMBER SEXTON: These are all copies  
20 of his petition?

21 MR. MACKEY: The part petition in  
22 question was the one stamped at the top 1364.

23 MEMBER JAFFE: The back of the first  
24 petition, line six, I think, the third signature  
25 down.

1 MR. MACKEY: He identified that as  
2 Arnetta Davis.

3 MEMBER SEXTON: The one in Canal  
4 Winchester?

5 MR. MACKEY: Yeah.

6 We had it as Arnetta Davis at first,  
7 but eventually found the document that matched to  
8 that. And it's also attached there to the absentee  
9 identification envelope for the primary in 2021.

10 MEMBER SEXTON: That's the one that  
11 gave us the ballot number?

12 MR. MACKEY: Yes.

13 MEMBER SEXTON: After considering  
14 all the evidence and arguments presented by Board  
15 staff regarding the validity of signatures  
16 previously ruled invalid by the Board of Elections,  
17 I move that Roger Dave George has demonstrated that  
18 a sufficient number of signatures were filed and,  
19 therefore, the name of Roger Dave George is  
20 certified to the November 2nd, 2021 ballot as a  
21 candidate for Canal Winchester School Board.

22 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Second.

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been  
24 moved and seconded.

25 All those in favor of the motion

1 signify by saying aye.

2 (Vote taken.)

3 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed,  
4 same sign.

5 (No response.)

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Motion  
7 carries.

8 The next item on the agenda is a  
9 voter registration challenge. And I'll call on Mel  
10 Fuhrmann in Voter Services to explain what we have.

11 MS. FUHRMANN: Good afternoon.

12 We received a voter challenge from a  
13 voter by the name of Bryan Anthony Faletti of  
14 7351 Lebanon Avenue in Reynoldsburg, and you have a  
15 copy of that voter challenge form in your packet.  
16 Specifically, he is challenging Israel Gonzalez  
17 Rodriguez of 7351 Lebanon Avenue in Reynoldsburg  
18 and Mr. Faletti asserts that Israel Gonzalez  
19 Rodriguez no longer resides at that address. And  
20 you'll see in your packet I've enclosed a copy of  
21 the voter registration, most recent voter  
22 registration document for Mr. Rodriguez as well as  
23 the voting history for Mr. Rodriguez. I will note  
24 that Mr. Rodriguez has not voted since May of 2017.  
25 And I've also enclosed the most recent absentee

1 ballot envelope that was returned by Mr. Faletti in  
2 October of 2020 who currently does live at  
3 7351 Lebanon Avenue. Also enclosed is his most  
4 recent voting history. You can see he voted as  
5 recently as November of 2020.

6 MS. GIBBONS: We also received today  
7 a return to sender from the notice that was sent to  
8 Israel Gonzalez Rodriguez.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: At that 7351  
10 address?

11 MS. GIBBONS: That's correct.

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Which would  
13 indicate that he doesn't live there.

14 DIRECTOR WHITE: Mel, the --  
15 Mr. Rodriguez's voter registration, is the date on  
16 his registration 1-19-2013?

17 MS. FUHRMANN: Yes.

18 DIRECTOR WHITE: That's the last  
19 time he filed a registration with the Board?

20 MS. FUHRMANN: That's right.

21 DIRECTOR WHITE: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. FUHRMANN: And Mr. Faletti is  
23 currently an active voter on our voter rolls here  
24 in Franklin County.

25 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Looks like a

1 pretty thorough review to me.

2 MEMBER SEXTON: So did Mr. Gonzalez  
3 vote in the 2020 election?

4 MS. FUHRMANN: No. Our records show  
5 that Mr. Rodriguez last voted in the May primary of  
6 2017 and has not voted since that time here in  
7 Franklin County.

8 MEMBER SEXTON: Okay.

9 MR. JAFFE: Is that May 2017 or  
10 November 2016? It's sort of hard to read across  
11 the line.

12 MS. FUHRMANN: Let me see. You are  
13 correct, Mr. Jaffe. It is November 8th of 2016  
14 would have been the last time that Mr. Rodriguez  
15 voted here in Franklin County.

16 MR. JAFFE: Absent the challenge  
17 being filed, wouldn't we be checking with him in  
18 the near future as part of the normal process to  
19 see if he's still an active voter?

20 MS. FUHRMANN: Yes.

21 MEMBER SEXTON: All right. Well,  
22 with that, I will move that the Board approve the  
23 challenge of the right to vote filed by Bryan  
24 Anthony Faletti of 7351 Lebanon Avenue,  
25 Reynoldsburg, Ohio, against Israel Gonzalez

1 Rodriguez of 7351 Lebanon Avenue, Reynoldsburg,  
2 Ohio and that Israel Gonzalez Rodriguez's  
3 registration be removed from the Franklin County  
4 voter file.

5 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I second the  
6 motion.

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been  
8 moved and seconded.

9 All those in favor of the motion  
10 signify by saying aye.

11 (Vote taken.)

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed,  
13 same sign.

14 (No response.)

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Motion  
16 carries.

17 The next item on the agenda is the  
18 certification of write-in candidates for the  
19 November 7th General Election. Or no. It says  
20 November 7th, but it's November 2nd.

21 MR. MACKEY: On August 18th we  
22 received from Annette Jamiel and Christy Mathys  
23 timely declarations of intent to be write-in  
24 candidates for the office of village council in the  
25 Village of Brice. The staff has reviewed those

1 declarations and found them to be valid and  
2 sufficient.

3 MEMBER MARINELLO: I move that the  
4 Board certify Annette Jamiel and Christy Mathys as  
5 valid write-in candidates for the Village of Brice  
6 council members on the November 2, 2021 General  
7 Election ballot.

8 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I'll second the  
9 motion.

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been  
11 moved and seconded.

12 All those in favor of the motion  
13 signify by saying aye.

14 (Vote taken.)

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed,  
16 same sign.

17 (No response.)

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Motion  
19 carries.

20 The next item on the agenda is we  
21 have two candidate withdrawals from Worthington  
22 City Council.

23 MR. MACKEY: On August 20th we  
24 received written notification from Eddie Pauline,  
25 candidate for Worthington City Council, that he

1 wished to withdraw and have his name removed from  
2 the ballot. The deadline to have your name removed  
3 from the ballot was August 24th. So he was within  
4 that timeline.

5 We also received on the 24th a  
6 written notification from Jennifer Rhodes, also a  
7 candidate for Worthington City Council, that she  
8 wished to withdraw and also have her name removed  
9 from the ballot. Everything appears to be in order  
10 for those.

11 MEMBER SEXTON: Was the second one  
12 in this time frame, as well?

13 MR. MACKEY: Yes. It was on the  
14 deadline day.

15 MR. JAFFE: Where does the deadline  
16 to be removed from the ballot come from?

17 MR. MACKEY: The 70th day before the  
18 day of the election, which is the date that we need  
19 to certify ballots to overlap counties, if we have  
20 any, and the Secretary of State certifies the  
21 official form of the ballot and the candidates to  
22 us.

23 MR. JAFFE: All right. Well, I move  
24 that the Board accept the requests of Jennifer  
25 Rhodes and Eddie Pauline to withdraw as candidates

1 for Worthington City Council and that their names  
2 shall not appear on the November 2nd General  
3 Election ballot.

4 MEMBER SEXTON: I'll second.

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been  
6 moved and seconded.

7 All those in favor of the motion  
8 signify by saying aye.

9 (Vote taken.)

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed,  
11 same sign.

12 (No response.)

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Motion  
14 carries.

15 The next item on the agenda is  
16 BlueCrest contract for our Relia-Vote machine.  
17 I'll call on Matt Kelly with the Absentee  
18 Department to walk us through this.

19 MR. KELLY: Good afternoon,  
20 Mr. Chairman and Board members.

21 Before you is the annual contract  
22 that we have with our Relia-Vote machine vendor  
23 BlueCrest doing business -- or DMT Solutions Global  
24 Corporation doing business as BlueCrest. The main  
25 highlights of this agreement I guess would be that

1 the agreement itself has been already reviewed by  
2 the prosecutor's office, signed off on, and meets  
3 all state and county legal standards and  
4 requirements. That was a process that took a few  
5 days to go over, but we got that accomplished.

6           The new agreement is actually an  
7 agreement that goes -- instead of 12 months it's a  
8 17-month agreement going back to February 1st, 2021  
9 to June 30th, 2021. So there's a portion of the  
10 contract that is represented for those dates and  
11 then another portion of the contract and you can  
12 see on the fee schedule that it's represented from  
13 July 1st, 2021 to June 30th, 2022. And the reason  
14 we lumped them both together is because the company  
15 itself, DMT Solutions Global Corporation, they are  
16 on a state term. So we wanted to get our contract  
17 back on the state fiscal year. So the portion --  
18 the first portion of this 122,000 that's  
19 represented by the \$35,931, that represents the  
20 first part of -- or I should say the last half of a  
21 former contract and takes us then in the second  
22 half to the new contract which follows the state  
23 fiscal year for a grand total of \$122,166. The  
24 contract itself is changing from being based on  
25 buying a block of technician hours that we used to

1 do. And we used to try to figure out technician  
2 hours, anywhere from 300 hours to 400 hours for a  
3 given year depending on how big the election cycle  
4 was. So we are now basing a contract on number of  
5 ballots. And so for this contract we have 220,000  
6 ballots that we would include as part of this  
7 contract and that will save us dollars in the long  
8 run. So that's the only other big change to this  
9 contract.

10 So if you have any questions or if  
11 the Director needed to add any information.

12 DIRECTOR WHITE: Yeah. This is for  
13 the Board's perspective. I wanted just to talk a  
14 little bit about this company. So we've been with  
15 this company which originally was Pitney Bowes and  
16 then I believe BlueCrest bought Pitney Bowes.

17 MR. KELLY: It spun off.

18 DIRECTOR WHITE: It spun off into  
19 BlueCrest that has our Relia-Vote equipment. We've  
20 been with them since 2007. So we've actually been  
21 with this company 14 years. And during that time  
22 we started out with two five-year lease agreements  
23 and then in 2017 we purchased the equipment for  
24 \$503,000. So since 2007 when you look at the  
25 leasing, purchasing, the upgrades and all the

1 maintenance, we've spent -- or we've invested  
2 nearly \$4.2 million into this equipment. And I  
3 raise that because I know there has been still some  
4 questions about the issue we had last year with  
5 sending out the incorrect ballots. And so while  
6 that incident was unfortunate, we have had a long  
7 relationship with this company. We've invested  
8 nearly \$4.2 million into this equipment. This  
9 equipment has served the voters of Franklin County  
10 well in that time. And since that incident has  
11 occurred we have changed our practices so that,  
12 one, the configuration setup where the scanner was  
13 disabled during the ballot insertion that caused  
14 the incident, that has been changed. The  
15 configuration settings have been changed so that  
16 can no longer happen. No one here can change it.  
17 Our BlueCrest vendor that comes in to assist us  
18 can't change it. It can only be changed at  
19 headquarters. And secondly, we've updated our  
20 auditing procedures so we now instead of auditing  
21 every 250th ballot we audit every 66th ballot. And  
22 we're now auditing to ensure that the right ballot  
23 is in the right envelope for the right voter. We  
24 were not doing that before. So we believe those  
25 changes and the amount of money we've invested that

1 we are in good shape moving forward to the future.  
2 And I wanted to provide that perspective for the  
3 Board.

4 MR. JAFFE: Thank you. That was  
5 very helpful.

6 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Thank you.

7 DIRECTOR WHITE: Matt, did you have  
8 anything to add to that?

9 MR. KELLY: Nope.

10 MR. JAFFE: I have a question about  
11 the per ballot pricing. So the term of this new  
12 contract before us goes through June of next year?

13 MR. KELLY: Correct.

14 MR. JAFFE: If we don't mail 220,000  
15 ballots in that time, what happens to what we paid  
16 for as far as the per ballot?

17 MR. KELLY: Well, just like the  
18 hours, that if we had unused hours -- we haven't  
19 had unused hours for a long time, but if we had  
20 unused hours those hours would then carry over to  
21 the next contract as a credit. Same thing with  
22 this. This is a more predictive model, I believe.  
23 With hours, if something really bad happened to the  
24 machine and there had to be a two-day shutdown and  
25 a swap out where there were a lot of hours being

1 burned for maintenance of the machine if something  
2 really big happened to the machine from a  
3 mechanical standpoint, that takes that off the  
4 table.

5           So just to give you some perspective  
6 why we came up with 220,000, that includes the  
7 2,000 ballots from this last special election. It  
8 includes 44,000 ballots that we're anticipating  
9 we'll be mailing out for this coming fall election,  
10 General Election. And that gives us wiggle room to  
11 produce 125 to 160,000 ballots and even 165 or  
12 170,000 ballots for the 2022 primary election. So  
13 we've built in enough wiggle room where it will  
14 be -- I'll be here next year eating my hat if we  
15 don't. So we've been conservative about how we're  
16 budgeting for this. So I think this is a more  
17 predictive model than just throwing a number out  
18 there for hours at 300, 400, or 450 hours.

19           MR. JAFFE: Very good. And Antone  
20 preemptively answered my other question, so I'm  
21 satisfied.

22           If there's nobody else, I move that  
23 the Board authorize the Director and Deputy  
24 Director to execute the contract with BlueCrest for  
25 annual on-call maintenance and a license agreement

1 for our Relia-Vote machine in the amount of  
2 \$122,166 effective February 1st of this year  
3 through June 30th of next year.

4 MEMBER SEXTON: Second.

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been  
6 properly moved and seconded.

7 All those in favor of the motion  
8 signify by saying aye.

9 (Vote taken.)

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed,  
11 same sign.

12 (No response.)

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Motion  
14 carries.

15 Well, I know everybody on this Board  
16 is aware that we moved from our voter registration  
17 system Integrity to Tenex. And I'll turn it over  
18 to Antone White real quick just to kind of give an  
19 update on that. And then if Jeff Gatwood has any  
20 follow-up conversation regarding that, that would  
21 be fantastic as well.

22 DIRECTOR WHITE: Thanks, David.

23 I wanted to provide a quick update  
24 to the Board on our Tenex project. So it's been I  
25 believe a two and a half year process to transition

1 our voter registration system from our old  
2 Integrity system into our modernized Tenex system.  
3 We actually spent the last two weeks with our  
4 vendor conducting that transition.

5           So just to give the Board a bit of a  
6 timeline here, on August 20th, which was a Friday,  
7 we put Integrity into read-only mode. So at that  
8 time the staff could no longer enter data into the  
9 Integrity system. We could still pull reports or  
10 still look at information, but we couldn't enter  
11 information within the system. On the 21st and the  
12 22nd of August we then conducted data migration.  
13 So at that time the data from the Integrity system  
14 was migrated over to the Tenex system, and that was  
15 over a weekend.

16           Beginning on Monday, the 23rd, we  
17 had staff on site from Tenex, we had a project  
18 manager that came on site, and at that time we  
19 conducted user validation of the data that was  
20 transferred into the new Tenex system and then we  
21 conducted staff training and we held various staff  
22 trainings throughout that week. The trainings went  
23 very well. They were very successful. And our  
24 Board of Elections super users are folks who have  
25 been working with the system and playing with it

1 and practicing with it over this two and a half  
2 year period. Many of them led these trainings.  
3 And with the assistance of Tenex staff we found  
4 that to be very beneficial to have one of our own  
5 training other staff here in the office. And so  
6 that went over very well.

7           On August 26th, which was a  
8 Thursday, we then did what I'm calling -- what we  
9 called a soft cut over. So we turned the system on  
10 and it was connected to the state system, and at  
11 that time we could see transactions coming back and  
12 forth and we looked at them to make sure that the  
13 transactions were coming back and forth  
14 appropriately. Staff from our Voter Services team  
15 processed some transactions to see them go back and  
16 forth. That went successful. We continued that  
17 activity into Friday, the 27th, and then at noon on  
18 the 27th we turned the system on fully for the  
19 entire staff at the Board of Elections and we've  
20 been live in it ever since Friday the 27th at noon.

21           So this has been a project that's  
22 been a long time coming, but it does significantly  
23 modernize the way in which we operate here at the  
24 Board of Elections. We're excited about the  
25 relationship with Tenex and we're excited about the

1 new system.

2 I don't know, Jeff, if you wanted to  
3 add any perspective to that. Jeff has been  
4 integral in helping us transition into this new  
5 system. And it's been Jeff Gatwood, our entire  
6 staff. And then I would be remiss if I didn't  
7 thank our partners at the Ohio Secretary of State  
8 as well as the Franklin County Data Center. Both  
9 of those entities have been really great partners  
10 in helping us transition.

11 MR. GATWOOD: Yeah. I fully agree  
12 with you on that. A lot of things we just said we  
13 couldn't have done without partnerships of the Data  
14 Center and the SOS. And the other thing that was  
15 really key to the success of this was all the  
16 engagement we got from the various departments. So  
17 voter services, absentee, PEO group. Because of  
18 that engagement they were ready to go from day one.  
19 So it really was beneficial. And it's not always  
20 easy to get the engagement of the departments  
21 because people have their full-time jobs to do and  
22 this is really a full-time job in itself. So kudos  
23 to the staff on being able to pull that off.

24 DIRECTOR WHITE: Thank you, Jeff.

25 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Very good to

1 hear.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Jeff is kind  
3 of understated on this because he -- at the same  
4 time we're moving to Tenex he has to keep Integrity  
5 up and going and he did a masterful job of doing  
6 that. It wasn't always easy. I think this last  
7 Labor Day weekend is the first weekend he's had in  
8 months upon months upon months of being able to sit  
9 back and kind of relax and not have to do something  
10 here at the Board of Elections. I know the Board  
11 and the staff is extremely grateful for all your  
12 efforts, Jeff. We brought you in just in the nick  
13 of time. We kind of had a joke that if for  
14 whatever reason Tenex didn't work we brought him in  
15 a day too late, and if it worked we brought him in  
16 just in the nick of time. So thank you.

17 And then, Carla, we were --  
18 everybody knows we had to do an audit of our 15th  
19 Congressional District primary. Do you want to  
20 just give a real brief overview of the audit and  
21 how it went?

22 MS. PATTON: So we hand counted  
23 1,268 ballots, which was just over five percent, as  
24 you recall from the August 16th Board Meeting of  
25 the five LIDs that we had drawn. We're happy to

1 report that we had a 100 percent accuracy in the  
2 way that votes were tabulated to our hand count.  
3 So we're comfortable in saying that the results  
4 that were certified are one hundred percent  
5 accurate.

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: And there  
7 wasn't any pressure other than the watchful eyes  
8 that we had with the Secretary of State.

9 MS. PATTON: No pressure. We had  
10 the Secretary of State here to observe us. We had  
11 four teams hand counting the ballots back there.  
12 They all took a break while the Secretary was then  
13 giving his press conference. But everything went  
14 well and we believe the Secretary is very pleased  
15 with what he saw here.

16 MS. GIBBONS: And that is true. He  
17 was.

18 DIRECTOR WHITE: I believe that's  
19 all we have today unless there is any other  
20 business.

21 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I move we  
22 adjourn.

23 MEMBER MARINELLO: I second.

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All those in  
25 favor, signify by saying aye.

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(Vote taken.)

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: We are  
adjourned.

- - -

Thereupon, the proceedings were  
adjourned at approximately 3:32 p.m.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

- - -

THE STATE OF OHIO:

SS:

COUNTY OF FRANKLIN:

I, Carla D. Castle, a Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true, correct, and complete written transcript of the proceedings in this matter;

That the foregoing was taken by me stenographically and transcribed by me with computer-aided transcription;

That the foregoing occurred at the aforementioned time and place;

That I am not an attorney for or relative of any of the parties and have no interest whatsoever in the event of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal of office at Columbus, Ohio, this 28th day of October, 2021.

/s/Carla D. Castle  
Notary Public, State of Ohio

My Commission Expires: September 29, 2026.

- - -