

THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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In Re: :

Regular Meeting :

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November 3, 2025

Before Chairman Douglas J. Preisse,

Director Antone White, Deputy Director David Payne,

Board Members, Michael Sexton, Jamie Shumaker, and

Meredith Freedhoff, on Wednesday, November 3, 2025,

commencing at approximately 4:13 p.m. and

concluding at approximately 4:24 p.m.

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ALSO PRESENT:

Erin Gibbons

Jeff Mackey

Jackie Bird

Audience

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Higgins & Associates
Court Reporting - Legal Video - Videoconference
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I N D E X

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AGENDA:

PAGE

Candidate Withdraw of Amy Cowell

3

Opening Polls for General Election

5

Jackie Bird Statement

6

Opening Polls for General Election (Vote)

12

Motion to Recess

12

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P R O C E E D I N G S

- - -

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Looks like we have a quorum, but I'll take roll, Mr. Chairman. Jamie Shumaker.

MEMBER SHUMAKER: Present.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Mike Sexton.

MEMBER SEXTON: Here.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Doug Preisse.

CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Here.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Meredith Freedhoff.

MEMBER FREEDHOFF: Here.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, we do have a quorum.

The first item on the agenda, and I'll call Jeff Mackey, is a candidate withdrawal.

MR. MACKEY: On October 28th, we received written notice from Amy Cowell, a candidate for Grove City Council in Ward 5, that she was withdrawing from the race. Her name will not be removed from the ballot because it was too late for that, but notices will be posted in the

1 voting machines.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Understood.

3 MEMBER SEXTON: Mr. Chairman,
4 Michael Sexton. I move the Board accept the
5 withdrawal of Amy Cowell, a candidate for the Grove
6 City City Council Ward 5 on November 4th, 2025,
7 General Election ballot.

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

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

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

14 (Vote taken.)

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

17 (No response.)

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: The motion
19 carries.

20 The next item on the agenda --

21 I don't know where or if you want to
22 entertain the speaker, but we probably should do
23 that well before we motion for recess.

24 You want to do that before we open

1 the polls or after we open the polls?

2 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Let's open the
3 polls in case we have a pandemic or endemic or
4 something.

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Fantastic.
6 Well, that's the next item on the
7 agenda.

8 MS. SHUMAKER: Mr. Chairman,
9 Jamie Shumaker. I move that the polls be declared
10 open on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, General Election
11 beginning at 6:30 a.m. and closing at 7:30 p.m. and
12 that in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code
13 Section 3501.32, any voter in line prior to the
14 close of polls at 7:30 p.m. shall be permitted to
15 vote.

16 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Doug Preisse.
17 Second the motion.

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: It's been
19 moved and seconded. The polls will be open.

20 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: We do
21 have a request-to-speak speaker slip from
22 Jacqueline F. Bird, and she appears to be here, so
23 please join us.

24 I don't think you need to be sworn

1 in, because you just want to speak to the Board.

2 MS. BIRD: This is not testimony.

3 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I guess, unless
4 you --

5 MS. BIRD: I'm Jacqueline Bird.

6 Thank you. I've been monitoring on behalf of the
7 Ohio Voting Rights Commission, the Board of -- the
8 Franklin County Board of Elections for over a year
9 and have had an opportunity to watch you all work,
10 and I'm very impressed with what you've got.

11 I found out last night that today is
12 Election Hero Day, and we have been all asked to
13 nominate or -- or recognize election heros.
14 Election of Heros is a nonpartisan national
15 celebration recognizing the tremendous
16 contributions that election officials and staff
17 poll workers and volunteers make to enter a safe,
18 secure voting experience for all Americans.

19 Taking place this year on November
20 the 3rd, nonprofits business leaders, brands,
21 public officials and more will unite to honor the
22 election heros in our communities.

23 And so I wanted to take this
24 opportunity to recognize the Franklin County Board

1 of Elections and the tremendous work you guys do
2 with such a professional staff. It doesn't matter
3 where I go or what -- what office I -- I talk to,
4 the front -- the front reception people, the -- you
5 know, the leaders, the staff in the back, and in
6 the rooms where they are preparing the machines for
7 voting, it's all been grand. And I'm really
8 impressed with your operations and would like to
9 acknowledge the heros with sustenance for tomorrow
10 for the entire board of elections. Will you put
11 that in the -- I assume you have a break room.

12 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: We do.

13 MS. BIRD: If you don't, I'm sure
14 they'll find it.

15 DIRECTOR WHITE: It will be found.

16 MS. BIRD: It will be found.

17 And so thank you very much. You --
18 What you do is noticed and appreciated and very
19 important, and so thank you.

20 MEMBER FREEDHOFF: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Thank you.

22 MEMBER SEXTON: Thank you.

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: And you go by

1 Jackie?

2 MS. BIRD: Yes, I do.

3 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Thank you,
4 Jackie.

5 And the organization, tell us again?

6 MS. BIRD: Well, I'm -- This isn't
7 an initiative of the Ohio Voting Rights Coalition,
8 but it's -- I think this is an initiative of the
9 League of Women Voters. The Ohio Voting Rights
10 Coalition itself is of League Women Voters, ACLU,
11 common cause, all the usual expects.

12 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Well, thank you
13 very much for taking the time.

14 I was traveling out of state
15 yesterday and was introduced as the guy that runs
16 elections in Ohio. That's what they introduced me
17 as. The reporters were coming up, Well, what's
18 going on in Ohio? I said, It's just Franklin
19 County. They said, Do you run the elections there?
20 I said, No. I sit in a meeting once in a while,
21 and we have a superb --

22 What are we up to? 140, 150 staff?

23 DIRECTOR ANTONE WHITE: When you
24 include our seasonal workforce, yes.

1 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: And then, of
2 course, the thousands of seasonal folks. So we're
3 lucky to have a great team, and it's awful nice of
4 you to recognize them.

5 MS. BIRD: The whole group --

6 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Thank you.

7 MS. BIRD: The whole operation is
8 pretty much --

9 Because we monitor most of the
10 counties in the state with people like me who come
11 in and watch the board meetings and just interact
12 with staff, I have to say that Franklin County is
13 probably the gold standard in the state of Ohio.

14 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Excuse me. Did
15 we get that on the record?

16 THE REPORTER: Yes.

17 MS. BIRD: Not that other boards of
18 elections aren't doing great jobs.

19 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Sure.

20 MS. BIRD: But every time we want to
21 draw an example; and it's usually -- usually, not
22 always, but most of the time it's from Franklin
23 County of, Here's how to do it well.

24 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: We appreciate it

1 very, very much.

2 Thank you.

3 Do we have another motion?

4 MEMBER FREEDHOFF: Mr. Chairman,
5 Meredith Freedhoff. I move that the Board recess
6 this meeting of the Board of Elections subject to
7 recall by the Chair, until after the close of the
8 election being held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025.

9 MEMBER SHUMAKER: Jamie Shumaker,
10 and I second.

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All in favor
12 signify by saying "aye."

13 (Vote taken.)

14 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed.

15 (No response.)

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: We are in
17 recess. Thank you.

18 (Discussion held off the record.)

19 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I call this
20 meeting of the Franklin County Board of Elections
21 back into session. Can we use the word "session"?
22 And I'm going to move, and I'll second --

23 You know what? I don't need a
24 second. Read the motion.

1 We're back in session. We're moving
2 to revert to a previous order of business.

3 Do we have a second?

4 MEMBER SEXTON: Second.

5 MEMBER FREEDHOFF: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: All in favor, say
7 "aye."

8 (Vote taken.)

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PAYNE: All opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 (Discussion held off the record.)

12 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: Now it would be
13 appropriate to have your motion.

14 MS. SCHUMAKER: Mr. Chairman,
15 Jamie Shumaker. I move the polls be declared open
16 on Tuesday, November 4th, 2025, General Election
17 beginning at 6:30 a.m. and closing at 7:30 p.m.,
18 and that in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code,
19 Section 3501.32, any voters in line prior to the
20 close of polls at 7:30 p.m. shall be permitted to
21 vote.

22 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: I second the
23 motion.

24 Then we're going into discussion

1 where I'm going to commend our colleagues over here
2 for catching the fact that we failed to vote.

3 Mr. Chairman, he pays attention.
4 Thanks for saving us from the law firm -- I mean,
5 for the lawsuit that these guys would have had to
6 defend.

7 All in favor of the motion say
8 "aye."

9 (Vote taken.)

10 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: All opposed, same
11 sign.

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN PREISSE: We're ajourn- --
14 in recess.

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16 Thereupon, the meeting concluded at
17 approximately 4:24 p.m.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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THE STATE OF OHIO:

SS:

COUNTY OF FRANKLIN:

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

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

That the foregoing occurred at the aforementioned time and place;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal of office at Columbus, Ohio, this 18th of November, 2025.

/s/Beth A. Higgins
Notary Public, State of Ohio

My Commission Expires: July 16, 2030.

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