

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
280 EAST BROAD STREET  
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215  
(614) 462-3100

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON

8/1/11

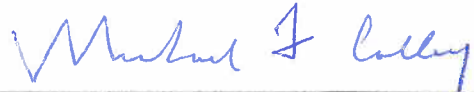
APPROVED ON

9/6/11

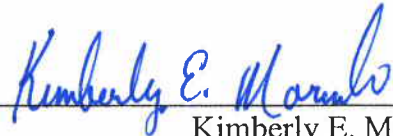
BY:



Douglas J. Preisse, Chairman



Michael F. Colley, Esq.

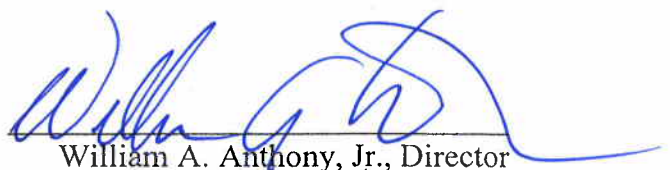


Kimberly E. Marinello



Zachary Manifold

ATTEST:



William A. Anthony, Jr., Director

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BEFORE THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO

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IN RE:  
Board Meeting

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Proceedings before Chairman Douglas J.  
Preisse, Board Members Michael F. Colley and  
Kimberly E. Marinello, with Director William  
A. Anthony, Jr., and Deputy Director Nathan  
Burd, taken at the Franklin County Board of  
Elections, 280 East Broad Street, Columbus,  
Ohio, on Monday, August 1, 2011 at 3:20  
o'clock p.m.

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

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4 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Good afternoon,  
5 everyone. I would like to call the Franklin  
6 County Board of Elections meeting to order.

7 I will do the roll call. Kimberly Marinello?

8 MS. MARINELLO: Here.

9 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Zachary Manifold?

10 MR. MANIFOLD: Here.

11 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Douglas Preisse?

12 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Here.

13 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: And Michael

14 Colley?

15 MR. COLLEY: Here.

16 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Everyone is here  
17 and accounted for. The first item on the  
18 agenda will be the approval of the minutes  
19 for June the 16th and July 5th meetings.

20 MS. MARINELLO: Mr. Chairman, I move  
21 that the Board approve the minutes of the  
22 June 16th and July 5, 2011 Board meetings.

23 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Is there a  
24 second?

1 MR. MANIFOLD: I'll second.

2 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: All those in  
3 favor say aye.

4 (All say aye.)

5 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: The next item on  
6 the agenda is we have Mr. Bill Buckel in the  
7 audience. A while back Mr. Buckel sent some  
8 information to the Board and he wants to  
9 address us to talk about why some folks don't  
10 return their ballots after they've been sent  
11 out to them. Mr. Buckel?

12 And I also left on everyone's desk a  
13 piece of paper that Mr. Buckel wanted to pass  
14 out for comments to the Franklin County Board  
15 of Elections. Mr. Buckel, the mike is yours,  
16 sir.

17 MR. BUCKEL: Good afternoon.

18 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: For the record  
19 you've got to give her your name and all that  
20 stuff.

21 MR. BUCKEL: Ladies and gentlemen,  
22 my name is Bill Buckel and I'm a registered  
23 voter, so I get to stay, right? I came down  
24 to just sort of get myself educated on some

1 of the things that impact on a survey I made  
2 because I couldn't find anybody else who'd  
3 made such a survey. And I'll start reading  
4 here so I'm official.

5 This is a follow-up to my letter of  
6 May 27th to members of the Board, the  
7 Director, and the Deputy Director.

8 Following the November 2010 General  
9 Election, about ten percent of the  
10 voter-requested absentee ballots were listed  
11 as not returned on the database at the Board  
12 of Elections. This apparent high no-response  
13 rate caused this citizen to ask why.

14 After being unable to find results  
15 of a past survey, I mailed a questionnaire to  
16 a random sample of 120 non-returned voters in  
17 Franklin and Madison Counties. This is  
18 honesty, this is not bragging. The results  
19 were inconclusive because the sample was too  
20 small. But the survey process did yield the  
21 following ideas for consideration.

22 First was perhaps provide an on-line  
23 or telephone process whereby absentee ballot  
24 voters may determine the status of their

1 returned ballot. Possibly, instructions on  
2 how to use this service could be mailed along  
3 with the ballot. I came today to learn about  
4 what has already been tried in this regard in  
5 the past.

6 Number two I'll get to after I sort  
7 of get my education here so that it's a  
8 consistent bit of logic. So I presume you've  
9 got mechanisms where absentee voters, if they  
10 suspect something, could check it in your  
11 system but I've never tried to do it but I've  
12 been an absentee ballot voter.

13 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: So you're posing  
14 that question?

15 MR. BUCKEL: I'm posing the question  
16 as a historical -- because the institutional  
17 memory is here, not me.

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BURD: Todd, the  
19 manager of our absentee department, if you'd  
20 like to just talk about what we do on-line.

21 MR. WEDEKIND: Sure. In the past we  
22 have sent letters and we still continue to  
23 send letters to people that have  
24 misinformation or lack information to make

1 their ID envelope a valid vote. If someone  
2 doesn't return their ballot, it's on-line  
3 whether or not their ballot has been  
4 returned. We post it on-line, you can call  
5 in. The website will show that, if it's  
6 received or not. So these tools are in  
7 place.

8 MR. BUCKEL: So really, as far as  
9 doing anything, you've done it?

10 MR. WEDEKIND: We do, correct.

11 MR. BUCKEL: Now, as far as me  
12 knowing about it, is this something that  
13 you'll alert me to when I get my ballot so  
14 that I know -- well, if I'm suspicious or  
15 want to be sure, I can do this whatever it  
16 is?

17 MR. WEDEKIND: The website you go to  
18 is in the ballot instructions that lets  
19 people know that they can go to our website  
20 to verify information.

21 MS. MARINELLO: It's on that  
22 commercial too on TV, isn't it?

23 MR. WEDEKIND: We do that as well.

24 MR. BUCKEL: It isn't a little set

1 of instructions that comes to me. If you  
2 want to doublecheck if the ballot actually  
3 went through -- Murphy's Law -- there's no  
4 coaching at that point when I see my ballot  
5 and mail it in that I've got these options.

6 Because I got the impression from  
7 the feedback on the survey that they just  
8 trusted the system like I've always done and  
9 didn't try to doublecheck, yet they were  
10 listed as not returned.

11 MR. WEDEKIND: That's an assumption  
12 that you can make. I'm not sure if it  
13 actually shows that.

14 MR. BUCKEL: True.

15 MR. WEDEKIND: I mean, the  
16 information is put out to people. Whether or  
17 not they chose to follow through with it or  
18 whether or not they remember that the  
19 information was given to them --

20 MR. BUCKEL: Oh. So really then  
21 when I got my ballot, I should have known I  
22 had this option as a doublecheck.

23 MR. WEDEKIND: Well, there's a lot  
24 to read. You've got a lot of instructions.



1 MR. BUCKEL: On the ballot because  
2 this was not a separate --

3 MR. WEDEKIND: The instruction page  
4 is a two-sided sheet of paper because there's  
5 a lot of information, the deadlines for  
6 people to read. They do give the  
7 information.

8 And then there are media blasts that  
9 are done where we explain to people what they  
10 can do and they can visit our website which  
11 is pretty common now for people to go to a  
12 website to check things.

13 MS. MARINELLO: Does it say on the  
14 instructions you can check on your ballot and  
15 go to --

16 MR. WEDEKIND: Yes.

17 MS. MARINELLO: So it's all there.

18 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: It's all there.

19 MS. MARINELLO: It's all there when  
20 you get it.

21 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Well, wait a  
22 minute. I think we may be talking past each  
23 other a little bit. So on the website you  
24 can check to see whether your absentee ballot

1 has been received or not?

2 MR. WEDEKIND: Correct.

3 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: But I think  
4 Bill's question --

5 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: It's in the  
6 instructions.

7 MS. MARINELLO: I thought you were  
8 sending instructions.

9 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: -- is it in the  
10 printed material that the voter receives as  
11 well that once your application and/or your  
12 ballot materials that you can check?

13 MR. WEDEKIND: Yeah. You can go --  
14 yeah, it's on the instruction page, the  
15 website.

16 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: And the printed  
17 material you do receive so you do --

18 MR. WEDEKIND: We try to do that.  
19 It is a lot of information, but we try to  
20 give everyone as much information as we can  
21 on the small amount of literature that we can  
22 give them. We don't want to overwhelm people  
23 too much, but we try to give them as much as  
24 we can. Whether or not they read the whole

1 thing, we don't have control over that.

2 MR. BUCKEL: Well, given the fact  
3 that you're about a million citizens in  
4 Franklin County and I'm one of them, on  
5 behalf of the rest, I'd like to say you did a  
6 good job. I just didn't know what was going  
7 on. Congratulations.

8 DIRECTOR ANTHONY: Thank you.

9 MR. BUCKEL: Going to number two,  
10 after the election -- this is again a  
11 suggestion or an idea. After the election,  
12 select at least 50 or 100 instances of  
13 ballots that the Board of Elections show as  
14 not returned.

15 Study each instance until the reason  
16 for "not returned" is understood. By knowing  
17 the reason for each failure, the Board of  
18 Elections will be able to address system  
19 problems. In addition, such studies should  
20 give an estimate of the non-returned ballots  
21 that are caused by voters' decisions.

22 With this information the BOE should  
23 have one way of recognizing an unusually high  
24 level of non-returned ballots. Possible

1 non-return reasons that came out of my survey  
2 included voters made an error, voters decided  
3 not to vote, and some voters decided to vote  
4 at the polls.

5           Anything beyond that -- those you  
6 cannot control but things beyond that may  
7 fall into this category, Possible  
8 non-returned reasons of a logistical nature  
9 include BOE tagging or data entry problems,  
10 for example, address errors, the address  
11 errors got the ballot to the wrong place,  
12 definition of "not returned" not understood  
13 by some people and so forth.

14           And another possibility, the U.S.  
15 mail problems, both going and coming. My  
16 survey just had two didn't get the ballot and  
17 about half thought they sent it in but it  
18 didn't get there. So from your point of view  
19 the coming ballots didn't come back.

20           A branch office examples, waiting  
21 for a pallet to fill -- a friend of mine  
22 observed this at one of the branches; the  
23 blue box pickup is more reliable than home  
24 mailbox pickup in terms of -- you might end

