

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

Dennis Sendros,	)	
Challenger	)	Administrative
	)	Order #26-056
	)	
v.	)	Re: Challenge to Nominating
	)	Petition Submitted for
	)	Chairman of the Council
Daniel Vega,	)	
Candidate.	)	

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on September 3, 2026. It is a challenge to the nominating petition submitted by Daniel Vega (“Candidate”) to run for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in Single-Member District (“SMD”) 5F04 in the November 3, 2026 General Election (“the General Election”). The challenge was filed by Dennis Sendros (“the Challenger”), a registered voter in the District, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.08 (o)(1). Board Members Karyn Greenfield and Mike Wakefield presided over the hearing. The Challenger appeared pro se and the Board’s General Counsel also appeared. The Candidate did not appear.¹

Background

On August 4, 2026, the Candidate submitted a nominating petition to appear on the ballot as a candidate in the General Election contest for the office of Advisory Neighborhood

¹ The Board conducted the proceeding in the Candidate’s absence, as permitted by 3 D.C.M.R. 403.4 (“If any person or party waives the right to be present at the hearing or fails to appear at the hearing, the Board may proceed ex parte, unless the Board extends the time of the hearing or unless their appearance is required by statute.”)

Commissioner in Single-Member District 5F04 ("the Petition"). The minimum number of signatures required to obtain ballot access for this office is 25 signatures from registered qualified electors residing within the SMD. The Petition contained 25 signatures, which is the exact number required for ballot access. Pursuant to Title 3, District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (D.C.M.R.) § 1603.7, the Board's Registrar of Voters accepted 25 signatures for review.

On August 8, 2026, the Board posted the Petition for public inspection for 10 days as required by law. On August 15, 2026, the Challenger filed the challenge.

The Challenger filed challenges to four of the 25 signatures submitted, enumerated by line and page number on individual challenge sheets. The signatures were challenged pursuant to Title 3 D.C.M.R. § 1607.1 of the Board's regulations on the following grounds: the signer is not a registered voter in the District of Columbia; and 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.

Assistant Registrar's Preliminary Determination

The Assistant Registrar's review of the challenge indicated that one of the four signature challenges was valid. Of the three challenges that were not sustained, two signers were verified as registered at the address listed or within the single-member district, and one signer's address discrepancy was cured by a timely change-of-address form filed on August 20, 2026, within the 10-day cure period under D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.08(o)(3). The one sustained challenge concerned the signature of Alicia Dickerson (Sheet 2, Line 9), whose voter registration was designated as inactive at the time the Petition was signed. Although an address update form was timely submitted on August 25, 2026, the defect is inactive registration status, not an address mismatch, and the address update does not cure it.

Accordingly, the Assistant Registrar preliminarily determined the Petition contained 24 valid signatures, which is one signature below the number required for ballot access.

August 31, 2026 Pre-Hearing Conference

Pursuant to Title 3 D.C.M.R. § 415.1, the Office of the General Counsel convened a pre-hearing conference with the parties on August 31, 2026. In her findings report issued prior to the pre-hearing conference, the Assistant Registrar outlined her determinations with respect to the validity of each signature challenged and provided a key code explaining the notations she used to indicate the basis for upholding or denying each challenge. The Challenger was not present at the pre-hearing conference. The Candidate appeared *pro se*.

The Assistant Registrar's report indicated that one of the four challenges was sustained, leaving the Petition with 24 valid signatures, one below the minimum number required for ballot access.

During the pre-hearing conference, the Candidate acknowledged that he had spoken with Ms. Dickerson and confirmed that she had been residing in Baltimore for a period of time, which may have caused her registration to lapse to inactive status. The Candidate stated that Ms. Dickerson has since re-registered and is currently an active registered voter, but acknowledged that he had no evidence that she was designated as active at the time she signed the Petition. The Candidate was advised that the inactive-voter defect is grounded in statute and cannot be waived by the Board.

The Candidate was further advised that because his Petition was filed with exactly 25 signatures, even a single sustained challenge would reduce the Petition below the statutory minimum. The Office of the General Counsel advised the Candidate of his options, including

withdrawal of candidacy and the write-in candidacy option. The Candidate expressed an inclination to withdraw but did not file a withdrawal of candidacy form during the conference.

As the matter was not resolved, it was set for a Board hearing on September 3, 2026. The Board notified the Candidate and the Challenger of the hearing.

September 3, 2026 Board Hearing

A representative of the Voter Services Division was in attendance at the hearing and presented the Assistant Registrar's findings. The staff attorney from the Office of the General Counsel summarized the procedural history and discussed what transpired at the prehearing conference. Neither the Candidate nor the Challenger appeared at the hearing.

The General Counsel recommended that the Candidate be denied ballot access. Member Greenfield moved to deny the Candidate ballot access. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion

The minimum number of signatures required to obtain ballot access for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in SMD 5F04 in the November 3, 2026 General Election is 25 signatures from registered qualified electors residing within the SMD. D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.08(i)(1)(E); 3 D.C.M.R. § 1603.7. The Petition contained 25 signatures, which is the exact number required for ballot access. The Challenger filed challenges to four signatures. The Assistant Registrar determined that one challenge was valid, reducing the valid signatures to 24. The Board has reviewed the record and upholds the findings of the Assistant Registrar.

With respect to the one signature sustained as invalid, the Board notes that D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.07(j)(5)(B) provides that inactive registrations "shall not be counted as valid" in signature verification. This is a statutory requirement that the Board cannot waive. *See* 3 D.C.M.R.

§ 1607.2 (Board may waive defects “unless waiver would conflict with a statutory petition requirement”). The timely submission of an address update form for this signer does not cure the defect, as the basis for invalidation is inactive registration status, not an address mismatch.

The Board notes that the Candidate took appropriate steps to cure the other challenged signatures. Two change-of-address forms were timely submitted within the cure period, and one of the two address-related challenges was resolved as a result. However, those efforts do not affect the sole sustained challenge, which rests on a non-waivable statutory ground.

The Candidate did not present evidence sufficient to rebut the Assistant Registrar's determination that Ms. Dickerson's voter registration was designated as inactive at the time the Petition was signed. The Board accordingly concludes that the Petition contains 24 valid signatures, which is one signature below the statutory minimum of 25 required for ballot access.

Conclusion

As a result of this challenge, the Board finds that the Petition contains 24 valid signatures – one signatures below the number required for ballot access. It is hereby:

ORDERED that challenge to the nominating petition of Daniel Vega for the contest for the office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in SMD 5F04 in the General Election is hereby **UPHELD** and ballot access is **DENIED**.

The Board issues this written order today, which memorializes its oral ruling rendered on September 3, 2026.

Date: September 8, 2026



Karyn Greenfield
Presiding Board Member