CITY OF ROCKVILLE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ELECTIONS

POST-ELECTION FORUM II

Saturday, February 8, 2020
PARTICIPANTS:

Board of Supervisors of Elections:

DR. LOIS NEUMAN, Chair
GRAHAM JOHNSON
ROBERT KURNICK
SOFYA ORLOSKY
STEPHEN WEINER

Staff:

SARA TAYLOR-FERRELL, City Clerk/Director of Council Operations
JUDY PENNY, Election Specialist

Speakers:

DON MASTERS
DAN CEDRIC
JOHN BECKER
DAVID MILES
JUDY RUDOLPH

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PROCEEDINGS

DR. NEUMAN: Welcome you to the Rockville Board of Supervisors of Elections Forum, a post election forum where we are here to hear from you as to what your response was to the elections and anything you wish to tell us about elections. We appreciate your taking your time to share your thoughts about vote by mail with us and I will not be very long. I'll be brief in my remarks. First, let me introduce the members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections. To me left is Sofya Orlosky. Next, is Graham Johnson. Next, on my right is Stephen Weiner and on the end is Robert Kurnick. Sara Ferrell over at the table to my left, your right, and Judy Penny who escorted when you came in are our able staff who are here with us today as well.

The purpose of this forum is to give the Board of Supervisors of Elections the opportunity to hear your comments about the 2019 elections so we are doing some fact finding. I want to know your thoughts about the election process,
suggestions for ways to facilitate the voting process, and ideas for how to enhance voter participation, which is our charge by the code. The Board will consider what we learn from each forum to factor into our reports and presentations.

Procedurally, this is not a formal meeting. The Board created the forum format with the expressed purpose of getting information from you. We have comment cards in the back for during or at the end of the session. We have a survey for you to fill out that you should have received as you came in. It looks like that. You can tell us your thoughts about elections at present and for the future. We have a sign-in sheet. We have a sign-up sheet, which if you haven't signed, you'll just let us know that you wish to speak. And the restrooms for those of you that are not familiar with this facility are out the door and sort of following the wall straight ahead are men's and women's, but they are single and then to the right you can find multi-use restrooms.
So, as a speaker, if you wish to speak, I will call you in the order of the names on the sign-up sheet or as you respond in the order that you respond from the audience. We will provide a microphone for you to use and the session will be recorded and televised on Channel 11 so you might be alert to that. To be sure we have time for everyone, each person will have five minutes, a five-minute limit with a 15 second warning and can return for an additional five minutes after everybody has concluded their remarks. We want to make sure that everybody has a chance to say something who wishes to speak. Please submit any written material before you speak. You can also send us comments to the City Clerk at cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov by February the 29th.

The Board may ask and encourage you to add information such as tell us more, explain what you mean by, or give us some examples so we might be asking you to provide us more based on what you've said. We want to hear information, clarification, details, and any concerns that you
have for our discussion and the Board members may
take notes on what you're saying.

So, we welcome your involvement in
facilitating the voting process and enhancing
voter participation and I will call the first
speaker and when you come up when you get the
microphone, if you will say your name and give any
identifier about yourself and as I said, you will
have five minutes. So, do we have anybody who
wishes to speak and if you do, let Judy know and
she will get the microphone to you. We ask that
you give your name before you speak. This is
being recorded as well.

MR. MASTERS: My name is Don Masters.
I'm a resident and also, a prior candidate in this
election. I had a few comments of my own and then
I went back and listened to the previous forum
that you had last week and that, unfortunately,
gave me a lot more comments. So, I'll probably go
over five minutes. I'm sure you'll let me know
that and then come back for a second round if I
can.
DR. NEUMAN: Certainly.

MR. MASTERS: It was interesting to me being and election worker for Montgomery County in the years past to see the difference between Montgomery County elections and Rockville elections and how you work together and how you work separately because a lot of things that I thought that Montgomery County would be doing for you, you guys actually do yourself so it was definitely a learning experience.

Regarding the election day, there are a couple things that I'd like to bring up. You went out there and properly measured the distance for the electioneering free zone to the front of the doors, but there were people that would congregate around the box when people would drive up to drop off their ballots and I think you should consider including that in the electioneering free zone for the next time. It was a comment in the prior thing and I would have to say I agree with it that there were a number of people, including myself, that were really looking forward to voting on the
day of the election in person and for whatever reason and I now understand the legal implications and the process implications of not having a ballot marking machine here the same day because you have to validate the ballot against who voted and whether they submitted a mail-in ballot as well so that was not possible, but I think for the people that like to feel that civil responsibility of going in person that was missing.

So, regarding your charge for increasing participation, as we all know that voting is one of the fundamentals of our democracy, it was a struggle for me during the election to connect with people not of original citizenship. I mean, all of us here seem to be, you know, old white boomers, but there are a lot of people out there that are much different than the way we grew up. I know I learned a lot through my family voting in every election, going through civics class, and I ran across one gentleman Asian American who somewhat enlightened me on the issue. He says, "You have to understand there are a lot of these
people that are now citizens that weren't even born in this country or their families weren't from this country didn't come from democracies. They do not understand the voting process." So, I think that's a big issue of trying to educate these people if they have never had civics class because the people I talked to they were either not voters or they were a vote and they weren't going to vote.

I've got a lot of comments about the postal service process because I used to work in commercial marketing and did a study of the postal service a few years back so I can either do that in the second five minutes or in a separate --

DR. NEUMAN: Well, you have about a half a minute, but you're welcome to come back and do that topic if you wish.

MR. MASTERS: I had a problem originally with the financial reporting. I don't Excel. I use something called Open Office and I ran into a problem. I didn't the kind of response that the other gentleman did that brought it up earlier. I
was just told to go back to the training documents and that would explain why it wouldn't work. So, it wasn't until I understood the differences between the two so I think maybe you need to validate the spreadsheet use on, you know, Open Office, Google Docs, those type of things for the next time. We were able to work it out though by using Excel.

DR. NEUMAN: Okay. Thank you. And if you wish to speak again, you're welcome to.

MR. KURNICK: Can I ask him a question?

DR. NEUMAN: Please.

MR. KURNICK: The people who were congregateing around the drop box, were they candidates or --

MS. PENNY: Robert, turn on your mic please.

MR. KURNICK: Oh, I'm sorry. All right. There we go. Let's try it again. The people who were congregateing around the drop box, were they candidates or campaign workers or do you know who they were?
MR. MASTERS: I would say yes.

MR. KURNICK: Yes to which?

MR. MASTERS: Both.

MR. KURNICK: Candidates and campaign workers?

MR. MASTERS: I don't know if they were campaign workers. I know there were some issues with campaign workers on the day of election. I wasn't the one that brought up the issue so I can't speak to somebody else's complaint but (inaudible).

MR. KURNICK: Okay. So, this is something somebody else told you. In other words, you didn't observe it yourself.

MR. MASTERS: Not for the campaign workers.

MR. KURNICK: Okay.

DR. NEUMAN: Any other questions anybody has? Okay.

MS. RUDOLPH: I'm Judy Rudolph. I'm a 40 year resident of Rockville. The first 38 years I lived in a homeowners association community and
the last two years leading up to the election,
I've been a renter in Town Center and the contrast
between my experiences in terms of interaction
with the city and from the city has been
considerable as a result of that and it was
particularly apparent in terms of the outreach to
residents with regard to this election. I think
that the problem that I have pinpointed is really
much broader than the election and has to do with
the city's whole approach to communications and
outreach. But it's been a rude awakening to me
that the city's communications are oriented
towards its definition of neighborhoods and
neighborhoods in the city's current experience are
characterized by having homeowners associations,
civic associations, and sometimes condo
associations. But people in rental buildings
often are kind of excluded from those. You know,
there are situations like Twinbrook and so on
where people can be put considered part of a
community association, but specifically, for me,
in Town Center, there is no residence association.
And, in addition that, our buildings are limited access so the candidates had no access for door-to-door campaigning. Some of the outreach in terms of water bills, I don't get a city water bill. I took a picture last week of the day that Rockville Reports was delivered to us and our building keeps recycling bins, John you will be happy about this, in the mailrooms so that when people their mail, the junk mail just goes right into recycling bins. It was full of Rockville Reports. People didn't even read them.

I had asked the property management company to publicize the election in its limited communications and it's very apparent that most of the property management companies of rental properties aren't committed to working with the city. So, some of the specific suggestions that I have really I think one of the easiest things and this is broader than the election. As I said, it really has to do with all the city's communications. But they have to file a report with the city to get their rental licenses. The
city could do a lot more outreach to property
management companies to get them to have welcome
packets in general about how new residents of
their buildings can participate in the city and
then with elections being a subset and then
election years to publicize it even more. But I
think there's a whole segment and I'll be very
interested in your demographics of participation
if there's any way of seeing the percentage of
renters who participated in this election.

With regard to the mail, I think it's
terrific. You know, as I've said, I've lived in
Rockville for a number of years. My participation
in city elections was somewhat erratic until I
retired, but I'm a computer user. Even though I'm
old, I'm not a dinosaur, but I have neighbors who
don't use computers and needed help and asked for
help. So, you know, I think looking at the
participation demographics, whatever you can do,
but just don't forget that there are people who
don't live in the traditional definition of
neighborhoods. Thank you.
DR. NEUMAN: Okay. Thank you. Any questions. I have at least one or two. Do you know if the people in their receiving their ballots or was there any problem with that.

MS. RUDOLPH: I know of what and interestingly enough, with regard to what Mr. Masters pointed out, she is a naturalized citizen who had been a naturalized citizen for 50 years, 78-years-old, and she approached me in September and said, "Will you help me register to vote? I don't know how to do it." And it was a very moving experience for me and even though language isn't a problem for her and even culturally, but she just wanted help. And it was one-to-one help of, you know, a neighbor, but it was triggered by a candidate having stopped her on the street and asking her to vote, but that candidate had to encounter her on the street because they didn't have access to our building to come door-to-door.

DR. NEUMAN: My second questions is, is the city aware of your concern?

MS. RUDOLPH: Yes.
DR. NEUMAN: Okay. And you've received responses of some kind from the city?

MS. RUDOLPH: To some extent.

DR. NEUMAN: But not to where you'd like it to be.

MS. RUDOLPH: Right. But I'm going to keep trying and people who know me don't doubt that.

DR. NEUMAN: And we appreciate your coming here and including us the Elections in your concern as to what's happening in this type of facility. It's very useful.

MR. RUDOLPH: Yeah. And by the way, I was remised in not starting out by thanking all of you and the staff because I don't think I have ever followed an election process as closely, but I had no idea how much effort it went into and for all of you as volunteers and even though the city staff gets paid, it wasn't enough to what you all put up with so thank you.

DR. NEUMAN: Thank you. Any other comment?
MR. LEE: Good morning. My name is Kwan Lee and thank you for holding this forum. So, unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to look at the first forum so hopefully some of these aren't redundant, but I'm going to piggy back off of what Mr. Masters and Ms. Rudolph mentioned is the language barrier. A lot of voters or people who didn't vote, one of their concerns was always the language barriers. Specifically, my base, you know, we have a lot of folks who are citizens but could not understand what they were receiving. So, I have many people who called me saying, "Can you help me fill out this ballot." And there were those who received ballots threw it away because they didn't know what it was and they found out that you could vote by mail and now, you know, they weren't sure how to get a new ballot. I would tell them and given their language barriers, they were pretty much I wouldn't say too lazy, but it was too much of a hassle or burden for them to go and get a new ballot. So, all these, you know, language barrier issues, essentially, they just
felt like voting wasn't worth it. It wasn't convenient enough.

Another issue that folks have mentioned to me was anonymity. They felt like the ballots they were sending were too obvious, you know, pinpointing that, you know, this is their ballot. They felt like it wasn't necessary for their names or address to be right so exposed outside.

Oh, and I have also been told that there are some residents who have moved, but still receive ballots so that's something that maybe we can better focus on terms of being more accurate and, you know, we don't have to be sending ballots to people who have moved already. That's all for now. Thanks.

DR. NEUMAN: Thank you. Anybody from the -- I would just like to respond to a few things. They don't understand what they are receiving you said so the language barrier is a translation one or the piece of material that they are getting?

MR. LEE: Especially the instructions
about how to vote. Some people might have really rudimentary understanding of the English language so they might be able to read simple sentences, but once you start throwing more vocabulary in there, they might not understand and so, it's not easy for them. You know, for us we read it and it's like, okay, you use a black pen or blue pen, fill out the bubbles, (inaudible), and, you know, this is for someone who is assisting so they have to fill it out. But for them, like, all this additional forms they're like, "Well. What is this? What am I supposed to sign," you know, and so, I think that maybe, you know, my solution is either have a place where you say, you know, if you don't want to go through hassle of translating everything. At the very least, you should have, like, call this number, you know, if you need assistance and have that sentence in multiple language so that they can call in and you can prepare them and you don't have to translate your whole entire document. But, again, the point is the material itself creates a huge barrier to
those who don't read or write the way most Americans do growing up in this country.

DR. NEUMAN: Do you know if they received the four mailings that we sent out? The postcards that had the, if you have questions, here's a website and here's a phone number to call.

MR. LEE: No, I never asked them that question honestly, but I can tell you that this particular issue isn't just an isolated single incident. I mean, it was through the whole process. The amount of calls I received to ask me to assist -- so, I was really pretty much the guy they would look for to help them translate the documents you were sending them. I mean, to me I think that should be, you know, the city's job and not necessarily just my job in showing them how to --

DR. NEUMAN: And that's why we did have the phone number so that people could call in and if we would have received sufficient phone calls that got our attention, we would probably have
done something in relationship to helping with translation.

MR. LEE: Was that number -- when you had the number, did you write it in, like, Chinese or something like that or was it only in English, please call this number when you have issue.

DR. NEUMAN: It was in English and there were numeric numbers, the number system that we would use in this country.

MR. LEE: Right. So, that's what I'm saying is that maybe you should have that sentence translate into multiple language. Again, this is my suggestion and, again, a lot of these people might not necessarily when you see a page full of, you know, text that you don't, you're not going to simply just call this number and say -- you know, at the very least, you've got to direct them that this number is for that reason. That's my suggestion.

DR. NEUMAN: And as you are aware, there are more than multiple languages that are now spoken and used in this country and what we have
is a dilemma, but the dilemma is how many translations do we provide as required by law and right now in this county it is the Spanish translation so as you see things that we do are in English and in Spanish. If there are other languages or that we need to pay attention to others and figure out another way to handle it, we certainly have done that. We were looking to have -- since it was vote by mail, part of the assumption, perhaps incorrectly and we're hearing from you, is that people would have access to their own translation services because surely this is not an issue just related to elections and just related to the mailing that they received from us, but probably occurs in multiple types of materials that people confront when they are in this country for not very long and so, we have translation services that are available and we know people have their own that they call or go on their website or whatever their means of communication is to get the assistance. So, our hope and you're saying there are still issues with it, but our
hope was that people would have the materials and
if they needed help in translation, would seek
their source to get the assistance in the
translation, which in essence is what they did.
They came to you and you helped them in the
translation.

The other issue we face is translating.
I have never, ever been in an election where
someone who speaks Spanish hasn't come up to me
and said, "You translated this wrong. This
language in my part of the world means this the
way you translated it. The way we say it would be
this word." So, we never nail it 100% right for
100% of the people and certainly, we keep trying
and we will continue to keep trying. So, the fact
that they felt comfortable to get in touch with
you and that you helped them is a good thing.

MR. LEE: Well, you know, of course, but
my point is I think the whole process of vote by
mail and why we did vote by mail is for voter
convenience and to encourage people to vote and
so, if we're finding rationales to say, "Well, you
know, it will be more a convenience for voters, but it will be more work on us." Then I think that rationale has already, you know --

DR. NEUMAN: No.

MR. LEE: -- gone out. So, my point is, yes, it might be more difficult -- we're not sure which language pinpoint, but at the very least we have to try. I mean, we've got consensus, we've got all these data we can look into instead of saying, "Well, you know, we got all different languages in Rockville so, you know, there's no way we can, you know, which one we should put we're not going to do anything about." I think that's not a good excuse. I think we should do something about it and there is data to know to pinpoint which ones that you would want for that.

DR. NEUMAN: Let me just finish with it. No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm not saying that we shouldn't try and that it is not a concern and it was indeed a concern, a big concern of ours to make sure the people would be able to get the information as best as we could get it to them and
then we provided ways for them to come back and get in touch with us if there were any questions. It is very useful hearing your comment because you're giving us the response to our efforts and it is very useful for us -- we'll certainly take it under consideration and Sofya is very concerned about this and has her comments as well.

MS. ORLOSKY: Well, as someone who grew up outside of this country and is a naturalized citizen, I definitely empathize with this comment. My question looking forward is, and this comes from kind of a lack of information in general, are there community groups that are maybe not as formal as housing associations or, you know, civic associations that we normally reach out to. Are there cultural community groups or elders or individuals who kind of are at the center of networks in the city that we could be reaching out to to talk about the next election to see how we can more effectively disseminate information and also, to understand the needs of these cultural groups of any ethnicity, of any language ability,
so that we incorporate this outreach into our future work. If you're aware of such groups of such networks, we welcome these recommendations. Please write to Sara because this is incredibly valuable information and since these are often not the groups that are formalized as homeowners associations or civic associations, we often times just don't know about them just because of how culturally we may be segregated in the city.

Thank you.

MR. LEE: Yeah, of course, there's plenty and, you know, Rockville is one of the most diverse cities so we have different groups and different elders as you mentioned within these groups, but I can tell you that based on experience, even though you might be able to educate the elders, at the very end each individual voter isn't going to simply vote simply because the elder, you know, said this. Right. They're going to want read the material and know it. But they're not going to read it when it's going to be a language in which, you know, they
have very difficult understanding. Again, simple sentence no problem, but once you're getting more into complex, they're not going to be able to grasp it and so, they might vote even though they're elders has given them some directions.

MS. ORLOSKY: The point of my comment is that when we talk with representatives of these communities, it helps us better understand the needs and how people seek information and where people go to understand the information so it's more to enable us to understand how we can adjust the way that we're reaching to various categories of voters.

DR. NEUMAN: Now, I'm going to have to call this topic, but I do want to make one comment regarding a much broader thing that you said, which was that people moved and they received ballots. One point I want to make is it's the responsibility of the voter, the person who moved, to let us know that they moved so that their name can be removed from the voter database. We don't do that. We would never enter a database and
remove someone's name. Somebody needs to let us
know that they now have a new address. So, if you
know people that that happened to, it would be
very useful for them to let us know so we can then
get back to that person and have them remove their
name from that address. Thank you. We can
certainly start the clock again for you if you
still have more things that you want to say and
again, thank you for your comments. Any other?
Yes, go ahead.

MR. MILES: I want to thank you all
again for all the effort that you all put in to
making this happen. The many weekends, the
community association's events. As it was said
previously, you don't get paid for this so I
really appreciate all the work you do. I'm going
to reserve most of my comments for e-mail. As Mr.
Lee said, some of it may have come out at the
previous session. I apologize for not being here
for that because of other meetings. I just wanted
some simple questions about how, you know, do we
know how many ballots may have been received after
the postmark and to, you know, talk about whether
or not postmarking on a specific day is the best
way to go moving forward.

Second, the projected costs of future
elections. I think a lot of the funding for this
election, a good chunk of it went into outreach
because of a new system and, you know, with the
costs moving forward. I think the proof is in the
(inaudible), you know, you all did turn out
increased voting by a significant amount so I
think that was money well spent, but moving
forward how much is this projected to cost not
that that should limit the things that we do.

And third and final, were there any
concerns voiced by people who have outside
mailboxes? I know a number of folks like in
Twinbrook have mailboxes outside and would not
necessarily bring their ballot to City Hall, but
just, you know, like many people, some people have
a flag, some people don't whether, you know, there
were any concerns from those neighbors and that's
all I have. Again, thank you for all you do.
DR. NEUMAN: I'm not aware of any concerns from anybody from outside mailboxes. We'll take that one first. If there are any, then certainly people need to let us know, but we haven't heard any and you did not have any calls -- I'm talking to Judy now. She is shaking her head. She did not have any calls about it or any e-mails. She would have gotten the -- she's the first line for that.

The rest of it will be presented in a report to mayor and council on March the 2nd and then after that report, then it will be come more public information so we're restraining and holding from giving bits and drabs of information until after we've given the whole picture and the whole report to mayor and council then we will go into discussions about any of those specifics. But overall, we are very pleased with how the election went and overall, all the markers are very positive. Comment from anybody? Anything else? Yes, who?

MR. CEDRIC: Hello. Thank you. I was a
candidate during the last election. The one thing that hasn't or at least I haven't heard mentioned that I wanted to bring up and put a bug in your ear about something for the next go around. The cost of campaigning with vote by mail is extremely high to reach the numbers of voters that we had. Increase in turnout was about 90% give or take and reaching that number of voters is very expensive. Montgomery County recently introduced a public funding option for campaigning. I think the City of Rockville should give some thought to that because right now the cost of campaigning is more expensive this time, much more if you review the financial reports. It's going to continue to get more expensive as time goes on for people to campaign and that limits the number of people that can afford to join in and become a candidate in the race.

DR. NEUMAN: Your point is well taken. We all appreciate that fact that now you had a wider distribution for all of your literature. I just want to point out as well that we gave you a
cleaner database. So, in the past, past candidates will know that they received a bucket load of literature back again because of bad addresses so we made it a concerted effort to work with the county to get the MD voters as clean as we could get it and we had the lowest return of any mail that we've ever had. Not perfect, not where we want to be, not the best, but certainly a major improvement over what we've had. So, the flip side of that is you're not wasting your money in terms of it not getting to the right people and coming back, but your point is well taken in terms of cost and that, of course, is a mayor and council issue, but thank you for bringing it up.

MR. KURNICK: Actually, I wonder if you could explain what it is about vote by mail that makes campaigning more expensive for each candidate.

MR. CEDRIC: The only communication options you have are knocking on doors or mailing people. Social media is there, but it's not relevant really to the amount of people that you
need to talk to and you need to talk to twice as many people as you did last time and to do that you have to mail and mail is very expensive. That's really the long and short of it. You can't reach 12,000 people on your feet by yourself, we tried, and you have to mail them if you want to contact them and have any possibility of reading the information and, like I said, this is very expensive. So, you've got to reach out, you've got to cast a wider net, which means you've got to mail twice as many folks and it's just expensive.

DR. NEUMAN: More questions?

MR. BECKER: Hi. My name is John Becker and I'm a resident here in Rockville over at the Americana Center (phonetic) and I just have some questions about the report that's coming out in March. I know you can't give out details, but basically, it's going to provide as far as who, what, when, where, and how and will it have information on previous elections and also, as far as when that report comes out, will be there be another meeting of this body so that the public
can comment on the report or something like that.
I just want to follow-up as far as the data kind
of thing is concerned.

DR. NEUMAN: There will be comparative
data, yes, absolutely and cost as well as turn out
and as well as differences among the elections.
You know, sometimes we had, for those of you that
remember, the touchscreens and then we went to
valid marking devices and then we write so we will
earmark those as well. Yes, we will have that and
what was your other question?

MR. BECKER: Will there be another
meeting of this body after the report is
distributed (inaudible).

DR. NEUMAN: Sara, that's not in the
works.

MS. FERRELL: It will be another
meeting. We're planning to meet with the
jurisdictions around the State of Maryland and
other municipalities so hopefully, they will all
come out and the public is welcome to attend after
the report goes out.
DR. NEUMAN: Any other comments that anybody has thought of? Yes, go ahead. Then we will go back. Absolutely. Now we will go back. Certainly.

MS. RUDOLPH: Actually, the comments about the expense of primarily having to campaign by mail made me think about the environmental impact of all of this in terms of the amount of paper much of went into hopefully recycling, if not trash, and, you know, I did see on the questionnaire that voting electronically there's a question asking one's preference about that, but maybe one of the other things that should be considered because of the expense to the candidates of having to prepare campaign literature is whether the city would be able to release electronic mailing addresses for registered voters or if candidates could have access to the city sending out campaign, you know, I know that there were profiles on the website and so on, but just the difference between push and pull communications, is there any way to make it
easier and more cost effective as well as more
environmentally sensitive to help candidates come
up with ways to campaign in some way other than
face-to-face or with paper in view of the good
news that the numbers are increasing.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, we do have the
candidates forum, which we have always had, right?
And we did have a lot of social media outreach and
a lot of blasts that went out to some people that
may get their information that way. But
certainly, the mayor and council can have
discussion about this to see if they have any
other alternatives as well.

MS. RUDOLPH: They did have a text alert
that if you signed up for the text alert, there
were weekly test alerts on the election process
and what was going on and where things were in the
process and if you received your ballot packet and
what to look for so there were text alerts
throughout the election process if you signed up
for them. I guess my concern is if it's getting
too expensive for people who really would like to
serve on the council to even consider running and, you know, maybe there's a way that the city could help to come up with some creative ideas, you know, I know that evidently there was some dabbling in robocalling this campaign, but just to help candidates and potential candidates think about how to run a campaign in advance to encourage more representative people on the council so the council really does look like Rockville.

DR. NEUMAN: You had a comment?

MR. JOHNSON: Hi. Maybe just a follow-up. What is a tradeoff between -- we talked about the robo, I mean, the sort of text messages going out, the key is in sending all say the four postcards that went out, well Gee can't we sent those out by an e-mail. That means we need to have e-mail addresses and people would have to give us permission to use it. In my experience with other organizations that people sometimes are very reluctant to release their e-mail addresses as a means of communication. You
want to contact me, send me something in the U.S. Postal Service, don't send it by e-mail. So, people are very sensitive about that and so, the challenge is, and maybe you have some thoughts, that maybe we could get 80% of the Rockville residents that would go along with e-mail and we only have to send U.S. Postal the other way and what about the fact that making those e-mail addresses available to candidates so they could e-mail them and what are the complications of all that I think is a challenge in terms of trying to cut down on paper.

MS. RUDOLPH: You know, and again, I think it goes back to the root issue of communications in 2020 are much more complex than they were, you know, 40 and 50 years ago and probably we need to as a city talk about that.

SPEAKER: I was here last time and I forgot to compliment you all for the hard work. It was a big undertaking that the city took and obviously, as a candidate and having been around for 55 years in Rockville, it was an interesting
thing and as you know, the world is looking at us because we're the first ones in the East Coast that do vote by mail and we all know it's going to come more and more so they're going to really be looking at all of our comments.

Because of the some more comments were made here this evening since last meeting, I want to address some of them. Thank you, Ms. Rudolph, for your comments. The property management question that you mentioned, I don't know how the city can handle that. As a candidate, we have a problem also. We can't go into a lot of these facilities and it's a matter of, you know, how do you reach them? So, I appreciate what she was saying. The suggestions here tonight were excellent. I don't know how you solve them all because even as Graham said, e-mail is not a way to go. People don't read their e-mails. I get so many e-mails I mean I have to delete most of them before I can read them. But, I mean, it's great. I did have a lot of people that contacted me once the city sent out these voter guides and you had
your e-mail on there. People asked questions, which was great and it sounds like that Mr. Lee got an awful lot from the Asian community and I'd like to address his issue about the fact that Dr. Neuman did indicate that everyone got these three mailings that said if you had questions call them. I'm surprised Mr. Lee didn't say, "Hey, try calling that number, see what help you get." He obviously they helped them because they knew him.

And I had an experience like that in my neighborhood where an Asian woman had no idea. She got the ballot and she was excited to know that I was running and she wanted to know how to fill it out and I, you know, helped her and she said, "Oh, I'm going to tell my son how to do this. He goes to University of Maryland." So, he's right. Those people are out there. How does the city reach them? You did four mailings counting the ballot. You talk about all this translation and the issues of the languages. Most of these people really do understand basic wordage like, "If you need help, call this number."
mean, as I told you all last meeting, those mailings, people threw them out. They thought it was advertisement, but those people who really paid attention, the information was all there. There is doubt, you know, they could reach out.

What I think is even more important that no one addressed here tonight is you talk about language and knowing the system and people never voted before and the renters, as a candidate, I think, one, the city did an excellent job on mailing the voter guide to every voter so it wasn't just that the Rockville report with the voter guide went to each household. From what I saw, it went to every voter. That's impressive. Each one of us candidates could not reach every single voter. We had to decide who to mail to. I was impressed, but I will tell you having campaigned for four months that the people started paying attention when they started getting the voter guide. Half the people didn't even know that the City of Rockville was having an election so how do reach everyone? You've done everything
you could possibly do. I don't care if you do more. You're going to have all the same problems.

So, I think you all did a great job.

There's no easy answer, but please realize the translation of the little cards is not the issue. I as a candidate when I had my kickoff, I did have a translation of my kickoff in Spanish and Chinese, but guess what, there wasn't anybody there that wanted it. Okay. So, it's pretty much hard to reach everyone. So, I want to compliment you all. The greatest thing I feel that the city did, I know they spent a lot of money, is that that voter guide went to every registered voter and I know that a lot of those no longer live in Rockville, moved, you don't know about it, and I still want to know how many names were purged from all of that information so I look forward to the report that comes out. But you all did a fantastic job considering everything I know and I think that you're getting some good comments.

There are no easy solutions, but the language is not the issue. It's reaching them, letting the
voters know who the candidates are, and what they stand for. Thank you.

DR. NEUMAN: And just one more comment about translation, this is not a local issue. This is an issue countrywide and there are organizations that are looking at this and also advise on how to lay out a ballot, the wording to use on a ballot, keeping it to an easy to understand level, and using pictures whenever possible. So, we use their information and used their information to help us in designing our materials. So, okay, is there anybody else?

MR. MASTERS: So, I'll just try to walk back some of the comments of some of these people. The lady here was talking about the cost. I haven't done a final analysis yet, but I can tell you that the candidates that won were the candidates that spent the most money and it was spent mostly through mailings so how you get to the voter is by mailing. For myself, I was surprised at the number of people that when I went to knock on doors that had already voted. So, you
know, those canvassing reports, even though I didn't use them like I should have, they would show who has already voted so you don't bother with them at least in a mailing. It's a little harder to do when you're walking around. But I think it's important to know that as soon as the ballot hit the street, people were filling out and sending them in. So, you know, I don't know what to do about that, but I think that for me as a candidate that was a concern.

Dr. Neuman, I don't know if you're not willing to give out the number of ballots that came in after the election until the report is out.

DR. NEUMAN: March the 3rd or actually the evening of March the 2nd.

MR. MASTERS: Because I know that came out last time and, okay. Mr. Lee, one of the things he mentioned about not being able to read or understand what was the instructions that were in with the ballot, I don't know the possibility of putting that online so if it's online, you can
run it through Google translate or something and
that could at least help in that instance. I
forget what the other thing was that he mentioned
there on that.

I guess this is more of a question. I
put this in an e-mail a week or so ago. I don't
know if has been resolved. There were some
missing financial reports after the deadline. I
don't know if they've all come in and been posted
yet or not. I know had a concern about one or two
of them that I thought were puzzling. I know you
guys are the experts looking them over.

DR. NEUMAN: Financial reports that were
not posted? Financial reports were not posted.
Is that what you're saying?

MR. MASTERS: Right.

DR. NEUMAN: We've kept up with all the
financial reports that have come in. We
communicated with the submitter and then the
procedure takes over after that and things are put
on the website as soon as possible. So, if they
are not there, it would be Sara or Judy that you
would talk to about that process.

MR. MASTERS: Because I know one of the
treasurers was out of the country and there were
--

DR. NEUMAN: Yes. You may know that
people run into all kinds of issues when it's
dealing with their campaign finance reports and as
the deadlines come up. Sometimes they come up a
little faster than people anticipated. So, we try
to work with everybody in terms of getting their
materials in and look at deadlines and look at
issues and try to be helpful if we can, but we
still must have that report so we work with the
person who's submitting to get it in, but we do
get them posted as soon as they're ready.

SPEAKER: Mr. Masters, it is required
that they are posted as soon as received within 24
hours and if we receive them, they are posted up
within two or three hours of that day most likely,
but they're up. If we received them, they are
posted so anything that isn't there, we haven't
received it.
MR. MASTERS: Okay. Thank you.

DR. NEUMAN: Thank you.

MR. MASTERS: So, back to participation just for a second, I'm new to the city compared to most people here only having been here, like, four, four and a half years. I don't know if moving the election to a federal election cycle would get more votes in because typically, people love the federal elections more than they get interested in the local dog catcher and such.

DR. NEUMAN: There was a referendum to that affect a couple of elections ago.

MR. MASTERS: Okay. And the provisional balance, is that completed now? Is the election closed? I don't know if that's the right term.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, again, we'll have that report ready for you.

MR. MASTERS: Thank you. So, on to the postal of all the questions that came up last time on the postal service. Not all mailing houses are the same like most businesses so I don't know who you used, but the postal service -- I think
everybody knows that the postal service has every mailable address in their database and along with it, they also have I'd say a majority of every person who they know of who lives at every address in the 50 United States and then most people know that if you move and fill out a change of address card, they are required to forward the mail for a year and then after that year, you will get a yellow sticker or something saying unable to forward. That all goes into a database and you can take any, mailers do this all the time, you can take and pay to have that bounced up against the postal database and they will tell you who's moved, who's got a new address, and all that so then if you say, "Okay, I don't want to mail to anybody that's moved and is now living outside of the City of Rockville," you can do that. So, that may eliminate some of these issues. I don't know if the mailing house did that in this instance.

DR. NEUMAN: One of the issues we deal with the database is it doesn't belong to us. The MD voters belongs to the state and we access it
through the county because the state gives the
database to the counties to work with. We in turn
work with the county and it's all the state county
database, but we have no input or access to it so
when we get information it's transferred back that
same way and then it would be up to those folks to
make the changes, but no one makes changes without
official response from the voter or from the
addressee and there are ways that they work with
the postal service, but that's not us other than
we work with the postal service for what we're
doing within the city and the database that we
have.

MR. MASTERS: So, you cannot change the
data that you get from the state --

DR. NEUMAN: Correct.

MR. MASTERS: -- when it goes to the
mail house.

DR. NEUMAN: We work with what the state
has given us. So, that was one of the reasons for
doing the four mailings because the mailings that
were not deliverable came back to us. We then
sent it to the county and the county updated the
database. So, with every mailing, there was a
clean-up, if you will, of the database so by the
time we got to the database that was used for the
ballots from March, May when we started when the
first mailing went out to the time we had the
database that we used for the ballots, it was the
cleanest database that we've had I think for
years. You see what I'm saying?

MR. MASTERS: Yeah, I understand.

DR. NEUMAN: Okay. But we would never
go in, and I want to make that really clear, we do
not go into the database to remove any names. I
mean, that's a huge issue with people's names
being removed illegally and without their
permission so that they cannot vote and we do not
touch the database. That's the protection.

MS. FERRELL: And also, the state would
not take that data from the post office and update
it. The ownness is on the voter to update their
voter status. So, even though we would pull that
data, we would not be able to give it to them and
say, "Update it according to this," because they
would not do it. That's not how you remove or
update voter registration.

MR. MASTERS: So, I'll say it a
differently. So, if the mail house came back and
said that out of the 40 some thousand things that
you wanted to mail, these 50 now have a different
address based on the United States Postal Service.
You couldn't do anything with that because that's
the responsibility of the voter --

MS. FERRELL: Correct.

MR. MASTERS: -- in connection with the
state.

MS. FERRELL: Correct.

MR. MASTERS: Okay. Somebody mentioned
last time -- I guess I'm a cyber security nerd.
So, when I saw that we had to have our name and
signature or whatever on the outside of the
envelope, I was surprised. I know when we do
stockholder voting, all that stuff goes into a
blank envelope so you have no idea what's inside.
I don't know if that's something anybody else has
talked about.

   MS. FERRELL: Don, you said your

signature outside the --

   MR. MASTERS: Well, I don't remember

what was on the flap.

   MS. FERRELL: No, you had a privacy

flap. Nobody's signature was exposed. You had a

privacy flap.

   MR. MASTERS: But it was just a name or

something.

   MS. FERRELL: Well, to mail you had an

address of your information, which is public

information. Anybody can receive that data as a

voter registration, but as far as your signature,

there was a privacy flap. You could not see who

voted that ballot and how they voted that ballot.

There was a privacy flap.

   MR. MASTERS: Okay. Well, I apologize

by saying the word signature.

   DR. NEUMAN: Well, I will also add not

everyone uses the privacy flap. That was our

choice to protect and give the voters some privacy
over their signature. Not everybody that has a
mail back ballot, absentee or otherwise, has that
privacy flap over the back. Sorry. In other
jurisdictions.

The second thing was the envelope was
designed by a vendor who that's their business is
to create a very standard form of envelope so we
went with what the experts who are in this field
recommended.

And the other thing is the database is
not -- when you're dealing with a database in
elections and you see the electronic poll book,
for example, if you went to go check in, that's
public information.

MR. MASTERS: Okay. In Arlington, where
I came from, things that they would send out that
they didn't want to go outside of the city, in
other words, not be forwarded by the postal
service, they would put on the envelope do not
forward. I don't recall if that was on --

DR. NEUMAN: Mm-hm.

MR. MASTERS: -- okay. I would say and
they're not here today, but the folks working for
the postal service did a great job. I think we
have, what, three zip codes so I imaging they told
all the carriers to bring back everything that
same day and keep it separate and so, I think, you
know, getting all the ballots and having them
bring it to you folks at the end of the election
day was a fabulous win in that aspect.

I think the only thing I would add is a
lot of people don't understand that in the past,
what, seven to ten years, the postal service is
now hiring carriers as temporaries to start off
and they just can't keep them. I know when I was
growing the carrier we would have him for years,
they would know everybody's name, they would know
the dog, I mean, you know, they just knew
everything in the neighborhood and now, where I'm
at, we've gotten at least a half a dozen carriers
in the past so a lot of these people, because the
mail is sorted by address, they don't look at the
name so you will get some people that will deliver
something to somebody that is no longer there
rather than sending it back as unable to deliver.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, what I will tell you

is we had extensive contact with the postal

service. We worked very closely with them and

they with us over numerous meetings to the point

of how to design the mailers, which we shared with

the campaign folks so that it went through the

postal equipment more -- it was more efficient for

the post equipment to be able to read it. So,

ey they advised us on designing that would help us

and help them and help everybody to get the

information out faster. They were wonderful to

work with, absolutely wonderful. It was worth

every single second that we spent. The operation

went beautifully because of that and we had some

really good sharp people in the postal service who

worked closely with us, who were very attentive,

very conscientious, very focused, constant

communications, delivered mail, you know, Gabe's

(phonic) position is he was supervisor --

MS. PENNY: Yes.

DR. NEUMAN: -- gvc Hamilton. He
brought the mail into us on the weekend so that we had the real ballots that had come in at that period of time. He did not have to do that. So, everybody really went, I mean, homeruns every time. They did a great job. So, thank you for bringing that up and I just underscored and echo it and I think we all are in total agreement.

Anybody have anything? No.

MR. MASTERS: Okay. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Again, I'd like to just introduce the fact that we have a representative from the League of Women Voters and I'll give her an opportunity if she would like to introduce herself.

SPEAKER: Well, I didn't have much choice. I am with the League of Women Voters. We are studying mail-in voting, which is why I am here, but I think I'd also just make a brief comment about language because I also work on Hour Voters Guide, which I'm sure you are all familiar with and I can tell you that we struggle with the tension between clarity and accuracy. We spend a
huge amount of time on these voters guides which
go county and state wide, well, and nationally as
well, but, as I'm sure you are aware, legal
language is often quite convoluted and we are
trying to make that language accessible to the
voters and we're always dealing with, okay, how
can we make this at once correct and clear and not
overwhelming because there is just so much
information that the voters need. And then
related to that is of course the problem with
translation and are putting out this year for the
first time a Spanish language voters guide that
will be -- the translation is being done by people
affiliated with (inaudible) Latino and we would
love to do more, but I'm sure you understand that
it is very difficult to find fluent writers and
speakers who can donate their time to do this
work.

MR. MILES: Thanks so much. Again,
David Miles. Thanks to the League of Women
Voters. It trigger me to this about -- I think
there was at least one of our forums that occurred
after the ballots had gone out. I don't know if
that was good or bad. I think we did receive part
of the information in terms of how many ballots
had been returned to city hall by particular
dates. I recall a number of candidates raising
concern that, again, a forum was occurring after
ballots had gone out and perhaps some people had
already made their decision, but I guess the
question I have then is will part of this
information, this summary that's made available
mayor and council and our citizens when the
ballots are coming in, like, you know,
week-by-week. That will help I guess people who
are planning (inaudible) to gage, you know, when
to plan them. I think in the end they all worked
out well. That's all I had. Thank you.

DR. NEUMAN: Day-by-day, Dr. Miles, not
week-by-week.

DR. LEE: I just want to clarify I think
what Mr. Masters is saying about the envelope and
I think briefly mentioned anonymity. The
signature was, yes, it was covered up, but I think
the concerns that people voiced was that you could
see their name and mailing address in this window
and I understand that you might want that
information out there so that if it gets kicked
back they can send it back or the post office
could send it back to the mailer, but I'm assuming
that if the address that's going to go to the
city, there's really no need for the mailer's
address to be visible. But that's people have
voiced in terms of the concerns about anonymity
knowing that this ballot is coming from this
particular household. Thanks.

DR. NEUMAN: You want to comment?

MS. ORLOSKY: For those of you who came
to the canvassing process, you may have witnessed
why it's important to have that address visible
and not under the flap and essentially, the
verification of the envelopes of the addresses is
a multi-stage process and when those envelopes
were received, the county board, the very first
step they did they verified the address before
even the flap was removed so they needed to be able
to see the address. After the verification went through and certain ballots were also identified that needed special review because the addresses weren't the match in the system or the name and the address weren't matching, there were a few of those, but only after that process the ballots were given to the canvassers to de-flap, make sure that everything is filled out, and after that there was a third step when they were unsealed and the ballots and the envelopes were separated face down and only after that the ballots were examined and scanned.

So, it's kind of an important step and I think it is one of those situations where, you know, you need to figure out how to do it in the most efficient way while preserving the integrity of the process, but also making sure that the verification takes place. So, I mean, it's a tradeoff.

MS. FERRELL: It's verification, but it's also making sure the checks and balances, like, there's not four or five different names and
addresses from that same address coming in like
one person per vote and that's a verification
process. So, we wouldn't know if, like, you have
four or five people at your house and if everybody
just had the address, who are those four or five
voters to verify? It's a verification piece and
that's the first step in the process. One vote,
one vote, one vote per voter so you have to have
the address and the name of the person to verify.

DR. NEUMAN: Could you explain more --
people are concerned about their addresses exposed
on the envelope. Could you say more about that?

MR. LEE: So, I guess most people's
concern is really the -- once they mail it out,
right, the chain of custody of that particular
envelope goes to, you know, can change hands
through the post office service and what not and,
I mean, normally, you would be like, well, you
know, you can trust all these people who has chain
of custody of this envelope all the way through
canvassing. But, again, it's, you know, we create
a process in which people these simple concerns
that we personally might not have, but others might feel uncomfortable are resolved to preserve the public trust of our system. And so, I'm here to express what voters have told me and if we want voters to feel confident about our process, you know, these are things that, again, I'm just simply expressing what I've heard. I personally might not be as sensitive to this particular process in which how this enveloped with my name on it outside goes from person-to-person and, you know, John Doe might see, "Oh, you know, Kwan Lee, here's is ballot," you know.

DR. NEUMAN: So, the issue is related to the ballot, not to any mail because the mail always have addresses on the out -- you have a return address on your envelopes.

MR. LEE: Right. But the fact is someone getting this mail, whoever has this mail could see, "Oh, this ballot is Kwan Lee's ballot." And I think concerns are simply, you know, what if this mail gets dropped somewhere and somehow someone, you know, who's is a dishonest person
gets it and, you know, does something with it.

DR. NEUMAN: Does what with is?

MR. LEE: I don't know, like, it gets lost somewhere, right, and someone gets the mail.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, I think Sofya was trying to explain, and Sara as well, which is there is backup, after backup, after backup, after backup to make sure that we have given the right person, we've received the envelope from the right person who is got sent to, right? And that they are registered voters in the database and that we then process it in accordance to procedures. So, we are only using that to make sure that we are getting the ballot from the person who is the registered voter in the MD voters. But we don't ever associate a voter with a ballot, ever. When the enveloped is opened, the name of the voter goes here, the envelope, and the ballot goes over there and then these are gone before these are even touched and they have no identifying marks on them and if they do, then they're examined for those identifying marks and those identifying
marks are addressed. But we have no way of identifying who voted. Go ahead, Graham.

MR. JOHNSON: I think a concern you're bringing up is that even before it gets to the city of Rockville what if there is some kind of tampering that's done. There is a means by which a person, if they are concerned if this could happen to them, you can find out whether your ballot has been received and so, that that's all.

MS. FERRELL: But not only that, we've had other options for returning that ballot. You could have returned it in person here to City Hall.

MR. JOHNSON: Right.

MS. FERRELL: A drop box to me personally. There were drop boxes here inside City Hall, outside 24/7 surveillance, to me personally, and, you know, we would, you know, whatever made the voter comfortable. You could have come into City Hall and voted, cast your ballot personally in the clerk's office in privacy, and dropped your ballot in a secure
place. I mean, there were all options available for those who felt like they did not want it to go back through the postal service.

MR. JOHNSON: I guess the issue then is to make people who do feel uneasy, which is probably a small percentage, these are options that are available to them and I think the key one is that they can assure that their vote has been received because that information is tracked by the City of Rockville.

MR. LEE: Yeah, and I think a lot of those people who had that concern I think they would come here and vote personally. But, again, that's something that I'm just throwing out there.

MR. MILES: Not to (inaudible) your point, but I think he raises a good one because there are people whose mailboxes don't have a flag so they just pin them to the mailbox, a lot of folks in Twinbrook like I was saying. And I guess the question back to you was does the return address have to be visible? Like, can it be under the flap with the signature because that might
ally his concern that, you know, just because you
see a blue envelope in front of somebody's house,
you don't know who it's coming from to increase --
I don't know if that's part of what you're getting
at maybe. I guess the question is does it have to
be visible through the flap? Can it go under the
flap?

MS. ORLOSKY: I think this is something
to be addressed during the next envelope design
process when we get to that stage, but I noted it
down as a recommendation. Thank you.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, I do know for the
state for absentee ballots, there is clear
information that must be on the outside of the
envelope, which includes the name, the address,
and the voter ID must be on the outside of the
envelope for it to go through the first step of
identification for an absentee ballot. So, there
are regulations that the state and that most
jurisdictions have in terms of how they handle
their mail. It's not just arbitrarily in terms of
what we did. So, yes.
SPEAKER: I'd like to address the explanation that Sofya, is that how you pronounce it, gave. I know that I had that same problem with the issue of canvassing. What people don't realize, and she explained it real well, but I think people don't understand it. If there could be a video, people would be assured because I did the same thing saying, "Why couldn't I get the information of all who voted?" Okay, in this last election when we already know the results of all the candidates and I found out there's a separate issue where that identification is done through the canvassing process, which is totally separate from the ballot. People have no idea of this process and really, if there was a video to show exactly how it's happening, it would explain things.

I was totally upset to not be able to get that information, but that information I think the county does it by scanning it and it's on the outside. You don't know what's in the inside. You should never know what's in the inside and the
separation is wonderful. I've worked the
canvasses at the county and it is double checked.
It's amazing. People do not know that process and
to address Mr. Lee's issue, especially these new
voters, if they saw video, they would understand
ballots are totally separate and this issue of I
want to know as a candidate who voted. I mailed
10,000 out of 20,000. I want to know who now
voted. That has nothing to do with who got voted
in. It had nothing to do with the council votes.
It has everything to do with those, you know,
10,000 people that I want to know did they vote
and how does that get into the system? Well, it
gets into the system because they have a voter ID
and it was verified in tremendous process. I
think the real question is what happens before it
gets to the city, but you all just assured
everyone they could deliver it. And then if you
saw that your name was not on that list that they
were listing, I thought that was beautiful. I
never knew that was available in the county.
Someone said it was available during early
election. I had no idea that I could find out, yes, that might early vote, you know, was registered, not counted yet, but registered that I did vote early and then, of course, on election day, the rest of the process.

But I think she explained it, but people need to see that process. You can't just tell people that. You know what I'm saying? There's no much information that the voter does not know out there and as candidates will know, we learned this when you go door-to-door especially new voters. I mean, you heard Don Masters say he's new here and the process is a little different from, you know, where he came from. So, how do you get all this information to everyone. I struggled. I went door-to-door for four months. I mean, you can't even reach everybody. The city did everything they possibly could, but if they throw away those three mailings that say if you have any questions, what else can you do? Thank you.

MS. FERRELL: I will say that that is
one thing that I will put forth as a
recommendation from the clerk to the city
manager's office that all candidates should go
through the process of canvassing and I think that
will be the first recommendation from this Board
to the city manager's office that they all need to
go through the canvassing process and then you'll
get a better understanding of what happens from
that point on and you will teach the voter.

DR. NEUMAN: Well, you know, it's
interesting to hear because you never know what
part of the voting process is going to be of
concern and there are so many layers and layers
and layers and checks and balances on so many
things and it would just be absolute information
overload as well as why do I really need to know
this to go through what is the essential
information that somebody wants to and need to
know. Where do you kind of draw the line. So,
it's very interesting to hear from you as to what
your concerns are and then we'll figure out how we
can solve it if we can. Any? Yes, go ahead.
MS. RUDOLPH: Just to build on several ideas. There was a very effective short video of Sara showing how to mark the ballot. So, you know, if we can expand on that in terms of showing the canvassing process for everybody to trust -- it would build trust in the system, but then one possibility is to take it one step further and have narratives in many different languages to help overcome both -- it's not just a language problem in terms of translating, but it's a cultural issue in terms of people trusting the process because as Mr. Masters shared and I have experienced having had some close associations with new Americans, many people come from a culture where they don't trust the protection of their privacy. And so, there could be culturally specific translations that probably would be relatively cost effective to put on a video so that as these questions get raised. But it's the whole, a picture is worth a thousand words.

DR. NEUMAN: We have half an hour.

SPEAKER: No, I would just like to make
one comment.

DR. NEUMAN: Oh, go ahead.

SPEAKER: And it's regarding the
delivery of the ballot to the postal service. At
each postal facility, they had one person assigned
to manage ballots. One person touched those
ballots. No one else. And I made spot visits to
the North Washington Street Post Office, Post
Office in Potomac. One person always was handling
the ballot so they understood completely what was
to be done, how to monitor it, how to count it,
how to deliver it. So, it's not as if these
ballots were filtering through multiple people at
the postal service. They had one designated
employee at each facility that was responsible for
these ballots and they took that responsibility
personally. They understood the importance of it.
So, I just wanted to reiterate that.

DR. NEUMAN: Good point. Any other
questions, comments, anything else that has come
to mind from the past forum or anything that
you've heard today? Go ahead.
SPEAKER: Hi. I'm just here to voice support for ranked-choice voting. I'm sure you've heard about it.

DR. NEUMAN: Rank choice. Yes, go ahead.

SPEAKER: Yeah. So, there is currently a bill to upgrade the voting software in the legislature supported by Senator Keegan and I guess the next step after that would be to allow the county to hold those kind of elections. So, I just was wondering if the election board could handle the new system if it actually passes, yeah.

DR. NEUMAN: One thing we'll go back to in a second you'll explain ranked-choice voting in ten sentences or less if you can. But in answer to the larger question, which is could the Board, was that your question, could the Board handle it?

SPEAKER: Yeah.

DR. NEUMAN: I have unlimited, unlimited confidence in the Board of Supervisors of Elections and I have unlimited confidence that we will certainly do our utmost to handle anything
that comes our way. It may not be to everybody's approval, to everybody's liking, but we will certainly put our heads together and come up with the finest answer because we have five sharp people who are really devoted to elections. So, if ranked-choice came our way and it was something we needed to study, we would. We would research it and we would study it and we would look at it in comparison to what we're doing and also look at the effect in the places that are doing it, which is what we did with vote by mail and found out it was extremely successful to a state for everybody that was using it and no one ever went back. Everybody that picked and started doing vote by mail stayed with it. So, we had a lot of data that convinced us it was the way to go and we would see if it was the way to go for Rockville.

Ranked-choice voting has its controversy. There are some places that have taken it on and have embraced it and said, yes, they want to do it. We would like to hear certainly what the state is thinking and then
certainly, we'll put our heads together and see what we're thinking and then try to match it to would it fit in Rockville. But absolutely, I have full confidence that we would listen and learn and study. So, please, tell us a little bit about ranked-choice.

SPEAKER: Well, you know, essentially it's just the smarter way to vote.

DR. NEUMAN: A little bias there. Go step-by-step. What is it?

SPEAKER: So, right now when you vote you pick your first choice and that's what you put on your ballot.

DR. NEUMAN: Mm-hm.

SPEAKER: We think you should also list your second choice and your third choice and so on. So, that's it from the voter's perspective. From the counting perspective, you always count the voter's top choice and you do a runoff. So, you take the count of the ballots and it's kind of like, I'd say it's like American Idol where the person with the least number of votes gets voted
off and it's just a process of elimination. And then at the end you have a runoff between the top two candidates and you're confident that all the voters were able to say something about that runoff. So, that's essentially it. Yeah, you get to say who you really want and you get to say more practically who would actually likely win. Say that you know it's going to be a runoff between two people and say you're part of a smaller party, you would actually be able to support your, you know -- say your brother is running for office. You want to be able to vote for your brother, right? You don't want him to drop out. So, you've go to vote for your brother first and then you also want to vote for somebody that's more likely to win, right, because the odds are your brother is not going to win.

DR. NEUMAN: And the disadvantages are?

SPEAKER: The disadvantage is there would have to be an education campaign for the voters, but we're lucky enough that there are actually some really great videos that have been
made that I could send to you and I feel like voters would understand in these short, like, one minute videos what the process is.

SPEAKER: The video doesn't show 29 candidates like the county had?

SPEAKER: Yeah, 29, that is a situation where ranked-choice voting would definitely help out. Thank you.

MR. MASTERS: So, to put it into current perspective, for let's say the mayor, if you had 13 candidates for mayor, then you would narrow that down until you had two candidates and one of those would a winner. But you have 13 candidates for four seats, it gets a little more complicated because then your buying multiple candidates for one of four so to me that's probably a bigger calling is when you have multiple seats to fill, it's going to take a lot more. I mean, computers can do that in an instant, but, you know, you'd have to put that into your design.

DR. NEUMAN: Any other reactions to the election, any questions, any thoughts about
information about elections? Go ahead.

MR. JOHNSON: This is question is directed to Kwan Lee if I could and earlier on you indicated concern about -- you talked about the language barrier and such as that and certainly the unease of some people whose English is not very proficient coming into vote on election day feeling very easy and so, one of the things we do provide for is voter assistance and there is a voter assistance card that can be filled about by the person assisting the voter and such, but the challenge is is to make sure that the person who is providing the voter assistance actually fills out the card and does it in an impartial manner. And I think one of the challenges, and maybe you have some thoughts on this since obviously you've given a lot of thought when a lot of people from the Asian community have come to you seeking assistance, how to make this voter assistance a workable one without appearing to be biased toward a particular candidate.

MR. LEE: So, first of all, thank you
for, you know, hearing my concerns, Mr. Johnson. So, the voter assistance is pretty lengthy and it's all in English. So, if you're ready off the bat, you know, especially someone with language barrier, you're giving them instructions in English, which is their barrier, and this is what you're expecting them to use to know what to do when they assistance. So, that's kind of a catch 22 if you know what I'm talking about and I wish a perfect solution so I can just tell you guys and, you know, see if it works, but I really don't. I just ended up, you know, doing most of the assisting and when I told them that they can, you know, fill that green card out, I sent them toward certain people that I knew within the community who were, you know, bilingual and more active within the process. I personally did not want to get involved with how to tell them given, you know, I just wanted to avoid that issue. But I thought that like that. That's something like that that maybe the city can implement. Again, you need to give for them in their language or
some form of their language for them to do that because, again, if you're giving them in English and that's what their having problems with in finding out how to do it, well, you still have that same problem.

MR. JOHNSON: Would you have the problem with the people that are providing the voter assistance might be reluctant or feel uncomfortable that don't understand the process very well. I'm not talking about the person whose English proficiency is not very good, but the person who's potentially providing the voter assistance whose English must be a little bit better than the voter in how to make them so they feel they can do it in a fair manner, the person that's providing the assistance. That's what's going through my individual.

MR. LEE: I'm pretty sure there's plenty of people in the city who are bilingual and could volunteer and help with that. I think that's one way you could probably get some assistance. I personally don't think translating everything in
multiple languages is the right method. It just
doesn't make sense. But, again, if you want to
point people who have that barrier in the right
direction, you need to translate those, you know,
few instructions and it make it very clear to them
and, you know, again, get some of these
translators on a 24 hour basis or what not or, you
know, during work hours and have them receive
these phone calls.

Another way I think I did personally was
I did create a video in a specific language that
was majority my voter base instructing essentially
a replica of what Ms. Taylor did and that's
something that the city to look into. It's not
too difficult to produce another video in a
different language to make that, you know, do
those instructions.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. KURNICK: I'd like to ask if you
think that we need instructions in other
languages, specifically, which languages do you
think we ought to include?
MR. LEE: I think that that's the data that you could probably get from the census. I don't want to make an assumption on simply because I might be able to attract a certain ethnic group. I think there's other ethnic groups that I could have done better and should be also reflected or assisted in -- so, personally I think that's something that I hope that the Board can look into to the different ethnic communities within Rockville and I leave that to you to make that choice of what languages to include within, you know, your instructions.

MR. MILES: I think Mr. Lee is being modest, but I think it's pretty common knowledge that Rockville has about 20% Asian so Asian is a huge group and there are many subgroups under that, but I guess figuring out what a cut off -- perhaps this is something for mayor and council to decide. If they're represented 5% or what have you and then that language should jump. I imagine a language like Mandarin or Cantonese or something like that wouldn't make the cut. I think that's
one of the reasons that Spanish makes the cut. I think of Latino origin are like I don't know 15 or so percent of the city so I guess what he can't or don't want to, but I think, you know, steps in some cut offs recognizing that there's a huge population of people that speak language other than English that we should certainly do even more to reach out to keeping in mind the constraints that you all have.

MS. FERRELL: I just want to make a comment. We go by the state law, which is required English and Spanish so that is why we never have gone beyond that, but there are -- we do have an English language line that we use for those who reach out to us in all languages. So, and, you know, that was put out there if, you know, to contact this office and maybe we can think of a better way to maybe put it on the face of the voting website page given that we know we're hearing this now. But we do have those provisions and it's not just the election process. We have it on a day-to-day basis.
MR. MASTERS: That question came up before mayor and council last year and Sara answered it perfectly.

DR. NEUMAN: Okay. Last time. We have maybe about ten minutes to go. Any other thoughts, any other questions? Okay. Thank you all very, very much for coming. It was very enlightening to hear exactly what this was supposed to do, get citizens and voter's comments about the election and other things that you were concerned about and we did exactly that so we thank you for being here with us and for sharing your concerns. What do we need? Form. Yes, please remember to take your survey and fill out and turn it in before you go and if you don't have one, just get your hand up and Judy will get one to you. Thank you all. What? Yes. That's the jurisdictions to get together. Sara did mention that. Thank you very much. Have a wonderful rest of your weekend.

MS. FERRELL: And also, please feel free to submit anything in writing to the
cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov. We would love to hear from you. Positive, anything, just submit to us. We're here.

DR. NEUMAN: If you think of something later. Okay. Have a good rest of your weekend and thank you for being with us. (Whereupon, the HEARING was adjourned.)

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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