

**Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Special Meeting
September 14, 2017**

A special meeting of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission convened on September 14, 2017 in Room 4080 of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue.

Commission Chair Eileen Norton called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Commissioners Charlene Angeles, Bruce Carter, Vickie Rawlins were in attendance, and Commissioner Hardeep Singh Rekhi joined by telephone. Vice-Chair Brendan Donckers was absent. Executive Director Wayne Barnett and staff members Rene LeBeau, Marc Mayo, and Jenna Smith were present. Assistant City Attorney Gary Smith was also in attendance.

1) Rule regarding releasing Democracy Voucher candidates from the spending and contribution limits

The Director introduced the rule as an effort to reduce to writing the Commission's decision at its July meeting regarding the suspension of the caps when the limits are lifted for the Primary election. He invited any amendments Commissioners might have to his attempt.

Commissioner Carter made a motion to adopt the Rule and Commissioner Rawlins seconded. The motion carried unanimously

2) Complaint regarding Councilmember González's compliance with the Democracy Voucher Program's primary election debate requirement

The Chair noted that Commissioner Rekhi had recused himself from this matter, and he signed off from the call.

The Chair invited public comment but neither the complainant nor anyone else rose to speak to the matter. Candidate Lorena González said she was available to answer any questions Commissioners might have, and that she had brought with her documents requested by Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner Carter said he was interested in reviewing the documents.

Ms. González said she had divided the documents into three categories: One, forums to which she had been invited between May 15 and the primary election. Second, forums to which she had been invited but had declined invitations since the primary, and third, upcoming forums that the candidate anticipated attending prior to the general election.

In response to a question from Commissioner Carter, Ms. González said she doesn't personally review invitations, her campaign manager does.

The Chair said it was a relatively simple ask for campaigns to inquire whether all candidates are invited to a forum, for the purposes of complying with I-122.

In response to a question from Commissioner Angeles, Ms. González said that the campaign had not been aware until the complaint was filed that district democratic party events would not count toward the three-debate requirement.

Commissioner Rawlins asked the Director whether there had been education around the debate requirement. The Director said the pledge signed by candidates incorporates the rule adopted by the Commission regarding debates.

The Chair said that we are in the first year of the program, we are going to hit bumps in the road. She said that we need to add this to our education for campaigns moving forward.

In response to a question from Commissioner Carter, Ms. González said this was not an intentional failure on the campaign's part. She said that she and her campaign had mistakenly believed that district democratic party events counted as forums. She said the campaign would have benefited from additional training.

Commissioner Rawlins asked the Director whether there was anything short of removing a candidate from the program that the Commission could do. The Director said that the debate requirement was the only requirement that would not be punishable under some other section of

SMC Chapter 2.04. Commissioner Angeles asked what the Commission's powers were, and the Director replied that he did not see an opportunity to levy a fine, but that he thought the power to expel a candidate from the program would include lesser powers.

The Chair called for an executive session to receive legal advice at 4:42.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 4:56. She made a motion that while the program requirements were not met by the candidate, the remedy is not removal from the program on these facts. This is a brand new program, we are all learning, we are hitting bumps in the road. She reiterated that this ruling is limited to these facts and these novel issues for the candidates and the Commission. Moving forward, we expect all candidates to meet this program requirement. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission thanked the complainant for bringing the issue forward, and Ms. González for coming down and addressing the Commission.

The Special Commission meeting for September 14, 2017 adjourned at 4:59 p.m.