

ORIGINAL

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ELECTIONS

POST-ELECTION FORUM II

Saturday, February 8, 2020

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1 PARTICIPANTS:

2 Board of Supervisors of Elections:

3 DR. LOIS NEUMAN, Chair

4 GRAHAM JOHNSON

5 ROBERT KURNICK

6 SOFYA ORLOSKY

7 STEPHEN WEINER

8 Staff:

9 SARA TAYLOR-FERRELL, City Clerk/Director
10 of Council Operations

11 JUDY PENNY, Election Specialist

12 Speakers:

13 DON MASTERS

14 DAN CEDRIC

15 JOHN BECKER

16 DAVID MILES

17 JUDY RUDOLPH

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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

18 The purpose of this forum is to give the
19 Board of Supervisors of Elections the opportunity
20 to hear your comments about the 2019 elections so
21 we are doing some fact finding. I want to know
22 your thoughts about the election process,

1 suggestions for ways to facilitate the voting
2 process, and ideas for how to enhance voter
3 participation, which is our charge by the code.
4 The Board will consider what we learn from each
5 forum to factor into our reports and
6 presentations.

7 Procedurally, this is not a formal
8 meeting. The Board created the forum format with
9 the expressed purpose of getting information from
10 you. We have comment cards in the back for during
11 or at the end of the session. We have a survey
12 for you to fill out that you should have received
13 as you came in. It looks like that. You can tell
14 us your thoughts about elections at present and
15 for the future. We have a sign-in sheet. We have
16 a sign-up sheet, which if you haven't signed,
17 you'll just let us know that you wish to speak.
18 And the restrooms for those of you that are not
19 familiar with this facility are out the door and
20 sort of following the wall straight ahead are
21 men's and women's, but they are single and then to
22 the right you can find multi-use restrooms.

1 So, as a speaker, if you wish to speak,
2 I will call you in the order of the names on the
3 sign-up sheet or as you respond in the order that
4 you respond from the audience. We will provide a
5 microphone for you to use and the session will be
6 recorded and televised on Channel 11 so you might
7 be alert to that. To be sure we have time for
8 everyone, each person will have five minutes, a
9 five-minute limit with a 15 second warning and can
10 return for an additional five minutes after
11 everybody has concluded their remarks. We want to
12 make sure that everybody has a chance to say
13 something who wishes to speak. Please submit any
14 written material before you speak. You can also
15 send us comments to the City Clerk at
16 cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov by February the 29th.

17 The Board may ask and encourage you to
18 add information such as tell us more, explain what
19 you mean by, or give us some examples so we might
20 be asking you to provide us more based on what
21 you've said. We want to hear information,
22 clarification, details, and any concerns that you

1 have for our discussion and the Board members may
2 take notes on what you're saying.

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

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

1 DR. NEUMAN: Certainly.

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

11 Regarding the election day, there are a
12 couple things that I'd like to bring up. You went
13 out there and properly measured the distance for
14 the electioneering free zone to the front of the
15 doors, but there were people that would congregate
16 around the box when people would drive up to drop
17 off their ballots and I think you should consider
18 including that in the electioneering free zone for
19 the next time. It was a comment in the prior
20 thing and I would have to say I agree with it that
21 there were a number of people, including myself,
22 that were really looking forward to voting on the

1 day of the election in person and for whatever
2 reason and I now understand the legal implications
3 and the process implications of not having a
4 ballot marking machine here the same day because
5 you have to validate the ballot against who voted
6 and whether they submitted a mail-in ballot as
7 well so that was not possible, but I think for the
8 people that like to feel that civil responsibility
9 of going in person that was missing.

10 So, regarding your charge for increasing
11 participation, as we all know that voting is one
12 of the fundamentals of our democracy, it was a
13 struggle for me during the election to connect
14 with people not of original citizenship. I mean,
15 all of us here seem to be, you know, old white
16 boomers, but there are a lot of people out there
17 that are much different than the way we grew up.
18 I know I learned a lot through my family voting in
19 every election, going through civics class, and I
20 ran across one gentleman Asian American who
21 somewhat enlightened me on the issue. He says,
22 "You have to understand there are a lot of these

1 people that are now citizens that weren't even
2 born in this country or their families weren't
3 from this country didn't come from democracies.
4 They do not understand the voting process." So, I
5 think that's a big issue of trying to educate
6 these people if they have never had civics class
7 because the people I talked to they were either
8 not voters or they were a vote and they weren't
9 going to vote.

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

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

18 MR. MASTERS: I had a problem originally
19 with the financial reporting. I don't Excel. I
20 use something called Open Office and I ran into a
21 problem. I didn't the kind of response that the
22 other gentleman did that brought it up earlier. I

1 was just told to go back to the training documents
2 and that would explain why it wouldn't work. So,
3 it wasn't until I understood the differences
4 between the two so I think maybe you need to
5 validate the spreadsheet use on, you know, Open
6 Office, Google Docs, those type of things for the
7 next time. We were able to work it out though by
8 using Excel.

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

11 MR. KURNICK: Can I ask him a question?

12 DR. NEUMAN: Please.

13 MR. KURNICK: The people who were
14 congregating around the drop box, were they
15 candidates or --

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

18 MR. KURNICK: Oh, I'm sorry. All right.
19 There we go. Let's try it again. The people who
20 were congregating around the drop box, were they
21 candidates or campaign workers or do you know who
22 they were?

1 MR. MASTERS: I would say yes.

2 MR. KURNICK: Yes to which?

3 MR. MASTERS: Both.

4 MR. KURNICK: Candidates and campaign
5 workers?

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

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

15 MR. MASTERS: Not for the campaign
16 workers.

17 MR. KURNICK: Okay.

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

20 MS. RUDOLPH: I'm Judy Rudolph. I'm a
21 40 year resident of Rockville. The first 38 years
22 I lived in a homeowners association community and

1 the last two years leading up to the election,
2 I've been a renter in Town Center and the contrast
3 between my experiences in terms of interaction
4 with the city and from the city has been
5 considerable as a result of that and it was
6 particularly apparent in terms of the outreach to
7 residents with regard to this election. I think
8 that the problem that I have pinpointed is really
9 much broader than the election and has to do with
10 the city's whole approach to communications and
11 outreach. But it's been a rude awakening to me
12 that the city's communications are oriented
13 towards its definition of neighborhoods and
14 neighborhoods in the city's current experience are
15 characterized by having homeowners associations,
16 civic associations, and sometimes condo
17 associations. But people in rental buildings
18 often are kind of excluded from those. You know,
19 there are situations like Twinbrook and so on
20 where people can be put considered part of a
21 community association, but specifically, for me,
22 in Town Center, there is no residence association.

1 And, in addition that, our buildings are limited
2 access so the candidates had no access for
3 door-to-door campaigning. Some of the outreach in
4 terms of water bills, I don't get a city water
5 bill. I took a picture last week of the day that
6 Rockville Reports was delivered to us and our
7 building keeps recycling bins, John you will be
8 happy about this, in the mailrooms so that when
9 people their mail, the junk mail just goes right
10 into recycling bins. It was full of Rockville
11 Reports. People didn't even read them.

12 I had asked the property management
13 company to publicize the election in its limited
14 communications and it's very apparent that most of
15 the property management companies of rental
16 properties aren't committed to working with the
17 city. So, some of the specific suggestions that I
18 have really I think one of the easiest things and
19 this is broader than the election. As I said, it
20 really has to do with all the city's
21 communications. But they have to file a report
22 with the city to get their rental licenses. The

1 city could do a lot more outreach to property
2 management companies to get them to have welcome
3 packets in general about how new residents of
4 their buildings can participate in the city and
5 then with elections being a subset and then
6 election years to publicize it even more. But I
7 think there's a whole segment and I'll be very
8 interested in your demographics of participation
9 if there's any way of seeing the percentage of
10 renters who participated in this election.

11 With regard to the mail, I think it's
12 terrific. You know, as I've said, I've lived in
13 Rockville for a number of years. My participation
14 in city elections was somewhat erratic until I
15 retired, but I'm a computer user. Even though I'm
16 old, I'm not a dinosaur, but I have neighbors who
17 don't use computers and needed help and asked for
18 help. So, you know, I think looking at the
19 participation demographics, whatever you can do,
20 but just don't forget that there are people who
21 don't live in the traditional definition of
22 neighborhoods. Thank you.

1 DR. NEUMAN: Okay. Thank you. Any
2 questions. I have at least one or two. Do you
3 know if the people in their receiving their
4 ballots or was there any problem with that.

5 MS. RUDOLPH: I know of what and
6 interestingly enough, with regard to what Mr.
7 Masters pointed out, she is a naturalized citizen
8 who had been a naturalized citizen for 50 years,
9 78-years-old, and she approached me in September
10 and said, "Will you help me register to vote? I
11 don't know how to do it." And it was a very
12 moving experience for me and even though language
13 isn't a problem for her and even culturally, but
14 she just wanted help. And it was one-to-one help
15 of, you know, a neighbor, but it was triggered by
16 a candidate having stopped her on the street and
17 asking her to vote, but that candidate had to
18 encounter her on the street because they didn't
19 have access to our building to come door-to-door.

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

22 MS. RUDOLPH: Yes.

1 DR. NEUMAN: Okay. And you've received
2 responses of some kind from the city?

3 MS. RUDOLPH: To some extent.

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

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

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

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

21 DR. NEUMAN: Thank you. Any other
22 comment?

1 MR. LEE: Good morning. My name is Kwan
2 Lee and thank you for holding this forum. So,
3 unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to look at
4 the first forum so hopefully some of these aren't
5 redundant, but I'm going to piggy back off of what
6 Mr. Masters and Ms. Rudolph mentioned is the
7 language barrier. A lot of voters or people who
8 didn't vote, one of their concerns was always the
9 language barriers. Specifically, my base, you
10 know, we have a lot of folks who are citizens but
11 could not understand what they were receiving.
12 So, I have many people who called me saying, "Can
13 you help me fill out this ballot." And there were
14 those who received ballots threw it away because
15 they didn't know what it was and they found out
16 that you could vote by mail and now, you know,
17 they weren't sure how to get a new ballot. I
18 would tell them and given their language barriers,
19 they were pretty much I wouldn't say too lazy, but
20 it was too much of a hassle or burden for them to
21 go and get a new ballot. So, all these, you know,
22 language barrier issues, essentially, they just

1 felt like voting wasn't worth it. It wasn't
2 convenient enough.

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

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

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

22 MR. LEE: Especially the instructions

1 about how to vote. Some people might have really
2 rudimentary understanding of the English language
3 so they might be able to read simple sentences,
4 but once you start throwing more vocabulary in
5 there, they might not understand and so, it's not
6 easy for them. You know, for us we read it and
7 it's like, okay, you use a black pen or blue pen,
8 fill out the bubbles, (inaudible), and, you know,
9 this is for someone who is assisting so they have
10 to fill it out. But for them, like, all this
11 additional forms they're like, "Well. What is
12 this? What am I supposed to sign," you know, and
13 so, I think that maybe, you know, my solution is
14 either have a place where you say, you know, if
15 you don't want to go through hassle of translating
16 everything. At the very least, you should have,
17 like, call this number, you know, if you need
18 assistance and have that sentence in multiple
19 language so that they can call in and you can
20 prepare them and you don't have to translate your
21 whole entire document. But, again, the point is
22 the material itself creates a huge barrier to

1 those who don't read or write the way most
2 Americans do growing up in this country.

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

8 MR. LEE: No, I never asked them that
9 question honestly, but I can tell you that this
10 particular issue isn't just an isolated single
11 incident. I mean, it was through the whole
12 process. The amount of calls I received to ask me
13 to assist -- so, I was really pretty much the guy
14 they would look for to help them translate the
15 documents you were sending them. I mean, to me I
16 think that should be, you know, the city's job and
17 not necessarily just my job in showing them how to
18 --

19 DR. NEUMAN: And that's why we did have
20 the phone number so that people could call in and
21 if we would have received sufficient phone calls
22 that got our attention, we would probably have

1 done something in relationship to helping with
2 translation.

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

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

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

20 DR. NEUMAN: And as you are aware, there
21 are more than multiple languages that are now
22 spoken and used in this country and what we have

1 is a dilemma, but the dilemma is how many
2 translations do we provide as required by law and
3 right now in this county it is the Spanish
4 translation so as you see things that we do are in
5 English and in Spanish. If there are other
6 languages or that we need to pay attention to
7 others and figure out another way to handle it, we
8 certainly have done that. We were looking to have
9 -- since it was vote by mail, part of the
10 assumption, perhaps incorrectly and we're hearing
11 from you, is that people would have access to
12 their own translation services because surely this
13 is not an issue just related to elections and just
14 related to the mailing that they received from us,
15 but probably occurs in multiple types of materials
16 that people confront when they are in this country
17 for not very long and so, we have translation
18 services that are available and we know people
19 have their own that they call or go on their
20 website or whatever their means of communication
21 is to get the assistance. So, our hope and you're
22 saying there are still issues with it, but our

1 hope was that people would have the materials and
2 if they needed help in translation, would seek
3 their source to get the assistance in the
4 translation, which in essence is what they did.
5 They came to you and you helped them in the
6 translation.

7 The other issue we face is translating.
8 I have never, ever been in an election where
9 someone who speaks Spanish hasn't come up to me
10 and said, "You translated this wrong. This
11 language in my part of the world means this the
12 way you translated it. The way we say it would be
13 this word." So, we never nail it 100% right for
14 100% of the people and certainly, we keep trying
15 and we will continue to keep trying. So, the fact
16 that they felt comfortable to get in touch with
17 you and that you helped them is a good thing.

18 MR. LEE: Well, you know, of course, but
19 my point is I think the whole process of vote by
20 mail and why we did vote by mail is for voter
21 convenience and to encourage people to vote and
22 so, if we're finding rationales to say, "Well, you

1 know, it will be more a convenience for voters,
2 but it will be more work on us." Then I think
3 that rationale has already, you know --

4 DR. NEUMAN: No.

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

17 DR. NEUMAN: Let me just finish with it.
18 No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm not saying
19 that we shouldn't try and that it is not a concern
20 and it was indeed a concern, a big concern of ours
21 to make sure the people would be able to get the
22 information as best as we could get it to them and

1 then we provided ways for them to come back and
2 get in touch with us if there were any questions.
3 It is very useful hearing your comment because
4 you're giving us the response to our efforts and
5 it is very useful for us -- we'll certainly take
6 it under consideration and Sofya is very concerned
7 about this and has her comments as well.

8 MS. ORLOSKY: Well, as someone who grew
9 up outside of this country and is a naturalized
10 citizen, I definitely empathize with this comment.
11 My question looking forward is, and this comes
12 from kind of a lack of information in general, are
13 there community groups that are maybe not as
14 formal as housing associations or, you know, civic
15 associations that we normally reach out to. Are
16 there cultural community groups or elders or
17 individuals who kind of are at the center of
18 networks in the city that we could be reaching out
19 to to talk about the next election to see how we
20 can more effectively disseminate information and
21 also, to understand the needs of these cultural
22 groups of any ethnicity, of any language ability,

1 so that we incorporate this outreach into our
2 future work. If you're aware of such groups of
3 such networks, we welcome these recommendations.
4 Please write to Sara because this is incredibly
5 valuable information and since these are often not
6 the groups that are formalized as homeowners
7 associations or civic associations, we often times
8 just don't know about them just because of how
9 culturally we may be segregated in the city.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. LEE: Yeah, of course, there's
12 plenty and, you know, Rockville is one of the most
13 diverse cities so we have different groups and
14 different elders as you mentioned within these
15 groups, but I can tell you that based on
16 experience, even though you might be able to
17 educate the elders, at the very end each
18 individual voter isn't going to simply vote simply
19 because the elder, you know, said this. Right.
20 They're going to want read the material and know
21 it. But they're not going to read it when it's
22 going to be a language in which, you know, they

1 have very difficult understanding. Again, simple
2 sentence no problem, but once you're getting more
3 into complex, they're not going to be able to
4 grasp it and so, they might vote even though
5 they're elders has given them some directions.

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

14 DR. NEUMAN: Now, I'm going to have to
15 call this topic, but I do want to make one comment
16 regarding a much broader thing that you said,
17 which was that people moved and they received
18 ballots. One point I want to make is it's the
19 responsibility of the voter, the person who moved,
20 to let us know that they moved so that their name
21 can be removed from the voter database. We don't
22 do that. We would never enter a database and

1 remove someone's name. Somebody needs to let us
2 know that they now have a new address. So, if you
3 know people that that happened to, it would be
4 very useful for them to let us know so we can then
5 get back to that person and have them remove their
6 name from that address. Thank you. We can
7 certainly start the clock again for you if you
8 still have more things that you want to say and
9 again, thank you for your comments. Any other?
10 Yes, go ahead.

11 MR. MILES: I want to thank you all
12 again for all the effort that you all put in to
13 making this happen. The many weekends, the
14 community association's events. As it was said
15 previously, you don't get paid for this so I
16 really appreciate all the work you do. I'm going
17 to reserve most of my comments for e-mail. As Mr.
18 Lee said, some of it may have come out at the
19 previous session. I apologize for not being here
20 for that because of other meetings. I just wanted
21 some simple questions about how, you know, do we
22 know how many ballots may have been received after

1 the postmark and to, you know, talk about whether
2 or not postmarking on a specific day is the best
3 way to go moving forward.

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

14 And third and final, were there any
15 concerns voiced by people who have outside
16 mailboxes? I know a number of folks like in
17 Twinbrook have mailboxes outside and would not
18 necessarily bring their ballot to City Hall, but
19 just, you know, like many people, some people have
20 a flag, some people don't whether, you know, there
21 were any concerns from those neighbors and that's
22 all I have. Again, thank you for all you do.

1 DR. NEUMAN: I'm not aware of any
2 concerns from anybody from outside mailboxes.
3 We'll take that one first. If there are any, then
4 certainly people need to let us know, but we
5 haven't heard any and you did not have any calls
6 -- I'm talking to Judy now. She is shaking her
7 head. She did not have any calls about it or any
8 e-mails. She would have gotten the -- she's the
9 first line for that.

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

22 MR. CEDRIC: Hello. Thank you. I was a

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

19 DR. NEUMAN: Your point is well taken.
20 We all appreciate that fact that now you had a
21 wider distribution for all of your literature. I
22 just want to point out as well that we gave you a

1 cleaner database. So, in the past, past
2 candidates will know that they received a bucket
3 load of literature back again because of bad
4 addresses so we made it a concerted effort to work
5 with the county to get the MD voters as clean as
6 we could get it and we had the lowest return of
7 any mail that we've ever had. Not perfect, not
8 where we want to be, not the best, but certainly a
9 major improvement over what we've had. So, the
10 flip side of that is you're not wasting your money
11 in terms of it not getting to the right people and
12 coming back, but your point is well taken in terms
13 of cost and that, of course, is a mayor and
14 council issue, but thank you for bringing it up.

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

19 MR. CEDRIC: The only communication
20 options you have are knocking on doors or mailing
21 people. Social media is there, but it's not
22 relevant really to the amount of people that you

1 need to talk to and you need to talk to twice as
2 many people as you did last time and to do that
3 you have to mail and mail is very expensive.
4 That's really the long and short of it. You can't
5 reach 12,000 people on your feet by yourself, we
6 tried, and you have to mail them if you want to
7 contact them and have any possibility of reading
8 the information and, like I said, this is very
9 expensive. So, you've got to reach out, you've
10 got to cast a wider net, which means you've got to
11 mail twice as many folks and it's just expensive.

12 DR. NEUMAN: More questions?

13 MR. BECKER: Hi. My name is John Becker
14 and I'm a resident here in Rockville over at the
15 Americana Center (phonetic) and I just have some
16 questions about the report that's coming out in
17 March. I know you can't give out details, but
18 basically, it's going to provide as far as who,
19 what, when, where, and how and will it have
20 information on previous elections and also, as far
21 as when that report comes out, will there be
22 another meeting of this body so that the public

1 can comment on the report or something like that.
2 I just want to follow-up as far as the data kind
3 of thing is concerned.

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

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

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

17 MS. FERRELL: It will be another
18 meeting. We're planning to meet with the
19 jurisdictions around the State of Maryland and
20 other municipalities so hopefully, they will all
21 come out and the public is welcome to attend after
22 the report goes out.

1 DR. NEUMAN: Any other comments that
2 anybody has thought of? Yes, go ahead. Then we
3 will go back. Absolutely. Now we will go back.
4 Certainly.

5 MS. RUDOLPH: Actually, the comments
6 about the expense of primarily having to campaign
7 by mail made me think about the environmental
8 impact of all of this in terms of the amount of
9 paper much of went into hopefully recycling, if
10 not trash, and, you know, I did see on the
11 questionnaire that voting electronically there's a
12 question asking one's preference about that, but
13 maybe one of the other things that should be
14 considered because of the expense to the
15 candidates of having to prepare campaign
16 literature is whether the city would be able to
17 release electronic mailing addresses for
18 registered voters or if candidates could have
19 access to the city sending out campaign, you know,
20 I know that there were profiles on the website and
21 so on, but just the difference between push and
22 pull communications, is there any way to make it

1 easier and more cost effective as well as more
2 environmentally sensitive to help candidates come
3 up with ways to campaign in some way other than
4 face-to-face or with paper in view of the good
5 news that the numbers are increasing.

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

14 MS. RUDOLPH: They did have a text alert
15 that if you signed up for the text alert, there
16 were weekly test alerts on the election process
17 and what was going on and where things were in the
18 process and if you received your ballot packet and
19 what to look for so there were text alerts
20 throughout the election process if you signed up
21 for them. I guess my concern is if it's getting
22 too expensive for people who really would like to

1 serve on the council to even consider running and,
2 you know, maybe there's a way that the city could
3 help to come up with some creative ideas, you
4 know, I know that evidently there was some
5 dabbling in robocalling this campaign, but just to
6 help candidates and potential candidates think
7 about how to run a campaign in advance to
8 encourage more representative people on the
9 council so the council really does look like
10 Rockville.

11 DR. NEUMAN: You had a comment?

12 MR. JOHNSON: Hi. Maybe just a
13 follow-up. What is a tradeoff between -- we
14 talked about the robo, I mean, the sort of text
15 messages going out, the key is in sending all say
16 the four postcards that went out, well Gee can't
17 we sent those out by an e-mail. That means we
18 need to have e-mail addresses and people would
19 have to give us permission to use it. In my
20 experience with other organizations that people
21 sometimes are very reluctant to release their
22 e-mail addresses as a means of communication. You

1 want to contact me, send me something in the U.S.
2 Postal Service, don't send it by e-mail. So,
3 people are very sensitive about that and so, the
4 challenge is, and maybe you have some thoughts,
5 that maybe we could get 80% of the Rockville
6 residents that would go along with e-mail and we
7 only have to send U.S. Postal the other way and
8 what about the fact that making those e-mail
9 addresses available to candidates so they could
10 e-mail them and what are the complications of all
11 that I think is a challenge in terms of trying to
12 cut down on paper.

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

18 SPEAKER: I was here last time and I
19 forgot to compliment you all for the hard work.
20 It was a big undertaking that the city took and
21 obviously, as a candidate and having been around
22 for 55 years in Rockville, it was an interesting

1 thing and as you know, the world is looking at us
2 because we're the first ones in the East Coast
3 that do vote by mail and we all know it's going to
4 come more and more so they're going to really be
5 looking at all of our comments.

6 Because of the some more comments were
7 made here this evening since last meeting, I want
8 to address some of them. Thank you, Ms. Rudolph,
9 for your comments. The property management
10 question that you mentioned, I don't know how the
11 city can handle that. As a candidate, we have a
12 problem also. We can't go into a lot of these
13 facilities and it's a matter of, you know, how do
14 you reach them? So, I appreciate what she was
15 saying. The suggestions here tonight were
16 excellent. I don't know how you solve them all
17 because even as Graham said, e-mail is not a way
18 to go. People don't read their e-mails. I get so
19 many e-mails I mean I have to delete most of them
20 before I can read them. But, I mean, it's great.
21 I did have a lot of people that contacted me once
22 the city sent out these voter guides and you had

1 your e-mail on there. People asked questions,
2 which was great and it sounds like that Mr. Lee
3 got an awful lot from the Asian community and I'd
4 like to address his issue about the fact that Dr.
5 Neuman did indicate that everyone got these three
6 mailings that said if you had questions call them.
7 I'm surprised Mr. Lee didn't say, "Hey, try
8 calling that number, see what help you get." He
9 obviously they helped them because they knew him.

10 And I had an experience like that in my
11 neighborhood where an Asian woman had no idea.
12 She got the ballot and she was excited to know
13 that I was running and she wanted to know how to
14 fill it out and I, you know, helped her and she
15 said, "Oh, I'm going to tell my son how to do
16 this. He goes to University of Maryland." So,
17 he's right. Those people are out there. How does
18 the city reach them? You did four mailings
19 counting the ballot. You talk about all this
20 translation and the issues of the languages. Most
21 of these people really do understand basic wordage
22 like, "If you need help, call this number." I

1 mean, as I told you all last meeting, those
2 mailings, people threw them out. They thought it
3 was advertisement, but those people who really
4 paid attention, the information was all there.
5 There is doubt, you know, they could reach out.

6 What I think is even more important that
7 no one addressed here tonight is you talk about
8 language and knowing the system and people never
9 voted before and the renters, as a candidate, I
10 think, one, the city did an excellent job on
11 mailing the voter guide to every voter so it
12 wasn't just that the Rockville report with the
13 voter guide went to each household. From what I
14 saw, it went to every voter. That's impressive.
15 Each one of us candidates could not reach every
16 single voter. We had to decide who to mail to. I
17 was impressed, but I will tell you having
18 campaigned for four months that the people started
19 paying attention when they started getting the
20 voter guide. Half the people didn't even know
21 that the City of Rockville was having an election
22 so how do reach everyone? You've done everything

1 you could possibly do. I don't care if you do
2 more. You're going to have all the same problems.

3 So, I think you all did a great job.

4 There's no easy answer, but please realize the
5 translation of the little cards is not the issue.

6 I as a candidate when I had my kickoff, I did have
7 a translation of my kickoff in Spanish and

8 Chinese, but guess what, there wasn't anybody

9 there that wanted it. Okay. So, it's pretty much

10 hard to reach everyone. So, I want to compliment

11 you all. The greatest thing I feel that the city

12 did, I know they spent a lot of money, is that

13 that voter guide went to every registered voter

14 and I know that a lot of those no longer live in

15 Rockville, moved, you don't know about it, and I

16 still want to know how many names were purged from

17 all of that information so I look forward to the

18 report that comes out. But you all did a

19 fantastic job considering everything I know and I

20 think that you're getting some good comments.

21 There are no easy solutions, but the language is

22 not the issue. It's reaching them, letting the

1 voters know who the candidates are, and what they
2 stand for. Thank you.

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

13 MR. MASTERS: So, I'll just try to walk
14 back some of the comments of some of these people.
15 The lady here was talking about the cost. I
16 haven't done a final analysis yet, but I can tell
17 you that the candidates that won were the
18 candidates that spent the most money and it was
19 spent mostly through mailings so how you get to
20 the voter is by mailing. For myself, I was
21 surprised at the number of people that when I went
22 to knock on doors that had already voted. So, you

1 know, those canvassing reports, even though I
2 didn't use them like I should have, they would
3 show who has already voted so you don't bother
4 with them at least in a mailing. It's a little
5 harder to do when you're walking around. But I
6 think it's important to know that as soon as the
7 ballot hit the street, people were filling out and
8 sending them in. So, you know, I don't know what
9 to do about that, but I think that for me as a
10 candidate that was a concern.

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

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

17 MR. MASTERS: Because I know that came
18 out last time and, okay. Mr. Lee, one of the
19 things he mentioned about not being able to read
20 or understand what was the instructions that were
21 in with the ballot, I don't know the possibility
22 of putting that online so if it's online, you can

1 run it through Google translate or something and
2 that could at least help in that instance. I
3 forget what the other thing was that he mentioned
4 there on that.

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

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

16 MR. MASTERS: Right.

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

1 would talk to about that process.

2 MR. MASTERS: Because I know one of the
3 treasurers was out of the country and there were
4 --

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

16 SPEAKER: Mr. Masters, it is required
17 that they are posted as soon as received within 24
18 hours and if we receive them, they are posted up
19 within two or three hours of that day most likely,
20 but they're up. If we received them, they are
21 posted so anything that isn't there, we haven't
22 received it.

1 MR. MASTERS: Okay. Thank you.

2 DR. NEUMAN: Thank you.

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

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

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

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

18 MR. MASTERS: Thank you. So, on to the
19 postal of all the questions that came up last time
20 on the postal service. Not all mailing houses are
21 the same like most businesses so I don't know who
22 you used, but the postal service -- I think

1 everybody knows that the postal service has every
2 mailable address in their database and along with
3 it, they also have I'd say a majority of every
4 person who they know of who lives at every address
5 in the 50 United States and then most people know
6 that if you move and fill out a change of address
7 card, they are required to forward the mail for a
8 year and then after that year, you will get a
9 yellow sticker or something saying unable to
10 forward. That all goes into a database and you
11 can take any, mailers do this all the time, you
12 can take and pay to have that bounced up against
13 the postal database and they will tell you who's
14 moved, who's got a new address, and all that so
15 then if you say, "Okay, I don't want to mail to
16 anybody that's moved and is now living outside of
17 the City of Rockville," you can do that. So, that
18 may eliminate some of these issues. I don't know
19 if the mailing house did that in this instance.

20 DR. NEUMAN: One of the issues we deal
21 with the database is it doesn't belong to us. The
22 MD voters belongs to the state and we access it

1 through the county because the state gives the
2 database to the counties to work with. We in turn
3 work with the county and it's all the state county
4 database, but we have no input or access to it so
5 when we get information it's transferred back that
6 same way and then it would be up to those folks to
7 make the changes, but no one makes changes without
8 official response from the voter or from the
9 addressee and there are ways that they work with
10 the postal service, but that's not us other than
11 we work with the postal service for what we're
12 doing within the city and the database that we
13 have.

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

16 DR. NEUMAN: Correct.

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

19 DR. NEUMAN: We work with what the state
20 has given us. So, that was one of the reasons for
21 doing the four mailings because the mailings that
22 were not deliverable came back to us. We then

1 sent it to the county and the county updated the
2 database. So, with every mailing, there was a
3 clean-up, if you will, of the database so by the
4 time we got to the database that was used for the
5 ballots from March, May when we started when the
6 first mailing went out to the time we had the
7 database that we used for the ballots, it was the
8 cleanest database that we've had I think for
9 years. You see what I'm saying?

10 MR. MASTERS: Yeah, I understand.

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

18 MS. FERRELL: And also, the state would
19 not take that data from the post office and update
20 it. The ownness is on the voter to update their
21 voter status. So, even though we would pull that
22 data, we would not be able to give it to them and

1 say, "Update it according to this," because they
2 would not do it. That's not how you remove or
3 update voter registration.

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

11 MS. FERRELL: Correct.

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

14 MS. FERRELL: Correct.

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

1 talked about.

2 MS. FERRELL: Don, you said your
3 signature outside the --

4 MR. MASTERS: Well, I don't remember
5 what was on the flap.

6 MS. FERRELL: No, you had a privacy
7 flap. Nobody's signature was exposed. You had a
8 privacy flap.

9 MR. MASTERS: But it was just a name or
10 something.

11 MS. FERRELL: Well, to mail you had an
12 address of your information, which is public
13 information. Anybody can receive that data as a
14 voter registration, but as far as your signature,
15 there was a privacy flap. You could not see who
16 voted that ballot and how they voted that ballot.
17 There was a privacy flap.

18 MR. MASTERS: Okay. Well, I apologize
19 by saying the word signature.

20 DR. NEUMAN: Well, I will also add not
21 everyone uses the privacy flap. That was our
22 choice to protect and give the voters some privacy

1 over their signature. Not everybody that has a
2 mail back ballot, absentee or otherwise, has that
3 privacy flap over the back. Sorry. In other
4 jurisdictions.

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

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

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

21 DR. NEUMAN: Mm-hm.

22 MR. MASTERS: -- okay. I would say and

1 they're not here today, but the folks working for
2 the postal service did a great job. I think we
3 have, what, three zip codes so I imaging they told
4 all the carriers to bring back everything that
5 same day and keep it separate and so, I think, you
6 know, getting all the ballots and having them
7 bring it to you folks at the end of the election
8 day was a fabulous win in that aspect.

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

1 rather than sending it back as unable to deliver.

2 DR. NEUMAN: Well, what I will tell you
3 is we had extensive contact with the postal
4 service. We worked very closely with them and
5 they with us over numerous meetings to the point
6 of how to design the mailers, which we shared with
7 the campaign folks so that it went through the
8 postal equipment more -- it was more efficient for
9 the post equipment to be able to read it. So,
10 they advised us on designing that would help us
11 and help them and help everybody to get the
12 information out faster. They were wonderful to
13 work with, absolutely wonderful. It was worth
14 every single second that we spent. The operation
15 went beautifully because of that and we had some
16 really good sharp people in the postal service who
17 worked closely with us, who were very attentive,
18 very conscientious, very focused, constant
19 communications, delivered mail, you know, Gabe's
20 (phonetic) position is he was supervisor --

21 MS. PENNY: Yes.

22 DR. NEUMAN: -- gave Hamilton. He

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

8 Anybody have anything? No.

9 MR. MASTERS: Okay. Thank you.

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

15 SPEAKER: Well, I didn't have much
16 choice. I am with the League of Women Voters. We
17 are studying mail-in voting, which is why I am
18 here, but I think I'd also just make a brief
19 comment about language because I also work on Hour
20 Voters Guide, which I'm sure you are all familiar
21 with and I can tell you that we struggle with the
22 tension between clarity and accuracy. We spend a

1 huge amount of time on these voters guides which
2 go county and state wide, well, and nationally as
3 well, but, as I'm sure you are aware, legal
4 language is often quite convoluted and we are
5 trying to make that language accessible to the
6 voters and we're always dealing with, okay, how
7 can we make this at once correct and clear and not
8 overwhelming because there is just so much
9 information that the voters need. And then
10 related to that is of course the problem with
11 translation and are putting out this year for the
12 first time a Spanish language voters guide that
13 will be -- the translation is being done by people
14 affiliated with (inaudible) Latino and we would
15 love to do more, but I'm sure you understand that
16 it is very difficult to find fluent writers and
17 speakers who can donate their time to do this
18 work.

19 MR. MILES: Thanks so much. Again,
20 David Miles. Thanks to the League of Women
21 Voters. It trigger me to this about -- I think
22 there was at least one of our forums that occurred

1 after the ballots had gone out. I don't know if
2 that was good or bad. I think we did receive part
3 of the information in terms of how many ballots
4 had been returned to city hall by particular
5 dates. I recall a number of candidates raising
6 concern that, again, a forum was occurring after
7 ballots had gone out and perhaps some people had
8 already made their decision, but I guess the
9 question I have then is will part of this
10 information, this summary that's made available
11 mayor and council and our citizens when the
12 ballots are coming in, like, you know,
13 week-by-week. That will help I guess people who
14 are planning (inaudible) to gage, you know, when
15 to plan them. I think in the end they all worked
16 out well. That's all I had. Thank you.

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

19 DR. LEE: I just want to clarify I think
20 what Mr. Masters is saying about the envelope and
21 I think briefly mentioned anonymity. The
22 signature was, yes, it was covered up, but I think

1 the concerns that people voiced was that you could
2 see their name and mailing address in this window
3 and I understand that you might want that
4 information out there so that if it gets kicked
5 back they can send it back or the post office
6 could send it back to the mailer, but I'm assuming
7 that if the address that's going to go to the
8 city, there's really no need for the mailer's
9 address to be visible. But that's people have
10 voiced in terms of the concerns about anonymity
11 knowing that this ballot is coming from this
12 particular household. Thanks.

13 DR. NEUMAN: You want to comment?

14 MS. ORLOSKY: For those of you who came
15 to the canvassing process, you may have witnessed
16 why it's important to have that address visible
17 and not under the flap and essentially, the
18 verification of the envelopes of the addresses is
19 a multi-stage process and when those envelopes
20 were received, the county board, the very first
21 step they did they verified the address before
22 even the flap was removed so they need to be able

1 to see the address. After the verification went
2 through and certain ballots were also identified
3 that needed special review because the addresses
4 weren't the match in the system or the name and
5 the address weren't matching, there were a few of
6 those, but only after that process the ballots
7 were given to the canvassers to de- flap, make
8 sure that everything is filled out, and after that
9 there was a third step when they were unsealed and
10 the ballots and the envelopes were separated face
11 down and only after that the ballots were examined
12 and scanned.

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

20 MS. FERRELL: It's verification, but
21 it's also making sure the checks and balances,
22 like, there's not four or five different names and

1 addresses from that same address coming in like
2 one person per vote and that's a verification
3 process. So, we wouldn't know if, like, you have
4 four or five people at your house and if everybody
5 just had the address, who are those four or five
6 voters to verify? It's a verification piece and
7 that's the first step in the process. One vote,
8 one vote, one vote per voter so you have to have
9 the address and the name of the person to verify.

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

13 MR. LEE: So, I guess most people's
14 concern is really the -- once they mail it out,
15 right, the chain of custody of that particular
16 envelope goes to, you know, can change hands
17 through the post office service and what not and,
18 I mean, normally, you would be like, well, you
19 know, you can trust all these people who has chain
20 of custody of this envelope all the way through
21 canvassing. But, again, it's, you know, we create
22 a process in which people these simple concerns

1 that we personally might not have, but others
2 might feel uncomfortable are resolved to preserve
3 the public trust of our system. And so, I'm here
4 to express what voters have told me and if we want
5 voters to feel confident about our process, you
6 know, these are things that, again, I'm just
7 simply expressing what I've heard. I personally
8 might not be as sensitive to this particular
9 process in which how this enveloped with my name
10 on it outside goes from person-to- person and, you
11 know, John Doe might see, "Oh, you know, Kwan Lee,
12 here's is ballot," you know.

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

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

1 gets it and, you know, does something with it.

2 DR. NEUMAN: Does what with is?

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

5 DR. NEUMAN: Well, I think Sofya was
6 trying to explain, and Sara as well, which is
7 there is backup, after backup, after backup, after
8 backup to make sure that we have given the right
9 person, we've received the envelope from the right
10 person who is got sent to, right? And that they
11 are registered voters in the database and that we
12 then process it in accordance to procedures. So,
13 we are only using that to make sure that we are
14 getting the ballot from the person who is the
15 registered voter in the MD voters. But we don't
16 ever associate a voter with a ballot, ever. When
17 the enveloped is opened, the name of the voter
18 goes here, the envelope, and the ballot goes over
19 there and then these are gone before these are
20 even touched and they have no identifying marks on
21 them and if they do, then they're examined for
22 those identifying marks and those identifying

1 marks are addressed. But we have no way of
2 identifying who voted. Go ahead, Graham.

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

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

14 MR. JOHNSON: Right.

15 MS. FERRELL: A drop box to me
16 personally. There were drop boxes here inside
17 City Hall, outside 24/7 surveillance, to me
18 personally, and, you know, we would, you know,
19 whatever made the voter comfortable. You could
20 have come into City Hall and voted, cast your
21 ballot personally in the clerk's office in
22 privacy, and dropped your ballot in a secure

1 place. I mean, there were all options available
2 for those who felt like they did not want it to go
3 back through the postal service.

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

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

15 MR. MILES: Not to (inaudible) your
16 point, but I think he raises a good one because
17 there are people whose mailboxes don't have a flag
18 so they just pin them to the mailbox, a lot of
19 folks in Twinbrook like I was saying. And I guess
20 the question back to you was does the return
21 address have to be visible? Like, can it be under
22 the flap with the signature because that might

1 ally his concern that, you know, just because you
2 see a blue envelope in front of somebody's house,
3 you don't know who it's coming from to increase --
4 I don't know if that's part of what you're getting
5 at maybe. I guess the question is does it have to
6 be visible through the flap? Can it go under the
7 flap?

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

12 DR. NEUMAN: Well, I do know for the
13 state for absentee ballots, there is clear
14 information that must be on the outside of the
15 envelope, which includes the name, the address,
16 and the voter ID must be on the outside of the
17 envelope for it to go through the first step of
18 identification for an absentee ballot. So, there
19 are regulations that the state and that most
20 jurisdictions have in terms of how they handle
21 their mail. It's not just arbitrarily in terms of
22 what we did. So, yes.

1 SPEAKER: I'd like to address the
2 explanation that Sofya, is that how you pronounce
3 it, gave. I know that I had that same problem
4 with the issue of canvassing. What people don't
5 realize, and she explained it real well, but I
6 think people don't understand it. If there could
7 be a video, people would be assured because I did
8 the same thing saying, "Why couldn't I get the
9 information of all who voted?" Okay, in this last
10 election when we already know the results of all
11 the candidates and I found out there's a separate
12 issue where that identification is done through
13 the canvassing process, which is totally separate
14 from the ballot. People have no idea of this
15 process and really, if there was a video to show
16 exactly how it's happening, it would explain
17 things.

18 I was totally upset to not be able to
19 get that information, but that information I think
20 the county does it by scanning it and it's on the
21 outside. You don't know what's in the inside.
22 You should never know what's in the inside and the

1 separation is wonderful. I've worked the
2 canvasses at the county and it is double checked.
3 It's amazing. People do not know that process and
4 to address Mr. Lee's issue, especially these new
5 voters, if they saw video, they would understand
6 ballots are totally separate and this issue of I
7 want to know as a candidate who voted. I mailed
8 10,000 out of 20,000. I want to know who now
9 voted. That has nothing to do with who got voted
10 in. It had nothing to do with the council votes.
11 It has everything to do with those, you know,
12 10,000 people that I want to know did they vote
13 and how does that get into the system? Well, it
14 gets into the system because they have a voter ID
15 and it was verified in tremendous process. I
16 think the real question is what happens before it
17 gets to the city, but you all just assured
18 everyone they could deliver it. And then if you
19 saw that your name was not on that list that they
20 were listing, I thought that was beautiful. I
21 never knew that was available in the county.
22 Someone said it was available during early

1 election. I had no idea that I could find out,
2 yes, that might early vote, you know, was
3 registered, not counted yet, but registered that I
4 did vote early and then, of course, on election
5 day, the rest of the process.

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

22 MS. FERRELL: I will say that that is

1 one thing that I will put forth as a
2 recommendation from the clerk to the city
3 manager's office that all candidates should go
4 through the process of canvassing and I think that
5 will be the first recommendation from this Board
6 to the city manager's office that they all need to
7 go through the canvassing process and then you'll
8 get a better understanding of what happens from
9 that point on and you will teach the voter.

10 DR. NEUMAN: Well, you know, it's
11 interesting to hear because you never know what
12 part of the voting process is going to be of
13 concern and there are so many layers and layers
14 and layers and checks and balances on so many
15 things and it would just be absolute information
16 overload as well as why do I really need to know
17 this to go through what is the essential
18 information that somebody wants to and need to
19 know. Where do you kind of draw the line. So,
20 it's very interesting to hear from you as to what
21 your concerns are and then we'll figure out how we
22 can solve it if we can. Any? Yes, go ahead.

1 MS. RUDOLPH: Just to build on several
2 ideas. There was a very effective short video of
3 Sara showing how to mark the ballot. So, you
4 know, if we can expand on that in terms of showing
5 the canvassing process for everybody to trust --
6 it would build trust in the system, but then one
7 possibility is to take it one step further and
8 have narratives in many different languages to
9 help overcome both -- it's not just a language
10 problem in terms of translating, but it's a
11 cultural issue in terms of people trusting the
12 process because as Mr. Masters shared and I have
13 experienced having had some close associations
14 with new Americans, many people come from a
15 culture where they don't trust the protection of
16 their privacy. And so, there could be culturally
17 specific translations that probably would be
18 relatively cost effective to put on a video so
19 that as these questions get raised. But it's the
20 whole, a picture is worth a thousand words.

21 DR. NEUMAN: We have half an hour.

22 SPEAKER: No, I would just like to make

1 one comment.

2 DR. NEUMAN: Oh, go ahead.

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

19 DR. NEUMAN: Good point. Any other
20 questions, comments, anything else that has come
21 to mind from the past forum or anything that
22 you've heard today? Go ahead.

1 SPEAKER: Hi. I'm just here to voice
2 support for ranked-choice voting. I'm sure you've
3 heard about it.

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

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

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

18 SPEAKER: Yeah.

19 DR. NEUMAN: I have unlimited, unlimited
20 confidence in the Board of Supervisors of
21 Elections and I have unlimited confidence that we
22 will certainly do our utmost to handle anything

1 that comes our way. It may not be to everybody's
2 approval, to everybody's liking, but we will
3 certainly put our heads together and come up with
4 the finest answer because we have five sharp
5 people who are really devoted to elections. So,
6 if ranked-choice came our way and it was something
7 we needed to study, we would. We would research
8 it and we would study it and we would look at it
9 in comparison to what we're doing and also look at
10 the effect in the places that are doing it, which
11 is what we did with vote by mail and found out it
12 was extremely successful to a state for everybody
13 that was using it and no one ever went back.
14 Everybody that picked and started doing vote by
15 mail stayed with it. So, we had a lot of data
16 that convinced us it was the way to go and we
17 would see if it was the way to go for Rockville.

18 Ranked-choice voting has its
19 controversy. There are some places that have
20 taken it on and have embraced it and said, yes,
21 they want to do it. We would like to hear
22 certainly what the state is thinking and then

1 certainly, we'll put our heads together and see
2 what we're thinking and then try to match it to
3 would it fit in Rockville. But absolutely, I have
4 full confidence that we would listen and learn and
5 study. So, please, tell us a little bit about
6 ranked-choice.

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

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

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

14 DR. NEUMAN: Mm-hm.

15 SPEAKER: We think you should also list
16 your second choice and your third choice and so
17 on. So, that's it from the voter's perspective.
18 From the counting perspective, you always count
19 the voter's top choice and you do a runoff. So,
20 you take the count of the ballots and it's kind of
21 like, I'd say it's like American Idol where the
22 person with the least number of votes gets voted

1 off and it's just a process of elimination. And
2 then at the end you have a runoff between the top
3 two candidates and you're confident that all the
4 voters were able to say something about that
5 runoff. So, that's essentially it. Yeah, you get
6 to say who you really want and you get to say more
7 practically who would actually likely win. Say
8 that you know it's going to be a runoff between
9 two people and say you're part of a smaller party,
10 you would actually be able to support your, you
11 know -- say your brother is running for office.
12 You want to be able to vote for your brother,
13 right? You don't want him to drop out. So,
14 you've go to vote for your brother first and then
15 you also want to vote for somebody that's more
16 likely to win, right, because the odds are your
17 brother is not going to win.

18 DR. NEUMAN: And the disadvantages are?

19 SPEAKER: The disadvantage is there
20 would have to be an education campaign for the
21 voters, but we're lucky enough that there are
22 actually some really great videos that have been

1 made that I could send to you and I feel like
2 voters would understand in these short, like, one
3 minute videos what the process is.

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

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

9 MR. MASTERS: So, to put it into current
10 perspective, for let's say the mayor, if you had
11 13 candidates for mayor, then you would narrow
12 that down until you had two candidates and one of
13 those would a winner. But you have 13 candidates
14 for four seats, it gets a little more complicated
15 because then your buying multiple candidates for
16 one of four so to me that's probably a bigger
17 calling is when you have multiple seats to fill,
18 it's going to take a lot more. I mean, computers
19 can do that in an instant, but, you know, you'd
20 have to put that into your design.

21 DR. NEUMAN: Any other reactions to the
22 election, any questions, any thoughts about

1 information about elections? Go ahead.

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

22 MR. LEE: So, first of all, thank you

1 for, you know, hearing my concerns, Mr. Johnson.
2 So, the voter assistance is pretty lengthy and
3 it's all in English. So, if you're ready off the
4 bat, you know, especially someone with language
5 barrier, you're giving them instructions in
6 English, which is their barrier, and this is what
7 you're expecting them to use to know what to do
8 when they assistance. So, that's kind of a catch
9 22 if you know what I'm talking about and I wish a
10 perfect solution so I can just tell you guys and,
11 you know, see if it works, but I really don't. I
12 just ended up, you know, doing most of the
13 assisting and when I told them that they can, you
14 know, fill that green card out, I sent them toward
15 certain people that I knew within the community
16 who were, you know, bilingual and more active
17 within the process. I personally did not want to
18 get involved with how to tell them given, you
19 know, I just wanted to avoid that issue. But I
20 thought that like that. That's something like
21 that that maybe the city can implement. Again,
22 you need to give for them in their language or

1 some form of their language for them to do that
2 because, again, if you're giving them in English
3 and that's what their having problems with in
4 finding out how to do it, well, you still have
5 that same problem.

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

18 MR. LEE: I'm pretty sure there's plenty
19 of people in the city who are bilingual and could
20 volunteer and help with that. I think that's one
21 way you could probably get some assistance. I
22 personally don't think translating everything in

1 multiple languages is the right method. It just
2 doesn't make sense. But, again, if you want to
3 point people who have that barrier in the right
4 direction, you need to translate those, you know,
5 few instructions and it make it very clear to them
6 and, you know, again, get some of these
7 translators on a 24 hour basis or what not or, you
8 know, during work hours and have them receive
9 these phone calls.

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

18 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

19 MR. KURNICK: I'd like to ask if you
20 think that we need instructions in other
21 languages, specifically, which languages do you
22 think we ought to include?

1 MR. LEE: I think that that's the data
2 that you could probably get from the census. I
3 don't want to make an assumption on simply because
4 I might be able to attract a certain ethnic group.
5 I think there's other ethnic groups that I could
6 have done better and should be also reflected or
7 assisted in -- so, personally I think that's
8 something that I hope that the Board can look into
9 to the different ethnic communities within
10 Rockville and I leave that to you to make that
11 choice of what languages to include within, you
12 know, your instructions.

13 MR. MILES: I think Mr. Lee is being
14 modest, but I think it's pretty common knowledge
15 that Rockville has about 20% Asian so Asian is a
16 huge group and there are many subgroups under
17 that, but I guess figuring out what a cut off --
18 perhaps this is something for mayor and council to
19 decide. If they're represented 5% or what have
20 you and then that language should jump. I imagine
21 a language like Mandarin or Cantonese or something
22 like that wouldn't make the cut. I think that's

1 one of the reasons that Spanish makes the cut. I
2 think of Latino origin are like I don't know 15 or
3 so percent of the city so I guess what he can't or
4 don't want to, but I think, you know, steps in
5 some cut offs recognizing that there's a huge
6 population of people that speak language other
7 than English that we should certainly do even more
8 to reach out to keeping in mind the constraints
9 that you all have.

10 MS. FERRELL: I just want to make a
11 comment. We go by the state law, which is
12 required English and Spanish so that is why we
13 never have gone beyond that, but there are -- we
14 do have an English language line that we use for
15 those who reach out to us in all languages. So,
16 and, you know, that was put out there if, you
17 know, to contact this office and maybe we can
18 think of a better way to maybe put it on the face
19 of the voting website page given that we know
20 we're hearing this now. But we do have those
21 provisions and it's not just the election process.
22 We have it on a day-to-day basis.

1 MR. MASTERS: That question came up
2 before mayor and council last year and Sara
3 answered it perfectly.

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

21 MS. FERRELL: And also, please feel free
22 to submit anything in writing to the

1 cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov. We would love to hear
2 from you. Positive, anything, just submit to us.
3 We're here.

4 DR. NEUMAN: If you think of something
5 later. Okay. Have a good rest of your weekend
6 and thank you for being with us.

7 (Whereupon, the HEARING was
8 adjourned.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby
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