



WASHTENAW COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

May 21, 2026

MINUTES

A meeting of the Washtenaw County Election Commission was held in-person, in the lower-level large conference room at 200 N. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register
Judge Darlene O'Brien
Tyruse Walls, Chief Deputy Treasurer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Latitia Lamelle Sharp, Treasurer

STAFF PRESENT: Rena Basch, Director of Elections
James N. Allen, Deputy Clerk/Elections Program Manager

Members of the Public: Jen Eberbach
Dan Wholihan
Jane Finkbeiner
Tom Hammond
Fred Wertz
Phil Goldsmith
Jim Marion
Matthew Coleman
Kelly Coleman
Tim Bruneau
Fred Gall
Kelly Marion

Call to Order

Judge O'Brien called the meeting to order at 11:02 am.

Treasurer Latitia Lamelle Sharp advised the Commission prior to the meeting she would be unable to attend and her Chief Deputy, Tyruse Walls, would sit in her place.

Public Participation

None.

Approve Previous Minutes from May 5, 2026

Kestenbaum moved to approve the minutes of May 5, 2026. Walls seconded.

Vote on the motion: 3 Yeas. 0 Nays. 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Recall petition review hearing for language pertaining to renewal of a contract with Carlisle/Wortman submitted by E. Frederick Gall against Saline Township:

- a. Supervisor James Marion
- b. Clerk Kelly Marion
- c. Trustee Tom Hammond

The Commission opened the floor up to discussion.

Attorney Phil Goldsmith spoke on behalf of the subjects of the recall on what he believes are the perceived deficiencies in the petition's clarity.

Attorney Dan Wholihan spoke on behalf of the petitions, citing the Dimas case (*Dimas v. Macomb County Election Commission*) that ruled any dispute regarding clarity should be resolved in favor of the petitioners.

Saline Township Resident Jane Finkbeiner requested the Election Commission to determine the recall language is insufficiently clear.

The Commission held discussion. Clerk Kestenbaum expressed his view the language was clear. Judge O'Brien agreed and provided specifics.

Kestenbaum, seconded by Walls, moved to approve to accept the language as submitted.

Vote on the motion: 3 Yeas. 0 Nays. 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Recall petition review hearing for language pertaining to proposed consent agreement with Related Digital which would allow a data center submitted by E. Frederick Gall against Saline Township:

- a. Clerk Kelly Marion
- b. Trustee Tom Hammond

The Commission opened the floor up to discussion.

Attorney Phil Goldsmith provided his interpretation that the petitions were neither factual, nor clear, and provided court documentation to support his claim.

Attorney Dan Wholihan cited *Hooker v. Moore*, whereas it is up to voters to decide what is and what isn't factual.

Clerk Kestenbaum asked if Related Digital was party to the consent agreement. Attorney Goldsmith presented documentation showing they were not.

The sponsors of the recall requested to withdraw their petition. Petition was withdrawn.

Recall petition review hearing for language pertaining to appointment of zoning administrator submitted by E. Frederick Gall against Saline Township Supervisor James Marion.

The Commission opened the floor up to discussion.

Attorney Dan Wholihan spoke on behalf of the sponsors to explain the purpose of the recall.

Jane Finkbeiner stated as a Saline Township Resident, if she were asked to sign the petition that she would not have a clear understanding of the recall's purpose.

Kestenbaum, seconded by Walls, to approve to accept the language as submitted.

Vote on the motion: 3 Yeas. 0 Nays. 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Recall petition review hearing for language pertaining to approving a health insurance stipend submitted by E. Frederick Gall against Saline Township:

- a. Clerk Kelly Marion**
- b. Trustee Tom Hammond**

The Commission opened the floor up to discussion.

Attorney Phil Goldsmith explained on behalf of the recall subjects that the petition's clarity was lacking, citing that it states the stipend was approved for 2026, but does not state who the stipend was approved for, i.e., employee or elected officials.

Attorney Dan Wholihan replied that it mirrors the language passed in the prior Election Commission Meeting.

Jane Finkbeiner stated the petition does not provide clarity on why a vote merits a recall.

Kestenbaum, seconded by Walls, to approve to accept the language as submitted.

Vote on the motion: 3 Yeas. 0 Nays. 0 Absent. Motion carried.

Clerk Kestenbaum advised that each petition approved is a separate petition. Multiple petitions for the same office holder would not add up to a sufficient number of signatures to trigger a recall election.

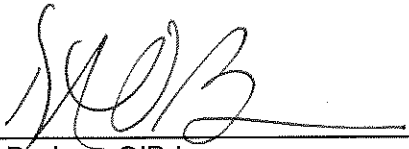
New Business

Elections Director Rena Basch advised the next meeting of the Election Commission will be on Thursday, May 28, at 11:00 am, same conference room, to approve the August ballots.

Adjournment

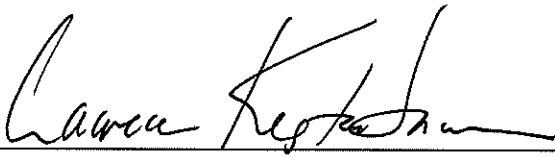
Kestenbaum, seconded by Walls, moved to adjourn the meeting.

The Election Commission adjourned the meeting at 11:28 am.



Judge Darlene O'Brien

APPROVED


Lawrence Kestenbaum, County Clerk/Register


Rena Basch, Director of Elections

Approved: 5/28/26