

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

In Re:)
Justice For All Party) Administrative
) Order #24-011

Re: Application for Approval of
The Name of a Political Party

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

Introduction

This matter came before the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“the Board”) on June 12, 2024. It is an action, filed pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05(a)(14) and 3 D.C.M.R. § 1601, for Board approval of the name of a political party.¹ Chairman Gary Thompson and Board members Karyn Greenfield and J.C. Boggs presided over the hearing on the matter. The Board’s General Counsel, Terri Stroud, Patricia Kinch, applicant, and Mike McCorkle, counsel for the applicant, were also present.

Background

On April 22, 2024, Patricia Kinch submitted a Board form captioned “Application for the Approval of the Name of a Political Party”. By that form, Ms. Kinch sought the Board’s approval of the new party name “Justice For All.”

On June 10, 2024, Kristin Furnish filed a Statement of Organization with the Office of Campaign Finance (“OCF”) for a political committee designated “Justice For All.”²

¹ The code provision authorizes the Board to “[i]ssue such regulations ... as are necessary to ... provide for the registration of any political party seeking to nominate directly candidates in any general or special election[.]” The regulation establishes a procedure and standard for approving party names.

² D.C. Official Code §1-1163.07 provides that political committees must file a statement of organization with OCF within 10 days of organization. 3 D.C.M.R. § 3000.7(g) states that political committees include party committees that are “organized to represent a political party of the official party structure at the city-wide or ward level.”

At the Board’s June 12, 2024 meeting, the Board’s General Counsel placed on the record the facts concerning the submission of Ms. Kinch’s application and the filing of the Statement of Organization with OCF. She advised that she had reviewed the current list of political parties authorized in the District of Columbia and that she had determined that there were no names identical or similar to the proposed party name. The General Counsel recommended that the Board approve the application.

Following the General Counsel’s recommendation, a motion was made to approve the application. The motion was seconded and the Board voted unanimously to approve the political party name “Justice For All.”

Discussion

As noted above, the D.C. Code authorizes the Board to regulate the approval of political party names.³ Pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board, an application for approval of a party name must be submitted on a form issued by the Board and must include “the name, address, telephone number, and voter registration number of the chairperson, treasurer, other principal officers, and each member of the duly authorized local committee of such party in the District.”⁴ Committees formed in support of parties must also file with OCF a Statement of Organization.⁵ In this case, we find that the filing requirements for approval of a party name have been satisfied.

³ D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05(a)(14).

⁴ 3 D.C.M.R. § 1501.1-2.

⁵ D.C. Official Code § 1-1163.07 and 3 D.C.M.R. § 3000.7(g). The prerequisite in 3 D.C.M.R. § 1601.2 of a committee for purposes of applying for a party name when read together with the statutory and regulatory provisions regarding the obligation of committees to file with OCF a Statement of Organization effectively means that an applicant for a party name must also file with OCF a Statement of Organization. To avoid the possibility of Board approval of an application for a party name associated with an OCF non-compliant committee, the Board’s practice is to defer reviewing an application for a party name until after the filing of a Statement of Organization with OCF.

Given that the applicant has satisfied ministerial filing requirements, we turn to the substantive issue before us. In that regard, we note that the Board’s regulations also provide that “[t]he Board may reject any name that, in the judgment of the Board, tends to confuse or mislead the public.”⁶ For example, given that D.C. voters may register as “Independent/No party affiliation,” the Board refused to approve the name “D.C. Independent Party” finding that that name “would tend to confuse or mislead the public.”⁷ As stated by the General Counsel at the June 12, 2024 hearing, however, no other political party approved by the Board has a name that is the same as or similar to “Justice For All.” The Board finds that the party name “Justice For All” is sufficiently distinguishable from every other political party name in the District of Columbia and does not tend to confuse or mislead the public. Accordingly, the Board approves the name “Justice For All” for a political party in the District of Columbia.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is hereby:

ORDERED that the application for the party name “Justice For All” is **APPROVED**.



Date: June 12, 2024

Gary Thompson
Chairman
Board of Elections

⁶ 3 D.C.M.R. § 1501.3.

⁷ *In Re: D.C. Independent Party*, BOE Admin. Op. 10-011 (issued September 17, 2010).