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BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO AS THE DULY CONSTITUTED ELECTORAL BOARD

Objections of: CATHERINE BOROWSKI	)	
	)	
To the Nomination	)	
Papers of: JONATHAN BLESSING	)	
	)	No. 04-EB-WC-02
Candidate for the office of	)	
Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of	)	
Chicago, Republican Party	)	

FINDINGS AND DECISION

The duly constituted Electoral Board, consisting of Chicago Board of Election Commissioners Langdon D. Neal, Theresa M. Petrone, and Richard A. Cowen, organized by law in response to a Call issued by Langdon D. Neal, Chairman of said Electoral Board, for the purpose of hearing and passing upon objections ("Objections") of CATHERINE BOROWSKI ("Objector") to the nomination papers ("Nomination Papers") of JONATHAN BLESSING, candidate for election to the office of Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of Chicago, Republican Party ("Candidate"), having convened on January 5, 2004, at 2:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, 121 North LaSalle Street, 2nd Floor, Chicago, Illinois; and having heard and determined the Objections to the Nomination Papers in the above-entitled matter finds that:

1. Objections to the Nomination Papers of the Candidate herein were duly and timely filed.

2. The said Electoral Board has been legally constituted according to the laws of the State of Illinois.

3. A Call to the hearing on said Objections was duly issued by the Chairman of the Electoral Board and served upon the members of the Electoral Board, the Objector and the Candidate, by registered or certified mail and by Sheriff's service, as provided by statute.

4. A public hearing held on these Objections commenced on January 5, 2004 and was continued from time to time.

5. The Electoral Board assigned this matter to Hearing Examiner CHRISTOPHER AGRELLA for further hearings and proceedings.

6. The Objector and the Candidate were directed by the Electoral Board to appear before the Hearing Examiner for a hearing on the date and at the time designated on the Electoral Board's docket. The following persons, among others, were present at such hearing: the Objector, CATHERINE BOROWSKI, by her attorney; and the Candidate, JONATHAN BLESSING, by his attorney.

7. The Candidate filed a motion to strike and dismiss the Objector's petition, which was granted in part and denied in part as explained in the Hearing Examiner's recommended decision.

8. The Hearing Examiner ordered that an examination of the registration records be conducted by clerks and agents under the Board's direction and supervision, in accordance with the laws of Illinois and the rules of the Board.

9. The Hearing Examiner directed all parties to appear and be present, either personally and/or by their authorized representatives during the records examination.

10. The Candidate or his duly authorized representative(s) was present during the examination of the registration records.

11. The Objector or her duly authorized representative(s) was present during the examination of the registration records.

12. The examination of the registration records was completed and the Electoral Board hereby adopts and incorporates by reference the results of the records examination conducted by its clerks and agents. The written report of the results of the registration records examination is contained in the Electoral Board's file in this case and is available for inspection upon request of a party.

13. The Electoral Board has considered all evidence and arguments tendered by the parties.

14. The Electoral Board finds that:

    a. The minimum number of valid signatures required by law for placement on the ballot for the office in question is 149;

    b. The number of purportedly valid signatures appearing on the nominating petition filed by the Candidate total 267;

    c. The number of signatures deemed invalid because of objections sustained total 147;

    d. The remaining number of signatures deemed valid total 120.

15. The Electoral Board finds that the number of valid signatures appearing on the Candidate's nominating petition following completion of the records examination is fewer than the minimum number of valid signatures required by law to be placed upon the official ballot as a candidate for election to the office of Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of Chicago, Republican Party.

16. The Hearing Examiner conducted an evidentiary hearing to receive evidence and hear testimony regarding the Objector's objection that the Candidate did not reside at the address stated on his Nomination Papers. This hearing was consolidated with a hearing on the Candidate's residency and standing to bring objections in case number 04-EB-WC-01.

17. For the reasons explained in his report and recommended decision, the Hearing Examiner concluded that the Candidate did reside at the address stated on his Nomination Papers. Therefore, the Hearing Examiner denied the Objections as to the Candidate's residency.

18. The Hearing Examiner scheduled another evidentiary hearing to receive evidence and to hear testimony regarding the results of the records examination. At the time of the scheduled hearing, the Candidate informed the Hearing Examiner that he intended to withdraw as a candidate. In light of the Candidate's stated intention to withdraw, the Hearing Examiner recommended that the Candidate's name not be printed on the ballot for the office of Ward Committeeman of the 1st Ward, Republican Party. However, the Hearing Examiner further recommended that in the event that the Candidate failed to file a withdrawal, the Electoral Board finds that the Candidate's Nomination Papers contained only 120 valid signatures, short of the 149 minimum number of signatures required by law and that the Electoral Board find that the Candidate's Nomination Papers were therefore invalid.

19. The Electoral Board hereby adopts the Hearing Examiner's recommended findings and conclusions of law. The Electoral Board finds that the Candidate did file a withdrawal of candidacy with the Cook County Clerk; therefore, he is no longer a candidate for the office of Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of Chicago, Republican Party, thus rendering these Objections moot.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Objections of CATHERINE BOROWSKI to the Nomination Papers of JONATHAN BLESSING, candidate for election to the office of Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of Chicago, Republican Party, are hereby DISMISSED AS MOOT and that the name of JONATHAN BLESSING, SHALL NOT be printed on the official ballot for the General Primary Election to be held on March 16, 2004, as a candidate for election to the office of Ward Committeeman for the 1st Ward of the City of Chicago, Republican Party.

Dated: Chicago, Illinois, this 6th day of February, 2004.

Langdon D. Neal, Chairman

Theresa M. Petrone, Commissioner

Richard A. Cowen, Commissioner

NOTICE: Pursuant to Section 10-10.1 of the Election Code (10 ILCS 5/10-10.1) a party aggrieved of this decision and seeking judicial review of this decision must file a petition for judicial review with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County within 10 days after the decision of the Electoral Board.