

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

Jeannina Williams,)	
Challenger)	Administrative
)	Order #20-026
)	
v.)	Re: Challenge to Nominating
)	Petition Submitted for the
)	Office of Advisory
Stephen Slaughter,)	Neighborhood Commissioner
Candidate.)	for Single Member District
)	8E07

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on September 2, 2020. It is a challenge to the nominating petition submitted by Stephen Slaughter (“Mr. Slaughter”) in support of his candidacy for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 8E07 filed by Jeannina Willaims (“Ms. Williams”) pursuant to D.C. Code § 1-1001.08 (o)(1) (2001 Ed.). Mr. Slaughter appeared *pro se*. Ms. Williams did not appear. Chairman D. Michael Bennett and Board members Michael Gill and Karyn Greenfield presided over the hearing.

Background

On August 5, 2020, Mr. Slaughter submitted a nominating petition to appear on the ballot as a candidate in the November 3, 2020 General Election contest for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) for the Single Member District (SMD) 8E07 (“the Petition”). The minimum requirement to obtain ballot access for this office is ten signatures of District voters who are duly registered in the same SMD. The Petition contained a total of thirteen signatures.

Pursuant to title 3, District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (D.C.M.R.) § 1603.1, Karen F. Brooks, the Board of Elections' Registrar of Voters ("the Registrar"), accepted all signatures for review.

On August 8, 2020, the Petition was posted for public inspection for 10 days, as required by law. On August 17, 2020, Ms. Williams, a registered voter in the District of Columbia, filed a challenge to the Petition.

Ms. Williams filed challenges to twelve signatures pursuant to title 3 D.C.M.R. § 1607.1 of the Board's regulations. She asserted the following grounds; the signer, according to the Board's records, is not registered to vote at the address listed on the petition at the time the petition was signed, and the signature is not made by the person whose signature it purports to be.

Registrar's Preliminary Determination

The Registrar reviewed the challenge to determine the validity of the challenged signatures. The Registrar's review indicated that one of the twelve challenges was valid, because the signer was not registered to vote at the address listed on the petition at the time the petition was signed. The Registrar determined that this left the candidate's Petition with twelve signatures, two signatures over the number required for ballot access.

August 28, 2020 Pre-Hearing Conference

Pursuant to title 3 D.C.M.R. § 415.1, the Office of the General Counsel ("OGC") convened a prehearing conference with on Friday, August 28, 2020. Mr. Slaughter appeared *pro se*. Ms. Williams did not appear. Ms. McKinney had been provided with notice of the pre-hearing conference on August 17, 2020, and so the Office of the General Counsel proceeded without her. Mr. Slaughter confirmed that he had received the Registrar's preliminary report, which an attorney with OGC briefly summarized. The attorney confirmed the OGC had received letters Mr.

Slaughter submitted to the record in which a number of individuals who signed his Petition wrote that they had, in fact, signed the Petition.

Following the pre-hearing conference, the Office of the General Counsel contacted Ms. Williams by email and inquired whether she wished to proceed to the September 2 Board hearing or whether she wished to withdraw her challenge. Ms. Williams responded that she preferred to withdraw. The OGC followed up by sending Ms. Williams a challenger withdrawal form. Ms. Williams did not respond or return the form.

September 2, 2020 Board Hearing

On September 2, 2020, the Board included this matter on its agenda for public hearing. Mr. Slaughter appeared *pro se*. Ms. Williams did not appear. An attorney with the Office of the General Counsel testified that the parties had been properly notified of the Board hearing. The Board voted to proceed *ex parte*. The Registrar presented the Board with her preliminary determination of the challenges. Mr. Slaughter reiterated his position that the individuals who signed his Petition were who they purported to be, and he referenced the letters he had submitted to the Board to this effect.

Discussion

The Board has received limited evidence or testimony from Ms. Williams in connection with this matter. Title 3 D.C.M.R. § 1606.4 states that, after the receipt of a properly filed challenge, the Board's staff shall search the Board's registration records to prepare a recommendation to the Board as to the validity of the challenge. Title 3 D.C.M.R. § 1606.5 states that the Board shall consider any evidence submitted, including but not limited to, documentary evidence, affidavits, and oral testimony. In this case, the Registrar provided documentary evidence to support her findings, which the parties have not disputed. Mr. Slaughter provided further

documentary evidence to dispute the allegations in Ms. Williams' challenge. The Board accepts the Registrar's report as the basis for its determination regarding Ms. Williams' challenge.

Conclusion

As a result of this challenge, the Board finds that the Petition contains twelve valid signatures, which meets the requirements for ballot access. It is hereby:

ORDERED that candidate Stephen Slaughter is granted ballot access in the contest for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for the Single Member District 8E07 in the November 3, 2020 General Election.

Date: 9/4/2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Michael Bennett", written over a horizontal line.

D. Michael Bennett
Chairman
Board of Elections