The District of Columbia Board of Elections convened a Regular Board Meeting in Suite 750, 1015 Half Street, S.E., Washington, D.C., 20003, pursuant to notice at 10:30 a.m., Michael Bennett, Chair, presiding.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS MEMBERS PRESENT:

MICHAEL BENNETT, Chair
KARYN GREENFIELD, Member

BOARD OF ELECTIONS STAFF PRESENT:

ALICE P. MILLER, Executive Director
TERRI D. STROUD, General Counsel

CECILY COLLIER-MONTGOMERY, Director of the Office of Campaign Finance

WILLIAM SANFORD, General Counsel of the Office of Campaign Finance
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(10:38 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Good morning. Boy, we have a nice, full house today. Thanks for coming. There may be one or two things on the agenda that sparks a couple of folks' interest, I see.

My name is Michael Bennett. We're going to call this meeting to order, at 10:40 a.m. The D.C. Board of Elections, our February 2020 Meeting, and we have a matter that we have to hold a hearing on today as well.

I also, I want to introduce the persons that are here. Do you hear us, okay, sir? Persons that are here, to my far-right, is Cecily Montgomery, Director of the Office of Campaign Finance.

MS. MONTGOMERY: Good morning.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: You can't hear?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's too loud?
(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's going in and out, okay. Let me cut it on and off. Is it still going in and out, or is it okay, or how, how is things going?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Not good?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's still going in and out?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I'll talk and then, see if it's still going in and out.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's still going in and out, okay.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I'll start talking again. Is it still going in and out?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It is still -- wow, this must be -- it may be this mic.
(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It is? Let me see here.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: If I use this one, does it -- is it going in and out?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is that going in or out, or not, or is --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Mr. Eidinger, you're -- you seem to be my guide, here, is it going in and out?

MR. EIDINGER: It is going in and out, but just project, so --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Just project better? Okay, thanks much. Speech, Co-Chair.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: What?

(Off the record comments.)
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: All right.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: If this is really bad, somebody, please, raise your hand, or something, which I'm sure I'll get that. To my far-right is Ms. Cecily Montgomery, who's Director of the Office of Campaign Finance.

To her left is our new Board Member, Ms. Karyn Greenfield. Karyn, welcome. Karyn was confirmed and sworn in, just a short time ago. Many of you may know that we lost one Board Member, Mike Gill, who is the third Board Member, is not here, but having the two of us here gives us a quorum.

So welcome, Karyn. And, maybe, may have an interest in her background, you can look on the Website and see that, I won't spend time today doing that, since we have such a heavy agenda.

To my far, to my right, our General Counsel, Ms. Terri Stroud. Introduce myself, Michael Bennett, to my left is Alice Miller, who
is the Executive Director of the Board of Elections. What we'll do is start off with a,
adopting the agenda and the --

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, I'm -- well, we're going to adopt the minutes from last meeting, because I'm going to amend the agenda, a little bit. Karyn, can I get a motion to adopt the minutes from last meeting?

MS. GREENFIELD: Yes, Mr. Chair, I move that we adopt the minutes from last meeting.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, it's been properly moved, I second that, and such it is unanimous acceptance of the minutes.

I'm going to, because we have -- and, I think, there are probably a number of people, who are interested in speaking, with regard to the initiative that we have to address today.

I'm going to switch things around and try and get through some of the items on the agenda, as quickly, as possible, so that, when we have the hearing on the initiative, we have time
to really focus on that and, and get as many
voices, as we can.

    I will have to limit the time that
people speak, but we will try to get to, as much,
as possible.

    The other thing -- so I'm going to
shift, when you look at the General Counsel
Report, I'm going to shift the proper subject
hearing, with regard to the initiative, to the
bottom of the General Counsel Report.

    And then, I'm going to shift up, if
you will, the motion hearing, with regard to the
motion to supplement the record, from Chris
Otten, to a part of the General Counsel's Report,
prior to the hearing.

    Then, what I'll do is, after the
hearing, though, I will allow for other public
comment, depending on the timing, the public
comment will, likely, be limited and it also may
be required to submit their comments in writing.

    Just trying to be most efficient and
give the proper amount of time to the persons
that are here to address this particular initiative.

So with that, I'd like to get a motion, from our other Board Member, Ms. Greenfield, with regard to accepting the agenda, as amended.

MS. GREENFIELD: I move that we accept the agenda, as amended.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's properly moved, I second, and it is accepted, as amended, unanimously. So Board matters. I don't have any Board matters, for today. And, Ms. Greenfield, do you have any matters for the Board to consider?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, I don't.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Great, thanks. Now, the report, from Ms. Montgomery, regarding the Office of Campaign Finance.

MS. MONTGOMERY: Yes, good morning. Before I address the activity of the visions in the Office of Campaign Finance, I would like to notify the public first that, with respect to the
Fair Elections Program, we have published a Fact Sheet, for Ward 2, for the June 16, 2020 Special Election, at our Website, on January 27th, 2020.

It can be found, at the Home Page, under Press Releases. Also, the OCF 2020 Schedule of Training Seminars is also available, at our Website. We published that on January 30th and it can be found, at our Home Page, under Advisories.

We, also, now published lists of the candidates, who are in the Fair Elections Program, at our Website, they will be updated monthly, and we published that on January 31st. It can be found, at our Home Page, under Press Releases and, also, at the FEP Slider.

We also included a list of the candidates who are registered in the traditional program as well, with a list of the candidates who are certified in the FEP Program and it includes the disbursements as of this day.

In the Fair Elections Programs Division, during the month of January, there were
two candidates who were certified as participating candidates in the Program, the first was Renee Bowser, the committee to elect Renee Bowser, Ward 4, Principal Campaign Committee was certified as participating candidate on January the 21st.

The second was Chander Jayaraman, Chander for Counsel, at large, Principal Campaign Committee. He was certified on January the 21st, 2020.

The Fair Elections Division also issued two status reports to candidates seeking certification in the program who have not, yet, met the threshold requirements.

It also issued two notices of denials, deficiencies, to candidates seeking certification in the Program. During the month of January, they also authorized base amount and matching payments.

Patrick Kennedy for Ward 2, $725 in matching payments was authorized on January the 21st. Chander for Counsel at Large, $87,515 in
matching payments, plus $20,000 in base payment, for a total of $107,515 was authorized on January 21st.

The Committee to Elect Renee Bowser, $36,975 in matching payments, plus $20,000 in a base amount payment, for a total of $56,975, on January the 21st, 2020.

As of January 31st, 2020, there are nine candidates who are certified in the Fair Elections Program as participating candidates, and again, because they are certified candidates, they are deemed eligible to receive matching payments for qualifying small dollar contributions and the payment of one-half the base amount.

During Fiscal Year 2020 to date, the total amount of public funds issued to participating candidates is $367,615.05.

In the Fair Elections Division, they also conducted eight desk reviews. They issued four requests for additional information.

In our Public Information and Records
Management Division, during the month of January, there were several reporting deadlines. The first was for the Legal Defense Committees.

The second report of receipts and expenditures was due on January the 2nd, 2020, and the report was timely filed. With our Constituent Service Program, January the 1st was the deadline for the report of the receipts and expenditures and it was actually due on January the 2nd, due to the holiday, there are nine required filers and all nine timely filed.

With our Senator Representative Statehood Funds, again, January 1st was the deadline for the report of the receipts and expenditures, it actually fell on January the 2nd, due to the holiday. There were three requiring filers and all three timely filed.

In our Fair Elections Program, with respect to our Principal Campaign Committee, January the 10th, 2020, was a filing deadline for the report of receipts and expenditures.

And, actually, it was an optional
report date for candidates seeking certification. Three candidates filed reports of receipts and expenditures on that date.

January 31st was the statutory deadline for the filing of reports and receipts and expenditures by our Principal Campaign Committees, our Political Action Committees, also, for the Fair Elections Program Principal Campaign Committees, our Independent Expenditure Committees, our Initiative Referendum Committees, and our Recall Committees.

I will be reporting during the month of February -- I'm sorry, at our March meeting, the total number of requiring filers for each of those filing groups, as well as the total number of timely filers. I do not have that date as of this date.

During the month of January, we also had new candidates and committees who registered. We had ten new candidates who registered in our Fair Elections Program, they are Charles Boston, Boston for State Board of Education at Large,
registered on January 3rd.

Fria More, Vote Fria More 2020, for
Ward 8 City Council registered on January the
2 Special Election, registered on January 13th.

Patrick Kennedy, Patrick Kennedy for
Ward 2, Special, June 16, 2020, City Council,
January 17th, 2020, John Fanning, Fanning for
Ward 2 Special Election City Council, January the

Mike Austin, Mike for Ward 8, Ward 8
City Council, January 17th, 2020. Kishan Putta,
Kishan Putta for Ward 2 Special Election 2020,

Katherine Vernice, Katherine for Ward
2 Special City Council, January 24th, 2020.
Daniel Platt, Daniel Platt 2020, Ward 8 City
Council.

We, currently, have a total of 35
candidates who are registered in the Fair
Elections Program. In our Traditional Campaign
Finance Program, we had 18 new candidates'
committees, who registered in the month of January.


Ivan Cloyd, Ivan Cloyd for U.S. Representative, January 10th. Pete Ross Candidate U.S. Representative, January 10th.

Tyrone Carmichael, Candidate at Large City Council, January 13th.

Ashley Carter MacLeay, Ashley for D.C. Republican National Committee Woman, January the 14th. Marcus Goodwin, Goodwin for D.C. 2020 at Large City Council, January 15th.

Rebecca Morris, Rebecca Morris Committee of Ward 7 City Council, January the 16th. Jeronda Hilton, Jeronda Hilton 22 Ward 8 City Council, January 16th.

Michael McHugh, Candidate Ward 1, Chairman D.C. Republican Party, January the 17th.

Jose Cunningham, Jose 2020, Republican National
Committee, January 17th.


Yilin Zhang, Yilin Zhang for Ward 2 Special Election, January 28th. Nathan Derenge, Nate for Ward 8 City Council, January 29th.

Marya Pickering, Marya D.C. 2020 at Large, City Council, January 29th.

We, again, have a total of 23 candidates who are registered in our Traditional Campaign Finance Program.

We also conducted entrance conferences, mandatory entrance conferences, during the month of January. We conducted two on January the 15th, 2020, there were 14 participants.
And, on January 29th, 2020, there were 23 participants. The names of the participants are included in my staff's report and will be posted at the OCF Website by the end of the day.

In our Audit Branch, our Reports Analysis and Audit Division, during the month of January, the Audit Branch conducted 40 desk reviews of the reports of receipts and expenditures that have been filed with the Agency.

With respect to our full field audits, we have one ongoing audit and that, actually, is a periodic random audit and it is of a candidate in the upcoming 2020 election.

The Re-Elect Brandon Todd 2020 that was initiated on September the 4th, 2019, and that is of the July 31st, 2019 filing of the reports of receipts and expenditures.

We issued one audit during the month of January and that was the -- and this was of, of a -- this was a full-field audit of a newly elected public official and this audit was of the
Committee to Elect Zachary Parker of 2018.

The audit was issued on January the 22nd, 2020. Again, he is a newly elected member of the State Board of Education and that was a non-compliance audit and the audit is available at our website for review by members of the public.

And I would ask our General Counsel, William Sanford, to give the report for the Office of the General Council.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: How was that -- was it still in and out, still bad? Am I, speaking now, it's still, a bit, pretty bad?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It is? Oh wow. Okay. It's the mic, apparently. And, yes, let me see if I can --

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is this any better? I'm really concerned about this.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is it still the
same? Worse?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We'll just try to project and do the best we can. Sorry about that, my apologies. We're working on it. Mr. Sanford.

MR. SANFORD: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. And a warm welcome to our new Board Member, Ms. Greenfield. My name is William Sanford, I am the General Counsel for the Office of Campaign Finance.

During the month of January 2020, the Office of the General Counsel received two referrals from the Reports Analysis and Audit Division, completed one informal hearing and issued two orders, which included the following.

One order was issued for failure to timely file a Report of Receipt and Expenditures, in which a fine of $1,900 was initially imposed, but that fine was subsequently reduced to a $1,000 fine, pursuant to a motion for reconsideration.
And one order was issued, resulting in
a non-compliant order, in which a fine of $5,000
was imposed. During the month of January 2020,
the Office of General Counsel imposed initially
$6,900 in fines and reduced the fines to $6,000.

The fines were imposed against the
following respondents. Initially, a fine of
$1,900 was imposed against Trayon White, for
failing to timely file a Report of Receipt and
Expenditures. That fine was reduced to $1,000,
pursuant to a motion of reconsideration.

In addition, a fine of $5,000 was
imposed against former Council Candidate Sheika
Reid and her Treasurer, Anthony Miller, for
unresolved issues resulting from a non-compliance
audit.

During the month of January 2020, the
Office of Campaign Finance Office of the General
Counsel collected a total of $1,250 in fines from
the following respondents.

A fine of $1,000 was paid by Council
Member Trayon White. A fine of $100 was paid, by
former Candidate Gayle Carley for Ward 5, and a
fine of $150 was paid by Franklin for D.C. 2018.

During the month of January 2020, the
Office of the General Counsel issued one
interpretive opinion that request was submitted
on the 13th of December, the issue was campaign
expenditures related to attendance at local
events and the opinion was issued on January
10th.

During the month of January 2020,
there were no new open, no new investigations
open, and during the month of January 2020 there
were no show cause proceedings conducted. And
that should conclude my report.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, Mr.
Sanford. Ms. Montgomery?

MS. MONTGOMERY: Yes, I just wanted to
add because I don't think I pointed out to the
members of the public that -- with respect to our
lists that will be published at the website of
the registered candidates in both our Fair
Elections Program as well as in the Traditional
Campaign Finance Program. We will update those monthly.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

MR. SANFORD: And I would just --

MS. MONTGOMERY: And that --

MR. SANFORD: I would just add that the -- a copy of the interpretive opinion that I mentioned is also available at the Office of Campaign Finance website.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Great. Thank you.

Any questions, Ms. Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, none.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. And I don't have any. I do want to point out one thing. Let me, let me -- I'm really concerned about this technology issue here. Can you cut the mics off and then, see if you guys can hear?

What I'm really concerned about is making sure that our reporter can hear and take things down, because that's the official record of the meeting and, and the -- that we have to pull up every, like, every month.
If we cut the mics off, can you hear, still, or will you be able to get the transcript, or not?

COURT REPORTER: I, I will be, but it's --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's going to be a challenge?

COURT REPORTER: Do you see these things?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes.

COURT REPORTER: These are my personal mics, which I can hear, but it's just a matter of speaking close to them.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

COURT REPORTER: So like, they won't be able to hear somebody talking from the audience.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Right.

COURT REPORTER: But they'll be able to -- like, I have one on that desk, they'll be able to hear somebody sitting right there.

(Off the record comments.)
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: What did you say?

(Off the record comments.)

PARTICIPANT: I think it was just your mic.

COURT REPORTER: No, it's not.

(Off the record comments.)

PARTICIPANT: Her microphone's fine. When she was speaking it was fine. It's just that one, right there, it's making some sort of interference.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Could you hear from Ms. Montgomery?

COURT REPORTER: I could hear her, it had a -- it had the same problem yours did.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's still in and out? Okay.

COURT REPORTER: It's like an interference.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: My apologies, folks.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: But I think it's
important we try and make sure the sound is
working clear. Okay. Well, that said, can you
guys hear me okay, when I speak up?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, just bring the mic
closer to you.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Say again?

PARTICIPANT: If you could, bring the
mic close --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I couldn't hear you

--

MS. STROUD: If you could, bring the
mic as close as you can to your --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, this one? Do
you think, is that helpful?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is this helping
anybody? Everybody going out? This is better?

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's better?

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. Great. I
will try that.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, so much.

Can you come back next month?

(Off the record comments.)

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: All right.

MR. SINDRAM: Much better, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. Hey,

thank you, Mr. Sindram.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: You are valuable.

Next on the agenda is -- well, let me make one
other point too, now that we've kind of gotten
through some of our technology issues, is that --
and I should've said it during the Board Matters.

But there is a combined calendar and
it's going to get more and more combined, better
and better, a combined calendar, both the Office
of Campaign Finance and the Board of Elections,
on both websites.

And so one of the things that we have
found over time was that it was sometimes confusing to candidates when they had one calendar for the Office of Campaign Finance and another for the Board of Elections.

There is such an integrated process here that we want to try and, at minimum, give people a combined calendar. So you will find that combined calendar on both websites.

And, as -- and we're getting better and better at that. It's not complete right now, but it will be, over the course of time. So I wanted to point that out as something I feel really good about that we're doing.

Next thing on the agenda is the Executive Director Report. Ms. Miller.

MS. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning. I'll start off talking about the candidate petition process for the June 2nd primary, which is well underway.

We have 57 candidates who have picked up petitions for the June 2nd election. Filing deadline for that, for those nominating
petitions, is 5:00 p.m., on Wednesday, March 4th, and that list is available on the Board's website. We update that list daily.

For the Ward 2 Special Election that's scheduled for June 16th, seven candidates have picked up petitions. The deadline for the nominating petitions to be brought for that election is March 18th, at 5:00 p.m., and, again, the list of candidates is posted on our website and that also is updated daily.

With respect to the cost for the Special Election, the Mayor has funded the cost for our operation, which will be $220,000. That amount was placed into our budget last week, so we are prepared to move forward with that operation.

We've also received a notification of grant funding from the Election Assistance Commission. That's the federal agency that operates through the federal government over elections.

And we have received notification for
$3 million dollars to be used in accordance with
Section 101 of HAVA, with a focus on security and
cyber infrastructure. The city has to make a
match of 20 percent in order for us to qualify
for that funding, which is $600,000.

For the month of January, the staff
participated in 14 outreach events. All of those
events are listed on our website -- a light just
went off.

(Off the record comments.)

MS. MILLER: Are listed on our
website, includes --

(Off the record comments.)

MS. MILLER: -- naturalization
ceremony, election worker recruitment events,
student events at Ballou High School, and the
National Re-Entry Network for Returning Citizens
for voter registration education events. All of
those events are, also, listed on our website.

We have a robust outreach for poll
worker recruitment. It's well underway. We have
people out here today, so if anyone's interested
in serving, as a poll worker, don't leave without
signing up. We'd love to have you. We need you.
And if you have a friend of a friend, feel free
to get them in here also.

Our training for poll workers will
start in March and we will be training straight
through the early voting process and through the
June 2nd election.

We're working to have 16 early voting
sites. Right now we have 15, we're looking for a
second location in Ward 2. The challenge remains
to try to find a location there we continue to do
so.

But, again, if you all have any
suggestions or ideas, we're open to them. We
need to have a place that can accommodate us for
early voting for ten consecutive days, and will
allow us to be there and, basically, take charge
of that location during that time period, both in
May and during October through the November time
frame.

I just want to put one additional
thing on the record, Mr. Chairman, and that is
I'd like to proudly mention that the Board was
notified by the Vice Chair of the Election
Assistance Commission of their selection for the
Clearies Award for accessibility.

The 2019 Clearinghouse Clearie Award
for improving accessibility for voters with
disabilities and for the Board's overall
commitment to accessibility.

This highlights the D.C. Board as an
exemplary model that can serve as an example to
other officials and jurisdictions. The Clearie
Awards recognizes the innovative efforts of
election officials across America.

Entries are judged based on the
initiative's creation of positive results,
innovations, sustainability, outreach efforts,
cost effectiveness, and reputability.

The award is given for exceptional
work to improve accessibility during the election
cycle. An independent panel of judges was
convened to review the nationwide submissions for
the award and to vote for the final selection.

The Chairman of the EAC, Christy McCormick, announced the award to recognize the Board as outstanding -- is the winner for this year, for performance and best practices in the area of accessibility.

So with that in mind, I just want to take a minute and recognize both Terrica Jennings and Arlin Budoo for the work they do to both identify and locate a presence with a vision towards accessibility at all times.

So Arlin's in the front. Terrica, I don't see you. But would you both please stand, because I think you deserve recognition for this award and it is a nationwide award and we are very grateful and thankful to you.

(Applause.)

MS. MILLER: And that concludes my report.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. Just to add to that -- man, this is really a challenge.

(Off the record comments.)
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Just to add to that, we spend a lot of time -- Jesus. Help me.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We spend a lot of time focused on accessibility. And I'm sure, all of you, here, are voters --

(Off the record comments.)

MS. MILLER: Is somebody patching in? Because, we think that's what it is.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Well, I'm going to -- I'm just saying this, while I -- just to help me conserve time. But we spend a lot of time focusing on accessibility to voting, and that's a big deal in the District and it should be a big deal around the country, and I'm sure it is.

But we spend a lot of time focused on that and we make sure that folks who have disability in any kind of way, or various challenges, have the opportunity to vote.

So Mr. Budoo and Ms. Jennings have just done an incredible job making sure that our
priorities are, in fact, met when it comes to accessibility and this award is evidence of that. So again, thank you, to both of you, for a job well done in this process. So next on the agenda -- boy, I'm almost afraid to cut this mic on again. Next on the agenda -- hey, it's better.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. Boy, a thumbs up. Hey, a thumbs up from the back.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I don't know, I got to make sure I know what's going on. We are now at the point of having our General Counsel Report. And, I think what we are, what you're probably going to do is have Mr. Otten --

MS. STROUD: Yes, Mr. Otten, so --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Otten, I'm sorry.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MS. STROUD: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And then we'll do the other items.
MS. STROUD: Mr. Chris Otten, if you're present, would you please come forward? And if Mr. Dinan is present, if he could come forward, as well?

(Off the record comments.)

MS. STROUD: And you both have submitted pleadings, and so if you would like to summarize your case for the record, you may do so, or if you want to, I guess, Mr. Otten, if you wanted to speak first --

MR. OTTEN: Right now?

MS. STROUD: -- about your motion?

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. OTTEN: Okay. And first, I thank you. My name is Chris Otten, I'm a 20-year resident in the District of Columbia. I just wanted to make sure that the Board has copies of the two motions I submitted, the initial motion and then the reply in response to --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, I'm good.

MR. OTTEN: Okay. So in summary --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I think that mic is
creating a feedback. I think that's part of the problem.

(Off the record comments.)

MR. OTTEN: Is that better?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes. Okay.

MR. OTTEN: In summary, there was a recall effort against Jack Evans that this Board took up, back in November, when the petitions were submitted.

Mr. Dinan represented Jack Evans, former Council Member, for two hired-in investigative firms that spent hundreds of hours, according to his words, reviewing our petitions.

One of these petitions, Petition Sheet Number 43, which is the one I submitted, along with 600 other petition sheets, was deemed to potentially have forged signatures and was inherently corrupt, quote-unquote, and to be tossed out as fraudulent.

These are all terms on the public record, with my name attached to it, submitted by Mr. Dinan as an allegation against my person and
my reputation.

These eight signatures are all, largely, from one block in Georgetown. I personally went up and down that block, with a witness, and got those signatures as a volunteer with a Recall Jack Evans campaign.

Unfortunately, the Board did not, in their decision to deny the recall as not meeting the threshold, petition signatures required, it did not put its work product on the record, it was just a matrix of aggregate numbers of signatures accepted, those denied.

So the record currently has only Mr. Dinan's allegation that my petition signatures were forged and fraudulent. That means if my grandchildren ever go to the public record, they will see that their grandfather was a fraud.

So my motion was to clarify the record, correct the record. To do that, I had to file a FOIA request to get petition signature -- Petition Sheet 43 and, as it was reviewed by the Board and the Board staff found that those
signatures were not fraudulent and verified them and counted them.

Unfortunately that is not on the record. So all my motion simply does is seek to put on the record that these signatures were indeed considered verified and valid and to clear my name.

MS. STROUD: Mr. Dinan.

MR. DINAN: First of all, Donald Dinan, for the record. Mr. Chairman, Board Members, we have submitted a response to Mr. Otten's motion and we would stand by the statements in that response.

MS. STROUD: And, I'm sorry, Mr. Otten, I neglected to have you state your name and address, for the record, and if you could do so, now?

MR. OTTEN: Sure. My name is Christopher Otten, O-T-T-E-N, and I live at 2203 Champlain Street, Northwest, Unit 303, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Also in attendance is the Director of
the campaign itself, Adam Eidinger, who is
willing to testify in support of the motions and
to show that, indeed, I had brought those in to
the campaign office the day I received those
signatures from real people in Ward 2.

MS. STROUD: Okay. So with respect to
this matter, we received your motion and we
received Mr. Dinan's response and your reply.
Our regulations -- and I'm just going to inform
you of the law regarding your motion.

The record for this matter is closed
with the issuance of the Order, Order Number
19-043, which was issued on December 18th, 2019,
and so once the record closed, there was no
basis, there's no basis on which to reopen it.

And that would be only be an avenue
that the parties can pursue. But I want to let
you know for the record that although the Order
was issued on December 18th, the Order did not
list any of the individuals challenged or mention
any names, so the Order, which is the document
that was issued, makes no mention of the
specifics of your challenge.

    But the record does include, not only
the recall petition, it includes the challenge,
it includes the work of the Registrar of Voters
and the Order, so the record is not as limited as
simply the Order, it includes all of the
documents that I've mentioned.

    And so the information that you want
to include on the record is, in fact, in the
record and is available for -- and as you were
able to receive it, you or any member of the
public that is going to come and look for the
record in this matter would be privy to the
information that includes the work of the
Registrar of Voters, the findings, which you
correctly state, indicate that those signatures
were not forgeries.

    So the -- I would recommend to the
Board that the motion be dismissed because you --
the record is closed and there's no basis upon
which to open it. And again that avenue would
only be available to the parties.
But you have had the opportunity today to make your case and you correctly indicate what the Registrar's findings were with respect to your motion. But the information that you would, in fact, have sought to include in the record is in fact already there.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And one thing we want to make sure -- I'm afraid to cut this thing on. One of the things I want -- and I want to thank you for your motion, your concerns -- this is ridiculous.

Your concerns are valid. I get it. And I think Ms. Greenfield and the Board gets it, as well. Unfortunately, the law doesn't allow us to open that record, to make sure that that information is there, although it is still there, if you look hard enough.

But I did want you to be able to come here today to put it on the record, because we are, as a Board, and our Administration, was very clear that the signatures that you gathered were not deemed fraudulent, regardless of the
challenge.

And they have the right to actually challenge that, but the reality is is that our review said that they were not fraudulent, which means you did not submit, nor were you a part of the gathering of any fraudulent signatures.

So I'm going to continue to talk about this to make sure that the record is very clear as to your submission and the allegations relative to a fraud, with regard to your signatures, they were not -- that allegation was not accepted nor substantiated.

And so for today and for the minutes of this meeting, the fact that your submission was not fraudulent will be forever on the record of this meeting today and also a part of the record of the Board that anyone can research and have access to.

So I'm going to make a motion that your motion, itself, be denied, but that we make a part of the record of this day and this meeting that, in fact, your signatures that you submitted
were, in fact, not fraudulent and the Board found that they were not fraudulent.

So is there any -- do you have any other comments, Mr. Dinan?

MR. DINAN: The only comment that I would make is that, in reviewing the challenge and I'm referring to it as Sheet 43, it said that the signatures appeared to be in the same hand and thus were challenged after that on that basis.

And we would submit that a review of that sheet shows that at least the name of the signers, the date, and the Ward appear to be written in the same hand, and, as we said in the challenge -- and we said appeared, I want to make that clear.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Sure.

MR. DINAN: Was made in good faith and based on --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

MR. DINAN: -- evidence.

(Off the record comments.)
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We appreciate that.

The Registrar did not agree with that, that statement. Mr. Otten, do you have any other comments, before I make a motion that Ms. Greenfield and I can vote on?

MR. OTTEN: Yes, just to clarify, for the record, I believe the rules state that petition circulators can help petition signers actually fill out the address, the ward, the date, but the signature has to be by the person signing it --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes that's --

MR. OTTEN: -- and that's what happened in this case.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: That's -- thank you.

MR. OTTEN: Yes, okay.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I'm going to make a motion that we, while we've gotten on the record the fact that Mr. Otten, his petition was not fraudulent, then but we -- well, with regard
to his motion, we have to deny the motion on the
official record of that matter.

    So I make a motion that we deny his
motion and Ms. Greenfield, can I get a second on
that?

    MS. GREENFIELD:  I second it.

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT:  Okay, so this
motion was properly moved and seconded, and it's
unanimous.  So, Mr. Otten, thank you for coming.
Mr. Dinan, thank you for coming, and I -- I hope
that this is sufficient from your perspective to
correct the record.

    MR. OTTEN:  Did you say that you were
going to support a motion to make sure the record
is corrected?

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT:  Well, the record is
closed, so I can't open up the official record of
the --

    (Off the record comments.)

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT:  -- of the
challenge, but what I am saying to you is that
today we have created a record that supports your
position and that also makes public the finding of the Registrar relative to your signatures.

MR. OTTEN: Okay, well, I guess I just want to clarify, will today's record be assumed into the record of the case?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It will be a part of -- look, it won't be assumed into the record, but it will be, you know, able to be gathered and pulled by anyone. Okay?

MR. OTTEN: All right.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: All right, thank you.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. So the cameraman messes up. Oh man.

(Laughter.)

MR. OTTEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you.

MS. STROUD: The next item on my agenda is the litigation status, the first case in litigation status is Hunt v. Miller. This was a complaint, which Mr. Hunt requested that the
Board provide an itemized accounting of the
write-in votes passed in the mayoral contest for
the 2018 general election, which the Board was
not required to do.

Briefing in that case is complete and
we are waiting the court's order on the Board's
motion to dismiss.

The next case is Butler v. Board. In
this matter, Mr. Butler filed an action for a
writ of in the nature of mandamus to compel the
Board to accept the D.C. term limits campaign
initiative of proper subject.

The Board filed a cross-motion for
summary judgment on November 21st and the
Plaintiff was to have filed a cross-motion on
that date, as well, but he did not. We're
waiting a decision on the dispositive motions
filed. One has not currently been issued yet.

The next case is Graham v. Board.
This matter involves the Board's appeal of a
permanent injunction and to advise Superior
Court, which prohibits the Board from receiving
any action on the Referendum 8 Petition.

The briefing in this case is complete and the D.C. Court of Appeals has ordered that the case be scheduled for oral argument as soon as the calendar permits.

In the case of Hammond v. Board, this is a matter that was filed in the D.C. Court of Appeals and is an appeal of a Board Order upholding the resolution of ANC 7B that found no vacancy in SMD 7B04.

This matter is consolidated with a similar one, which is Robin Marlin v. the Board. The most recent update to this case since our last meeting is that, on January 22nd, the Appellants filed a motion for an extension of time to file the appendix to their brief.

On January 28th, the Board filed an opposition to that motion and we are waiting for a ruling in that matter. And that concludes my litigation status.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. All right, we -- so let me kind of give you a reminder in
terms of how we're going to proceed. We are going to -- I'm going to ask the General Counsel to frame the matter with regard to the initiative and then we're going to ask for proponents of the initiative, and then we're going to ask for opponents of the initiative.

MS. STROUD: Opponents first.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Opponents first, I'm sorry.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Opponents first?

MS. STROUD: Yes, we're going to have them come up, but --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: All right.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. So we'll ask for opponents first, and then proponents. And then we'll kind of wrap up with that. But, how many people will want to testify in general with regard -- can I just see a show of hands -- in general, I'm going to have to give some limit. It's not that many.
MS. STROUD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, so what we're going to do is we're going to limit the testimony to three minutes, okay? And so I ask you to be succinct and focused.

The other thing that I think -- most of you may or may not know, but most of you probably know is that our -- what we have to make a decision on is whether or not it's a proper subject matter for an initiative.

I am happy to hear, if you want to take up your time doing that, telling us how important it is and, I think that probably you, many of you will want to do that, but at the end of the day, the merits of the initiative is not our decision to make.

The merits will be addressed, you know, if indeed it meets the requirements to be an initiative on the ballot, then the merits of it will be addressed by the voters and not by us.

But if you want to spend your time doing that, that's okay and I'm okay with that.
So -- and at the end of the meeting, we're going to have public matters.

We will probably end up having public matters that are not regarding this initiative, to be submitted in writing, or very, very limited, and I'm kind of saying that for Mr. Sindram's benefit on the phone. But we'll kind of see where we are. So, Ms. Stroud?

MS. STROUD: Okay, so I just want to give you some background on the initiative process of the District of Columbia. The initiative process allows members of the public voters to propose laws for consideration by voters at an election.

So it allows the people to step into the seat of the Council with respect to proposing laws. And the Board of Elections is the gatekeeper for the initiative process, meaning that when we receive initiative measures, the Board has to review them to determine whether or not they present a proper subject for initiative. And the Board is limited to criteria which are
outlined on the screens that you see on either
side of the room.

And so the Board, under District law,
specifically Section -- D.C. Official Code
Section 1-1001.16, which contains the legislation
involving the initiative and referendum process.

So that law indicates that the Board
must reject any proposed initiative measure, if
it is contrary to the terms of the Home Rule Act,
if it seeks the Home Rule Act.

If it would unlawfully appropriate
funds in a manner that the District's courts have
outlined, if it would violate the U.S.
Constitution, if it is not in compliance with the
Office of Campaign Finance filing requirements,
if it is not in the proper legislative form.

If it would unlawfully discriminate,
or violate the D.C. Human Rights Act, if it would
negate, or limit, a current and existing Budget
Act of the Council.

And so if it runs afoul of any one of
these criteria, then the measure does not present
a proper subject. If it meets all of these criteria and does not violate the proper subject laws, then the Board is required to accept the initiative.

And so that -- again, the Board is limited to, in its analysis and determination, as to whether or not an initiative would present a proper subject, these are the criteria that the Board must analyze.

It does not look at whether the measure would be a good idea or a bad idea, it does not review the measures, as Chairman Bennett indicated.

The merits of the measure are left for the public to decide, voting in an election, on the initiative. And so that is the purpose of today's hearing.

So the Board received the Entheogenic Plant and Fungus Policy Act of 2020 on December 20th. It was published in the D.C. Register, in accordance with D.C. law, on January 24th.

And we indicated the criteria that the
Board had to use to review the matter and indicated that members of the public could come in and weigh in on the proper subject analysis.

And so at this point, if we could have the proponent of the proposed measure come forward?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We have to determine -- please, go ahead and have a seat.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: First, first question is whether or not the opponents of the proposed measure have met the statutory clerical requirement with regard to filing?

MS. STROUD: Yes. So I'll state for the record that the verified statement of contributions was filed with the Office of Campaign Finance on December 20th, 2019.

The initiative was filed in the proper form. It came with an affidavit containing the proposer's name, telephone number, residence address, and a statement that they are a registered elector in the District.
It did come with five printed attachments and copies of the full text of the measure. There was a summary statement of no more than 100 words. It contained a short title of the measure.

And so we'll go into the proper subject analysis, once -- well, first of all, are there any opponents present that would like to speak against the initiative measure, the proposed measure?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, wow. That's different.

(Off the record comments.)

MS. STROUD: And so I am going to read the names of the individuals who have submitted comments in favor of the proposed measure. Melissa Lavasani, who's present. Is Larry Norris present?

(No audible response.)

MS. STROUD: Marcus Capone?

(No audible response.)
MS. STROUD: Queen Adesuyi?

(No audible response.)

MS. STROUD: Major Neal Franklin?

(No audible response.)

MR. FOGG: I'm here, I'm here for Neal. Matthew Fogg, here.

MS. STROUD: Oh, so you're here, on behalf of Mr. Franklin?

MR. FOGG: Yes.

MS. STROUD: Okay. Matthew Fogg is your name?

MR. FOGG: That is my name.

MS. STROUD: Okay. Jesse Gould?

MR. GOULD: Present.

MS. STROUD: Okay. Wyly Gray?

MR. GRAY: Here.

MS. STROUD: Okay. Daniel Carcillo?

MR. CARCILLO: Here.

MS. STROUD: Mikhail Kogan?

(No audible response.)

MS. STROUD: And Evan Park?

MR. PARK: Here.
MS. STROUD: Okay. Okay, so first, we will hear -- oh, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Oh. If you could identify yourself and your name and address and where you're from and -- and just for the record.

MR. SANDLER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Members of the Board. My name is Joseph Sandler, I'm Counsel for the Proposer, Ms. Lavasani and the Ballot Committee.

Just briefly, with respect to the proper subject matter analysis, three quick points. We would respectfully submit that the proposed initiative is consistent with Title 4 of the Home Rule Act. In particular, it enacts -- it is legislative in nature, even though it's -- it enacts a law that would set an unfortunate priority for the Metropolitan Police Department.

Because it is a new policy that can only be imposed from the Department, externally, by an act of the Council and that regard is legislative in nature. It's not directing the Department to make any decision within an
existing statutory framework.

Secondly, it clearly does not appropriate funds, or negate, or limit, a Budget Act of the Council and that changing and enforcing a priority does not reduce or redirect resources spent either on criminal enforcement generally by the MPD, or enforcement of the District's drug laws, just as Initiative 71, which actually legalized personal use of small amounts of marijuana may have resulted in less enforcement movement -- inherently less enforcement activity, but didn't in itself redirect resources or appropriate or affect any actual Budget Act of the Council, and was in fact found by this Board to be a proper subject for initiative and, of course, was adopted by the voters.

And finally we would note that the initiative is consistent with the so-called Harris amendment to the federal continuing -- continuing the Appropriations Act in that it does not seek to reduce, or change the penalties for
these Schedule 1 substances that the -- that
would be the subject of a lower enforcement
priority, and consequently it's consistent with
the federal laws and the, you know, the U.S.
Constitution.

With that, I will turn it over to the,
if it's okay with the Board, the Proposer, Ms.
Lavasani.

MS. LAVASANI: Okay. Good morning, my
name is Melissa Lavasani. Do you need my
address?

MS. STROUD: Yes, please.

MS. LAVASANI: It's 901 Ninth Street,
Northeast, Washington, D.C. 20002. I am a Ward 6
resident and I am the proposer of the Entheogenic

I thank you for having us here today.
I hope my testimony will be interesting,
educational, and enlightening. I was born in
Washington, D.C., to two Iranian immigrants.
Growing up in Minneapolis, Minnesota,
my parents were role models for hard work and
resiliency. I graduated with a degree in Economics from McAllister College, where I had a successful tennis career for all four years.

I have since acquired two Master's degrees in Management and Public Policy. I moved back to D.C. in 2004. While my earl --, my 20s and my early 30s were challenging and informative, I was quickly checking accomplishments off my list.

By 2017, I was married to my -- a man I consider my best friend and I was pregnant with our second child. A couple of months into pregnancy, I developed a severe case of sciatica, which is pain that runs down your body from your spine.

The chronic pain began to wear on my mental health. Alarmed after -- alarmed, after casually being offered an anti-depressant, during a routine prenatal checkup, I did some research on these drugs.

I knew the numbness I felt was depression and I needed to take care of it
immediately. However, the doctor's assurance that it was safe for me and the baby did not convince me that antidepressants were my solution.

My research showed me the medical community still does not have a complete understanding of depression's effects on the brain. As it manifests differently with each person, diagnosing the correct pharmaceutical is a dangerous game of trial and error.

Additionally, each of these drugs has a laundry list of negative side effects, as well as alarming rates in relapse once off. After this extension research and experiencing a loss of a friend who took his own life, through this struggle I decided not to take them.

There were too many changes going on in my life and I was going through inevitable identity crisis a woman goes through, when she's changing her family and growing.

After that point in -- my life spiraled out of control. My depression became
severe with symptoms of anxiety, paranoia,
recurrent panic attacks, delusions, insomnia,
self-harm, and suicidal thoughts.

I was on a never-ending spiral of
toxic thought patterns, of shame, self-hate,
worthlessness, which were all deeply ingrained in
my brain.

I tried talk therapy numerous times,
but I failed at seeing lasting results. I was
failing at every level, as a mother, as a wife,
as a sister, and as a colleague.

After listening to a podcast that
featured Paul Stamets, who's an American
mycologist, I listened to a discussion about the
amazing health benefits, with the science that
backs it, about micro-dosing psilocybin
mushrooms. I decided to micro-dose psilocybin to
treat my depression.

After two weeks of logging my dose and
tracking my emotions carefully, I quite literally
feel my brain re-routing its thoughts.

Everything had changed and I was almost
completely symptom free.

The results were there; however, I was taking probably the biggest risk of my life. I was in possession of a Schedule 1 drug. I was breaking the law and putting my family at risk.

The entire experience was conflicting. I was healing myself, however, I was terrified of getting caught and losing everything I had.

After micro-dosing, a friend suggested I see an Ayahuasca Shaman for continued healing.

Again, in desperation, I participated in a few ceremonies and the results were profound. Since this time, my life has transformed completely.

I feel like myself again. I am calmer and more compassionate and I feel empowered to take on any challenge that's in front of me. I'm completely engaged in my life and connected with my family again.

It's hard to believe there was ever a time that I did not want to see this day.

Entheogenic plants and fungi empowered me to take
control and make the necessary changes in my life.

Our current system for treating disease is not working. Depression's elusiveness is both unfortunate and worrisome as it ranks as the leading cause of disability worldwide.

Entheogenic plants and fungi offer us a new solution to very troubling problems and the research surrounding these naturally occurring, non-addictive, non-toxic substances is extremely promising.

Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research has published over 60 studies in support of the amazing benefits of psilocybin.

Some of the issues they are looking at are addiction, smoking sensation, depression, and existential distress caused by terminal illness. They are expanding their studies to include opioid addiction, Alzheimer disease, PTSD, Lyme disease, and anorexia.

If entheogenic plants and fungus
become the lowest level law enforcement priority in the District of Columbia, people can properly and safely heal themselves without fear of legal repercussions.

This is a personal freedom issue. This is a healthcare issue. This is a social justice issue. This is a trauma interrupting life changing society shifting issue and we need to act now. I am reconciling time lost with my son while I was battling depression, with whom I am here today.

Kufikiri Imara, a member of the Decriminalize Nature Oakland Campaign, said recently, One person's journey of healing helps a family heal. A family's healing helps a community heal. A community's healing helps a city heal. This is our opportunity to heal D.C. and we need to take it. Thank you.

(Appplause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Lavasani.

MS. LAVASANI: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And we allowed you to go over a few minutes, but we wanted to make sure we heard your story.

MS. LAVASANI: I appreciate that, thank you.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you so much.

MR. SANDLER: Thank you.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Any other --

MS. STROUD: So next I guess -- we'll go in order, we will have Matthew Fogg, who is representing Major Neal Franklin next.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

MS. STROUD: And, when everyone comes up, if you could just state your name and address, for the record, and then, we'll just hear your testimony. And we will, we have a timer up here and we'll allow you three minutes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes.

MS. STROUD: You have three minutes.

(Off the record comments.)

MR. FOGG: Good morning, my name is
Matthew Fogg and I am a resident of Maryland and, actually, but I'm here for -- on behalf of the law enforcement -- Law Enforcement Action Partnership Network.

It's a 501C non-profit police organization of prosecutors, judges, and other law enforcement places working to improve the criminal justice system.

We believe that including the Entheogenic Plant and Fungus Policy Act on the District of Columbia ballot is, this November, would advance that cause and we ask you to allow it to appear on the ballot.

Prior to retiring as the Chief Deputy United States Marshal with 30 years of service in the Washington, D.C. area, I supervised a U.S. drug enforcement interdiction and nationwide fugitive dragnet task force.

I learned firsthand how much more destructive to a person's life being prosecuted for a drug crime can be than using the same drug ever was.
We know, we all know that an arrest or incarceration record limits a person's job and housing opportunities, the eligibility for student and home loans, voting rights, access to public benefits, and the list goes on and on.

Our current system fails to acknowledge the religious and medicinal uses of many non-addictive plant medicines that have been used for thousands of years, by indigenous cultures and by present day communities.

Generations of anecdotal evidence and current clinical research with leading universities, including Johns Hopkins, New York University, UCLA, point to therapeutic uses of psychedelic drugs and treatment, complex mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorders, treatment-resistant depression, and addiction.

Drugs are classified arbitrarily and not based on science. Many prescription drugs are not regulated enough, while plant medicines are controlled by illegal markets that can make
their use more dangerous.

   In a time of rapid opioid overdoses, police and veteran suicides, caused by PTSD, and an unaddressed mental health crisis in the country, no one should go to jail for using a natural medicine to try to heal themselves.

   Many psychologists refer to this process as self-medication. For all these reasons, the law enforcement action partnership supports decriminalization of natural psychedelics -- or natural psychedelics in the District of Columbia.

On behalf of Major Neal Franklin, Lead Executive Director, myself, Dr. Matthew Fogg, Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal, retired, as a lead speaker, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, sir.

Got any questions, Ms. Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, I don't have any.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, I don't have any. Thank you, sir, I appreciate it.

MR. FOGG: All right, you're welcome.
Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. STROUD: Mr. Jesse Gould.

MR. GOULD: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Good morning.

MR. GOULD: Jesse Gould, address 285 St. Nicholas Avenue, New York, New York 10027. I realize that this might not affect your immediate decision today, but I traveled here so I'll just go over some of my statements.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We appreciate it.

MR. GOULD: I'm an Army Ranger veteran, with three combat deployments to Afghanistan. Nearly three years ago, I had to travel to another country to receive life-saving mental health therapy that was not offered and it came in the form of a psychedelic plant.

This therapy saved my life and it saved many other veteran's lives. I'm writing you today, as both a military veteran and as a U.S. citizen, and I respectfully request you support this initiative.
As a veteran, I represent the voice of a community that's suffering through an unprecedented mental health crisis. As a civilian, I bring this simple request to re-examine certain mods that are now outdated and prevented the emergence of effective treatment options.

The prospect of decriminalization may seem daunting on the surface, but entheogen plants saved my life and may others. I would have been skeptical as well had I not come to discover my misconceptions were not supported by facts.

My primary concern around the subject comes from a view that this is mainly to increase use, abuse, and social and health concerns. And to this point, I want to go over some of the overall public health benefits.

My foundation, which is also a 501(c)(3), Heroic Hearts Project, is dedicated to the healing veteran mental trauma through psychedelic-based therapy.
These veterans reached out to us, after having explored the full spectrum of therapies offered through the Department of Veteran Affairs.

This includes prolonged exposure therapy, talk therapy, EMDR, and every combination of medications that you can imagine. I did not die in a morgue, but I was dying back home. It's just one particular poignant message that I've gotten as I've forged through this foundation.

Each veteran in our program served this country under the principles of duty and honor and each one of these veterans came to my foundation, out of desperation. These men and women were all seeking to regain their lives.

Psychedelic and plant-based therapies saved these lives. I can fill this entire letter with stories of veterans who have been saved by this sort of therapy.

Like Rudy the Green Beret, who, for the first time, felt real joy spending a Sunday
morning making pancakes with his ten-year old son.

Or Army Ranger Anthony, who emerged from his darkest point to finally realize that his life had value. Every day veterans are turning towards these vilified substances and finding hope that they haven't felt in years.

Among the veteran population, as has been discussed, rates of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, suicide have soared. Since the start of the global war on terrorism, more veterans have died as a result of suicide than in combat by more than a factor of 20.

Veterans are also four times more likely to have suffered from opioid addiction as a direct result of negligence in pain management programs.

Despite over $80 billion of funding, the Department of Veteran Affairs have not been able to find any real solutions to this epidemic.

They've already, others will discuss the values and the facts that many of these
substances are already going through research protocols and being declared breakthrough therapies, which shows that we need to re-evaluate our drug policy and how we view these substances.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Mr. Gould, I'm sorry to stop you. It looks like you're just about finished, but you've hit the time, and --

MR. GOULD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- I want to be careful. But, number one, thank you for your service.

MR. GOULD: Of course.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It is, it's an honor to have you in here and all the things that you've done and been through, for all of us, here, let me say thank you.

MR. GOULD: I appreciate that.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Secondly, I want to know, if you have any other, any questions, Ms. Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, I don't have any
questions.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. So thank you for your service and my apologies for cutting you off, it looked like you were pretty close to done and, thank you, for your testimony.

MR. GOULD: Thank you for listening.

(Applause.)

MS. STROUD: Mr. Wyly Gray.

MR. GRAY: Can you hear me all right?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes.

MS. GREENFIELD: Yes.

MR. GRAY: Awesome. My name is Wyly Gray, I live at 7389 Roxbury Avenue, Manassas, and I'm here representing veterans as well with a non-profit called Veterans of War.

Veterans of War, on behalf of veterans nationwide searching for effective approaches towards meaningful healing, respectfully requests your support of the Initiative to Decriminalize Entheogenic Plants and Fungi.

According to the VA, there are currently 18.6 million U.S. veterans living and
of that population, our nation loses 20 per day
to suicide.

You unpack that, that's 7,300 of our
brothers and sisters in arms that we lose
annually. We lose more veterans per year to a
preventable outcome than we have lost in more
than 18 years in active war.

Veterans are a community in a
desperate need of access to immediate and
effective solutions. Having enlisted in the
Marines from June of 2000 until my honorable
discharge as a Staff Sergeant in December of
2008, I, like many, deployed multiple times in
support of our recent wars in Iraq and
Afghanistan.

Also, like many, I had to learn to
cope upon my return, with daily ailments, such as
insomnia, tinnitus, a hyperactive fight or flight
disorder, rage, depression, and many, many more.

Like others, I tried everything, from
VA-sponsored medication, guided therapy,
adventure therapy, equine therapy, anything I
could get my hands on, to try to get better, but nothing seemed to work.

While these approaches certainly changed my relationship to the trauma that I experienced, they simply seemed to act as a band-aid. When I was alone I remained suicidal.

It wasn't until I experienced the connection offered through plant medicine that I found any measure of true healing. I can sleep again thanks to my work with entheogenic plants.

In my desperation, a desperation echoed loudly in the veteran community to find healing, I was forced to travel to Peru, a country where ancient medicines are not only legal, but they're venerated by their society as well.

Veterans should not be forced to undertake a dangerous mission into the Amazonian jungle in order to find access to critical life-saving medicine. I came home and dedicated my life to ensuring that those that are suffering can find appropriate tools to recover.
The mission of Veterans of War to save veterans' lives would be much easier to accomplish if entheogenic plants and fungi are decriminalized, as it would serve to send a very powerful message nationwide that our Government is committed to leading the way to solve America's veteran health, mental health crisis.

Entheogenic plants and fungi offer the ability to reprogram trauma, repair damaged neurotransmitters and even stimulate the birth of new neurons within the brain.

They merit further study as well as application to target audiences, such as those suffering from PTSD. As clinical trials have shown again and again, entheogenic plants and fungi are both safe and effective means by which to combat trauma.

Veterans of War have seen firsthand the healing potential of these ancient medicines and advocate strongly for their decriminalization, on behalf of a nation of veterans suffering from the aftermaths of war.
that are simply trying to return home.

This is bigger than the failed war on drugs. Lives are at stake. Veterans of War humbly ask for your support in promoting the return to commonsense legislation, by decriminalizing our access to natural medicines.

On behalf of our nation's veterans, we thank you for your time and earnest attention.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Gray? Yes, thank you, Mr. Gray. Ms. -- hold on. Ms. Greenfield, do you have any questions?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, I don't. And thank you for your service.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you for your service.

MS. STROUD: Next we have Daniel Carcillo, Carcillo.

MR. CARCILLO: All right. Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Good morning.

MR. CARCILLO: Thank you, for
listening. Daniel Carcillo, 13236 West Chicago Bloomington Trail, Homer Glen, Illinois 60491.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And elevator bleep.

MR. CARCILLO: Yes. Yes. So again, my name is Daniel Carcillo, I'm a husband and proud father of three, traumatic brain injury, mental health and brain advocate, former professional NHL hockey player, two-time Stanley Cup champion and founder of Chapter 5, a charitable organization. It's cutting out.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, I'm sorry.

MR. CARCILLO: It's all good.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: We can hear you fine.

MR. CARCILLO: Okay, good.

(Off the record comments.)

MR. CARCILLO: A charitable organization that helps athletes transition into life, after the game. As a Decriminalized Nature Natural Advisory Council Member, I'm respectfully requesting your support of the initiative to decriminalize entheogenic plants and fungi.
I'm 34 years young, retired, with two horizontal tears in both ankles, general PCO on my right knee, ACL, reconstructive surgery on my left knee, arthritis in both knees, I had an arthroscopic hip surgery, my abdomen stapled back to my pelvis, no labor in my left shoulder, lost three teeth, and I've broken my nose two times, and sustained seven documented concussions.

I was fully prepared and equipped to live a life with arthritis, broken bones, muscle tears, surgeries, dentist visits, and uncomfortable pain that comes along with the life of playing professional sports that cannot kill me, but almost killed me, with post-concussive symptoms, derived from seven documented concussions and thousands of sub-concussive hits to the body and to the head, as well as, the mental health complications, derived from the sexual, physical, emotional, and verbal abuse I was forced to deal with, as a minor, in junior hockey.

Eight months ago, I made a plan to end
my own life, because I thought I had exhausted
all treatment options, for my emotional trauma
and post-concussive syndrome.

I spent thousands, hundreds of
thousands of dollars, in search for the right
care and began to feel as if I was a burden to
those around me, who were watching me suffer with
daily symptoms, like head pressure and false
control issues, light sensitivity, memory loss,
insomnia, anxiety, depression, and suicidal
ideation.

The number one cause of death
following a traumatic brain injury is suicide.
My life was saved by a former teammate, who
introduced me to a traditional mushroom ceremony,
to which, the FDA has recently granted two
organizations special breakthrough designation.

Clinical trials, at universities like
Johns Hopkins, NYU, Imperial College of London,
have been shown to treat anxiety, depression, and
addiction, with alarmingly successful results.

During a traditional mushroom
ceremony, I was able to get to the root cause of my emotional and physical trauma and process difficult emotions and events in hours, rather than years.

The mushrooms gave me a chance to forgive myself, break destructive thought patterns and my guide taught me how to integrate the lessons from ceremony into my everyday life.

It has allowed me to make a deeper connection in my relationships with my wife, parents, and brothers, to be a more patient, understanding and loving father with my children, come to terms with my fear of the unknown and with death.

It helped me to change my self-narrative from negatively motivating myself to positive reinforcement and has given me the opportunity to realize that I am worthy of love, love myself and, in turn, loving everyone around me.

And I think I'm out of time, so I'll stop there and I appreciate you listening.
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Carcillo. It's Carcillo, is that correct?

(Applause.)

MR. CARCILLO: Yes, Carcillo.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Do you have any questions, Ms. Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: No, I don't have any questions.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you for your taking the time to come to provide us with the information.

MR. CARCILLO: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you so much.

MS. STROUD: And all written and submitted testimony is included in the record.

MR. CARCILLO: Okay. Thank you.

MS. STROUD: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Next.

MS. STROUD: Finally, we have Mr. Evan Park.

COURT REPORTER: Can I turn off the microphones, because it's providing feedback and
when you disconnected the cameraman, you
disconnected me.

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, so what
    should we do?

    COURT REPORTER: Can I just turn off
    --

    PARTICIPANT: Yes.

    COURT REPORTER: -- I have a personal
    microphone, I'm just going to turn off the, this
    that's on this table.

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

    COURT REPORTER: Is that okay?

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT: That's fine, yes.

    COURT REPORTER: Okay.

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT: That may mean that
    you guys may not hear him, as well, and I
    apologize for that.

    MR. PARK: I'm happy to stand up, if
    that's easier for everyone.

    CHAIRMAN BENNETT: If you want to
    speak loud that's, that's great. Well, sitting
    down is actually best.
(Simultaneous speaking.)

(Off the record comments.)

MR. PARK: Stay here?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, I mean, like, you need to stand, now, because you got to hear --

(Off the record comments.)

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. PARK: Okay. I'm a trial attorney, so I'm used to speaking loud, so I'll try to do that.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. All right.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And maybe it'll bounce off this wall and get back there, so.

MR. PARK: Okay, that -- so it's encouragement to even speak louder, to make sure that happens.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: There you go. All right. Thank you.

MR. PARK: To the ladies and gentlemen of the D.C. Board of Elections and to the members
of the public, thank you for allowing me the
opportunity to share a few points.

My name is Evan Park. My address is
11302 Silver Drive, in Kensington, Maryland. And
we're here to have an honest dialog today about
entheogens and this battle initiative. And what
a meeting so far. Really, it's been completely
inspiring for me.

We hope that you approve this
initiative and allow the democratic process to
unfold in the District on this historic measure.

Responsible adults should have the
right to develop healing relationships with plant
medicines, free from the threat of criminal
prosecution.

The drug war has been a war on people,
the brunt of which has been felt by people of
color. It has also been a war on information.
Over the last 50 years, it's been incredibly
difficult for people to come forward and say,
like we heard today, to say yes, I've been helped
by plant medicine.
The laws have been too tight. The stigmas have been too great. The threat of prosecution too tremendous, and so has been the suffering of our people.

I'm a current member of the D.C. Criminal Justice Act Panel, proud member. Each day, I see the effects of unresolved mental health and substance abuse issues on the District's most vulnerable residents, who I represent in criminal matters, over at the D.C. Superior Court.

I love my clients. I want what's best for them. I see them involved in the system that struggles to facilitate their healing. In speaking out in support of this initiative, I'm fighting for their rights to develop healing relationships with nature's medicines.

And, as I look at these eight points on the wall, and I look at the resolution, I don't see any issue here. I think it, I think it succeeds and satisfies these requirements.

I've seen people heal, by developing
relationships with entheogens. I need look no further than my own life. Entheogens played a critical role in getting me on the path to recovery from alcoholism and substance abuse in the 1990s. I speak about that publicly, including at D.C. Bar Association events.

They also helped me overcome serious mental health issues that remained, even after many years in 12-step recovery, extensive therapy, and intermittent use of pharmaceuticals.

I learned about one of the entheogens covered by the initiative, Ayahuasca, from vets who had gone public about their healing experiences. Thank God for that. Thank God for that.

They went overseas and they served and they continue to serve, with their honesty, when they came back. When my trauma and PTSD popped up, I was desperate enough to try something new, Ayahuasca.

And I participated in several lawful ceremonies, protected under State and Federal
Religious Freedom Restoration Acts and, over the course of these ceremonies, I healed early childhood wounds, released oceans of grief and healed from some very, very traumatic events.

Because of plant medicines, I am now trauma and PTSD free. Thank you for allowing me to speak and for your service to the District.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: All right, thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you so much. Our -- and, and thanks, for that -- in fact, all the testimony has been incredibly revealing on a personal basis.

And that takes a lot for persons to come in a public forum and do that, so I congratulate you all for your, for your passion and your willingness to open up, in such a way, publicly, so thank you all for that. Ms. Stroud, what do we have remaining?

MS. STROUD: Well we have, also -- are there any more individuals who would like to
offer brief comments, one or two individuals? I know that there are some people that indicated that they would want to present, but did not present written testimony, so I think we have time for one or two three-minute -- is there anyone else?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Anybody else?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: If not, then -- I'm sorry. I had a hand raise. Yes. Yes, ma'am.

MS. HOGAN: You want me to come up?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, please.

MS. STROUD: Sure.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is there anybody else after her? Because I want to move the process along, because you guys have been here for a long time and we want to try and get you out as soon as possible.

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is there anybody else after her, this young lady?

(No audible response.)
CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, great.
Ma'am, if you could identify yourself and your address, would be great.

MS. HOGAN: My name is Jamila Hogan. I live at 1714 Douglas Street, Northeast, D.C.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

MS. HOGAN: Am I being heard all right?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes I think so, please, maybe, just project a little bit.

MS. HOGAN: I just wanted to share that it's very exciting to be here. What a time to be alive, to see all of these different things that the earth has given us finally be decriminalized and accessible to all for the healing benefits.

One of the -- one things that I wanted to get on the record, as you said, that this isn't about moral, or right or wrong, or whether you agree with it or not, this is about the legalities and it's important to note that we have to stop arresting people for possessing plants.
Slavery was never ended, it was just amended. And we see now that it's being used as an instrument to arrest people that would've been enslaved back in 1865.

So hopefully, with this measure now being on the ballot, we'll be able to move past many of the stigmas that have surrounded the use of this plant and many other plants and the people who find healing from possessing it.

That's it.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you. I think --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- what I'd like to do and, and those of you -- I think there are a few of you who have been kind of been a part of this process before.

I would like to try and give you information, or decisions, as soon as possible, all right? And so what I'd like to do today is to -- is to get a motion, from Ms. Greenfield for us to go into Executive Session.
Give us about ten minutes to try and discuss this, to see whether or not I can give you a verbal decision today, since you all are here, versus waiting on something in writing.

And so that's what we're going to try to do. And so we're going to -- if I can, get a motion from Ms. Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: Yes. Mr. Chair, I move that we move into an Executive Session, to deliberate on this initiative.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's been properly moved. I second that, that motion, so we have a unanimous decision to go into Executive Session. So if indeed we are not able to come up with a decision that we can issue today, verbally, we'll come back relatively quickly.

I'm going to try come back relatively quickly anyway. Let's -- so if you can give us about ten minutes, or maybe at the most 15, but hopefully around ten, ten minutes, we'll come back and, and give you a verbal decision. Okay? Thanks.
(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: So the meeting, the meeting is on hold, until we come back.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: So please stay if you like, if you like.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off the record at 12:03 p.m. and resumed at 12:23 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I'd like to call the meeting back to order. This is the February Meeting of the D.C. Board of Elections. We were in hearing to consider the Initiative of Proper Subject Matter.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I mean, to vote to resume the meeting --

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- please, General Counsel. Can I get a motion to resume the meeting from Member Greenfield?

MS. GREENFIELD: I move to resume the
meeting.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I second. We both
have a unanimous decision to resume the meeting.
So we are in the hearing regarding the Initiative
for, and I have to apologize, I'm not really good
at pronouncing this word, I mean, it's
Entheogenic Plant --

MS. STROUD: Entheogenic.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- Entheogenic
Plant and Fungus Policy Act of 2020. The real
challenge -- one, let me thank everybody for
their testimony today.

As I said earlier, the personal
testimonies are quite compelling. Although we
aren't in a position to make a decision on the
merits of the Initiative, one way or the other,
but it takes a lot, I think, for people,
personally, to reveal so much about themselves,
in the effort to do something they believe is, is
good for the community, so I thank you for that.

Secondly, the real issue that we had
to focus on and discuss is whether or not this
initiative represents legislation, which is what is proper, or whether or not it is administrative in nature, relative to the cause.

We had lots of discussion on that back and forth and quite honestly, it's really a close call as to what as to whether or not the Initiative is administrative, or legislative.

And that's -- but that's our requirement. We have the requirement to make that decision and come out with a decision, today, and so we have one for you. The written decision will be within 20 days of --

MS. STROUD: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- today?

MS. STROUD: Yes, yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: But the -- but we wanted to give you a verbal decision today, since all persons were here. And so can I get a motion from Ms. Greenfield with regard to the Initiative?

MS. GREENFIELD: Yes, you can. Mr. Chair, I move that the Board accept the proposed
initiative measure titled Entheogenic Plant and Fungus Policy Act of 2020, as it presents a proper subject initiative.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: That motion has been --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: That motion has been properly moved. I second that motion. I now call for a vote. Ms. Greenfield, can you vote?

MS. GREENFIELD: I vote yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: And the second vote is from me, Michael Bennett, Chair, I vote yes. So the Initiative is approved to go forward. It is a very -- it was a really, really close call and while we are not permitted, nor is it appropriate to make decisions on the merits, it is very compelling when people are willing to reveal themselves the way you guys have today, so thank you for that.

And we will, we will have another meeting, prior to the 20th day, prior to the 25th, to actually issue the Initiative, so -- or
MS. STROUD: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- to issue the order in the Initiative, so Ms. Stroud will --

MS. STROUD: Executive Board will --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- will give you --

MS. STROUD: -- issue --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- some of the procedures on that.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MS. STROUD: Sorry, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: No, please.

MS. STROUD: We will issue the order forthwith and we -- the measure has been accepted and within 20 days after we -- the Board, issue its order, or today, we will have a public meeting at which we will prepare the formulation.

It's a short title summary statement legislative text for the initiative measure. And then it will be published in the D.C. Register, which sets off the challenge process and, you know, we'll go forward from there.
But if anyone has any questions, they can feel free to contact the Office of the General Counsel and we'll respond to any questions you have about next steps.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Well done. All the best. And we are going to -- if you want to leave, you can, but we only have -- there's one more thing left in our agenda and that, I believe, is --

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: -- public matters. And is there anybody has anything else they'd like to bring before the Board today? Yes, sir.

(Off the record comments.)

MR. CAPOZZI: Hello, John Capozzi, 3612 Austin Street, Southeast, D.C. And, in the spirit of the Chairman, I want to be brief. In following up on the, the November Challenge, related to Ward 2, Ward 2 --

PARTICIPANT: Rudy.
MR. CAPOZZI: -- Challenge to Jack Evans --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Is that is that messing you up?

PARTICIPANT: He doesn't want it off.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It is? Can you cut it off please, sir? That's okay, Rudy, you're good.

MR. CAPOZZI: I want to make sure that we have action related to reviewing the rolls of the voters in Ward 2. It's clear that there are thousands and thousands of voters on the rolls in Ward 2 that are not actually residing in Ward 2 at this time.

And so they should be put in inactive status, which I think would help during the election in June and then the special election, in -- also in June.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Right.

MR. CAPOZZI: So what I did was I got the information for the mail and its mail services, for GW and Georgetown University, I
want to pass that along to Director Miller.

I would like them to be contacted and then you work directly with those universities, to get those students who have registered here in the District, but have -- are no longer residing here off the rolls as a start to cleaning up these rolls for Ward 2. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Your concerns are certainly valid, and I recall those from the hearings associated -- the meetings associated with Jack Evans and stuff.

We certainly will, you know, focus on that, and not just with Ward 2 but with others. But I understand, he has particular issue with regard to Ward 2 around students, so thank you for that.

MR. CAPOZZI: Yes. Let me give you this, and I appreciate your time.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay, thank you.

Any other public matters?

MR. SINDRAM: Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Yes, sir.
Mr. Sindram.

MR. SINDRAM: Thank you, sir. Thank you. I was beginning to think you didn't like me anymore. The first should be last, the last should be first. Where's Mr. Bennett?

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I'm right here.

Please, Mr. Sindram.

MR. SINDRAM: I mean, I mean, your copy --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Oh, Gill.

MR. SINDRAM: -- of --

PARTICIPANT: Mr. Gill.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. SINDRAM: Yes, yes.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Oh, Mr. Gill, he's absent today, sir.

MR. SINDRAM: Oh, okay. All right.

Real, real quickly. Hats off to a yeoman's job by -- her name --

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Mr. Sindram, could you identify yourself, quickly, for the record?

MR. SINDRAM: Absolutely. Michael
Sindram, disabled veteran, served our country more than most. I want to give, again, to a job well done, above and beyond the call of duty. Who's the AD Coordinator? Help me, here.

(Off the record comments.)

MS. STROUD: Terrica Jennings.

MR. SINDRAM: Terrica Jennings, there we go. Appreciate, you know, keeping me in the loop and my group. If you would, Mr. Chair, and Ms. Jennings, I'd like to receive a hard copy of the interpretive opinion that Mr. Sanford referred to.

And I would also like to receive a hard copy of the recent initiative that you guys indicate is appropriate, if you could send me those two items? I'll give my address, I'll give it to you, now, your choice, but I would appreciate that.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Okay. If you could -- and, you know, I don't think you identified yourself with regard to the address for the
forms, to send them to you. Give us your address, at least, that'll be on record by the end of the day.

MR. SINDRAM: Absolutely.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. SINDRAM: Michael Sindram, disabled veteran, served our country more than most, 6645 Georgia Avenue, Northwest, Apartment 306, that's in Washington, D.C. 20012.

And I did want to conclude with, it is the veteran, the veteran, not preacher, who's given us freedom of religion. It is the veteran, not reporter, who's given us freedom of the press.

It is the veteran, not public, who's given us freedom of speech. It is the veteran, not campus organizer, who has given us the freedom to assemble.

It is the veteran, not lawyer, who's given us the right to a fair trial. It is the veteran, not politician, who's given us the right to vote.
It's the veteran who salutes the flag and serves under the flag. God bless America and our troops. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Sindram.

(Off the record comments.)

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: I don't think there are any other public matters, so -- and I don't, I don't see a hand, okay. Thank you so much, the meeting is adjourned.

MS. STROUD: A motion to adjourn.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: Oh, I need a motion to adjourn. I'm fucked. Ms. Greenfield.

(Laughter.)

MS. GREENFIELD: Mr. Chair, I move that we adjourn the meeting.

CHAIRMAN BENNETT: It's seconded and I vote, both, yes, so it's unanimous, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting in the above-entitled matter was concluded at 12:32 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Board Meeting

Before: DC BOE

Date: 02-05-20

Place: Washington, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

__________________________
Court Reporter