



UNION COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD OF COUNTY CANVASSERS

MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026

The meeting of the Union County Board of County Canvassers was called to order by Chair Clara Harelik, Esq. at 12:07pm. The following were in attendance: Chair Clara Harelik, Esq.; Commissioner Dennis Kobitz; Commissioner Donald Stanzione, Esq.; Commissioner Raymond Szpond; Commissioner Debra Varnerin; Deputy County Clerk Clara Fernandez; and Administrator Nicole DiRado. Secretary / Commissioner of Registration James Foerst, Esq. was not present.

The Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was read by Chair Harelik.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ADJUDICATION OF BALLOTS VOTED IN THE BERKELEY HEIGHTS SPECIAL ELECTION

The Board voted to reject ballots which were received after the statutory deadline.

CERTIFICATION OF THE BERKELEY HEIGHTS SPECIAL SCHOOL ELECTION

The Union County Board of County Canvassers certified the results of the Berkeley Heights Special School Election held on March 10, 2026.

Deputy County Clerk Clara Fernandez has left the meeting.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- March 10, 2026 – Regular Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Commissioner Kobitz to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Szpond and all Commissioners present voted in the affirmative, with Chair Harelik abstaining. Commissioner Foerst was not present.
- March 13, 2026 - Regular Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Commissioner Kobitz to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Szpond and all Commissioners present voted in the affirmative, with Chair Harelik abstaining. Commissioner Foerst was not present.
- March 17, 2026 - Regular Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Commissioner Kobitz to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Szpond and all Commissioners present voted in the affirmative, with Chair Harelik abstaining. Commissioner Foerst was not present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joe Cryan, Union: Senator Cryan, Senator for the 20th Legislative District and Union Township Democratic Municipal Chair, addressed the Board regarding the early voting locations for the 2026 Primary and General Elections. Senator Cryan appreciated the Board's openness to discuss the matter. He anticipates an expansion of early voting in the future and fully expects 50% of voter turnout to eventually migrate to early voting. He notes the Kean University site serves more than just Union, specifically Elizabeth, Hillside and other neighboring towns. While he would like to see the Payne Center remain



UNION COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS BOARD OF COUNTY CANVASSERS

open, Senator Cryan understands the reality of the budget and agrees the lowest turnout location should be closed. Further, he discussed the importance of opening a site in the 7th Congressional District. Senator Cryan urges the Board to approve the early voting site at the Union Township Senior Center. With over 5,000 votes cast in the 2025 General Election, this location has been established as a convenient, accessible location in Union County. Senator Cryan also complimented the poll workers at the Union Township Senior Center. He has always had a positive experience.

Commissioner Varnerin clarified that it was not this Board's decision to close the eleventh early voting site. The decision was made by the County administration in their effort to prepare the 2026 County Budget.

RESOLUTION FOR ADOPTION

- Recertification of the Early Voting Locations for the 2026 Primary & General Elections
 - Berkeley Heights: Berkeley Heights Municipal Building, 29 Park Avenue
 - Cranford: Union College of Union County, 1033 Springfield Avenue, Room N4
 - Elizabeth: Sampson Center, 800 Anna Street
 - New Providence: DeCorso Center, 15 E. Fourth St.
 - Plainfield: Union College of Union County, Church Street between 2nd and 3rd Aves.
 - Rahway: Rahway Recreation Center, 275 E. Milton Avenue
 - Roselle: Amalfe Center, 1268 Shaffer Avenue
 - Scotch Plains: Ponderosa Farm Park, 1600 Cooper Road
 - Union Twp: Kean University, 1000 Morris Avenue, North Avenue Academic Building
 - Union Twp: Union Senior Citizen Center, 652 Rahway Avenue

A motion was made by Commissioner Szpond to certify the early voting locations for the 2026 Primary and General Elections. On a motion seconded by Commissioner Varnerin, all Commissioners present voted in the affirmative. Commissioner Foerst was not present.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Varnerin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Szpond seconded the motion. All members present voted in the affirmative. Commissioner Foerst was not present. The meeting was adjourned at 12:25pm.