

**Cincinnati Elections Commission**  
**August 26, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Old Business:**

1. Approval of minutes from last regular meeting on July 10, 2025 **(MOTION REQUIRED)**

**New Business:**

1. Discussion of 5-month Post-Election Report **(MOTION REQUIRED TO FINALIZE)**

↳ Charter Article XIII, Section 4(f)(3): “Periodically, the commission shall file timely reports on the operation of this Article, including one comprehensive report each election cycle within five months after an election.”

2. Discussion of 2025 Pre-Election Campaign Finance Reports **(MOTIONS REQUIRED)**

↳ Presentation by Ian Doig, City of Cincinnati Law Department

Suggested language for motions: “I move that the Commission...

**No issues**: “...having identified no overcontributions or other issues, accept the reports of \_\_\_\_\_ as complete and accurate.”

**Overcontributions**: “...conditionally accept the reports of \_\_\_\_\_ and notify their campaign to address any potential inaccuracies and overcontributions.”

**Untimeliness**: “...[assess a penalty in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_ / assess no penalty] in connection with the late filing of the reports of \_\_\_\_\_.”

**Next Meeting**: Thursday, September 11 @ 4pm

**Special Meeting of the Cincinnati Elections Commission**  
**Minutes of July 10, 2025**

**CEC members present:** Marucs Bethay, Nick Klingensmith, and Sally Krisel.

**City representatives present:** Ian Doig, Law; Teninnah Ross, Law; Gus Ricksecker, Council Aide.

**Old Business:**

**1. Approval of the June 12, 2025, meeting minutes**

Mr. Klingensmith moved for approval of the June 12, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bethay. A vote was taken and the June 12, 2025, minutes were approved.

**New Business:**

**1. Proposed Charter Amendment re: Campaign Finance Filing Deadlines, etc.**

Ian Doig opened the discussion introducing Gus Ricksecker from Councilmember Nolan's office. Ian shared that Councilmember Nolan's is putting forth a charter amendment that will affect campaign finance, reporting requirements and other election timelines.

Gus Ricksecker thanked the CEC for allowing him the time to speak. Gus began providing the CEC election and political background of Evan Nolan. Evan Nolan has worked in campaign finance either as a volunteer, on a campaign or as an official treasurer on a campaign and has worked with the financial documents over the years. One real issue that was apparent was the duplication of efforts between the city and state filing deadlines. The city has two additional reporting periods. This created a lot of confusion for candidates and members of the community. In an effort to simplify this process, the proposed charter amendment will merge the filing deadlines and use only the state deadlines. This will eliminate the city deadlines.

Gus also noted the charter amendment will include changes to the appointment and recruiting process with the CEC. The changes to the proposed charter amendment will change the appointment of a non-party affiliated member. The change will allow the mayor 30 days to appoint someone to the CEC versus the current 15 days. The amendment will also allow for the CEC to grant an extension to the mayor if a person has not been selected within 30 days.

Gus opened the floor for questions.

Ian provided the CEC with a copy of the red lined ordinance that will be on the November ballot. Ian asked the CEC for their input on the ballot language.

Sally asked about the prior proposed changes to the language for percentage of non-affiliated party. Gus added that their office received feedback from various agencies including the NAACP and the Urban League that the political composition of the CEC should not be placed on the ballot for change.

Sally clarified that council is placing this amendment on the ballot and the amendment is not petition driven. Gus and Evan will meet with additional groups to ensure everyone is okay with the language.

Sally asked Gus what does the CEC need to do regarding this amendment. Gus responded that since the CEC is a valued commission and wanted to allow for any questions from the group prior to the amendment being placed on the ballot. Ian noted that all members are welcome to reach out to Evan Nolan's office if they have any questions.

Ian asked the CEC if they have any advice or input on the ballot language or current proposals to the draft amendment.

Bethay and Klingensmith stated they both are okay with the current ballot language.

Ms. Krisel made a motion to approve the changes to the campaign finance section and the language of the ballot. Mr. Klingensmith seconded the motion. Mr. Bethay asked that the CEC see the final language before it is placed on the ballot. Ian noted that if there are additional changes the CEC can have a special meeting to discuss. Ian called the roll and motion passed.

## **2. Letter to Candidates re: upcoming Pre-Election Report Deadline (July 31, 2025)**

Ian opened discussion providing a draft of a letter that will be sent to all candidates reminding them of the July 31, 2025, filing deadline for the CEC.

Sally asked that a note be added to the material stating the July 31<sup>st</sup> filing deadline is also a filing deadline for the state. Ian will add to the material. Ian will send this information to candidates tomorrow (July 11, 2025).

Ian added that the Law Department is currently working on the 5-Month report and would like to discuss the report at the next meeting. Ian also updated the CEC that there is no up-to-date information related to the mayor's selection of a CEC member.

Ian also added that if the proposed amendment passes, the CEC should have a discussion of the new filing deadlines.

Mr. Bethay made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Klingensmith seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

### **Meeting Adjourned:**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29pm.

Date: [insert date]

To: Sheryl Long, City Manager

From: Sally Jo Krisel, Vice Chair, Cincinnati Elections Commission

Copies: Nick Klingensmith, Member, Cincinnati Elections Commission  
Marcus Bethay, Member, Cincinnati Elections Commission

Subject: 2025 Mayoral Primary Five-Month Post-Election Report

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This post-election report is submitted to the City of Cincinnati by the Cincinnati Elections Commission (“CEC”) pursuant to Article XIII, Section 4(f)(3) of the Charter of the City of Cincinnati. Under Article XIII, the CEC’s primary role is to monitor and enforce the campaign contribution limits applicable to candidates for Mayor and City Council.

Although several inadvertent campaign overcontributions were identified following the 2025 Mayoral Primary election, the CEC and the Law Department worked collaboratively with the affected campaign to resolve the issues and ensure the excess funds were returned. No formal hearings were required or requested, and no penalties were imposed.

## **I. CEC BACKGROUND AND FILING REQUIREMENTS**

As set forth in the City’s Charter, the CEC must be composed of at least five Cincinnati residents who volunteer to serve four-year terms. For each political party represented by City Council or the Mayor, there must be a single “party-affiliated” CEC member who is nominated to the CEC by their party. The remaining members must be “non-affiliated.” All members are formally appointed by the Mayor, with Council approval. Currently, only three individuals are serving on the CEC.<sup>1</sup>

The City of Cincinnati Law Department provides legal and administrative support to the CEC. Law Department staff attend all CEC meetings and, particularly during the election cycle, field numerous inquiries from Mayoral and Council campaigns, contributing individuals, political action committees, and political parties regarding campaign contributions and reporting requirements. The Law Department also assists the CEC in addressing legal and procedural issues that arise during the campaign season.

Pursuant to the Charter of the City of Cincinnati, mayoral candidates who advance from the primary election are required to file campaign finance reports with the CEC within one week of the mayoral primary. This year, each “Post-Primary Report” was due on May 13, 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> Two seats on the CEC are currently vacant due to former members no longer meeting the required qualifications. The Mayor’s Office is aware of the vacancies and is in the process of appointing replacement members.

Notably, this filing requirement is separate and distinct from the reports that candidates must submit to the Hamilton County Board of Elections (“BOE”), which are due one month after the primary election. To address the potential for confusion caused by these differing deadlines, the CEC and the Law Department proactively contact representatives from each campaign to ensure they understand the applicable requirements and timelines.

## **II. FINDINGS FOR THE 2025 PRIMARY ELECTION**

There were three Mayoral candidates on the May 6 primary ballot: Mr. Brian Frank, Mr. Cory Bowman, and the incumbent Mayor, Mr. Aftab Pureval. Mr. Pureval and Mr. Bowman received the highest number of votes and will advance to the general election on November 4, 2025. As such, these two candidates were required to file Post-Primary Reports with the CEC.

Both candidates met the filing deadline, and their reports were published on the City of Cincinnati’s online campaign finance portal.<sup>2</sup> The CEC, at its May 20, 2025 special meeting, voted to formally accept Mr. Bowman’s Post-Primary Reports as complete and accurate.

At that same meeting, the CEC voted to conditionally accept Mr. Pureval’s Post-Primary Reports, and to simultaneously notify his campaign of several potential overcontributions that were identified in these reports. The CEC issued an official notice letter offering the campaign an opportunity to respond and correct these potential violations, and inviting the campaign to submit a written explanation or appear before the CEC in person to provide additional context. Mr. Pureval’s campaign promptly submitted a written response, acknowledged the inadvertent errors, and took immediate steps to remedy the overcontributions by returning the excess funds. Given the prompt cooperation and corrective action, no public hearings were necessary. On June 12, the CEC formally voted to accept Mr. Pureval’s amended reports as complete and accurate.

Because Mr. Frank did not advance from the primary election, he was not required to submit a post-primary campaign finance report. Instead, his campaign finance filing was due on July 31, 2025, in accordance with the “Pre-Election” reporting schedule applicable to all candidates participating in the 2025 general election.

## **III. ADVISORY OPINIONS**

No advisory opinions were requested or issued prior to the primary election. All former advisory opinions are available to view on the CEC’s website.

## **IV. CEC RESOURCES FOR THE 2025 PRIMARY ELECTION**

Since its inception in 2004, the CEC has operated without a direct annual budget. Nonetheless, it remains responsible for regulating campaign finance activity as mandated by Article XIII of the City Charter. To fulfill these obligations, available resources continue to be concentrated in three key areas: improvements to the campaign finance database, data entry and review of candidate filings, and Law Department staff time dedicated to supporting the CEC’s operations.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/noncms/digs/campaign-finance/>

## **A. Database Improvements**

The City of Cincinnati's Enterprise Technology Solutions Department ("ETS") implemented further enhancements to the CEC's online campaign finance database to improve functionality and user experience. Notably, ETS staff member Jacob Smith recoded the submission process to allow candidates to upload campaign finance data using modern .xls spreadsheet files, where previously only .csv formats were accepted. The older .csv templates lacked the flexibility and functionality that candidates needed to efficiently organize, edit, and track their data prior to submission. By enabling .xls support, ETS significantly reduced the technical burden on campaigns and facilitated a smoother and more accurate submission process. These improvements also helped reduce formatting errors and manual corrections by City staff, improving overall data integrity in the CEC system.

## **B. Data Entry**

Following the May 6 campaign finance reporting deadline, the Law Department provided data entry and administrative support to ensure timely and accurate processing of the submitted reports. Although the post-primary filing deadline applied to only two mayoral candidates, Law Department staff in the Ethics & Good Government Section—Ian Doig and Teninnah Ross—promptly reviewed each submission for completeness and accuracy, performed necessary formatting adjustments, and entered the data into the CEC's public-facing online database. These efforts ensured that the public had prompt and accurate access to campaign finance records, consistent with the transparency goals of Article XIII.

## **C. Law Department Involvement**

The Law Department continues to play a central role in supporting the work of the CEC. Attorney Ian Doig serves as the City's designated representative to the CEC, acting as both legal counsel and CEC Clerk. In this capacity, he prepares meeting agendas, drafts reports required under the Charter, manages correspondence, and provides ongoing legal guidance to CEC members. Mr. Doig also fields numerous inquiries from candidates, PACs, political parties, and members of the public regarding campaign finance rules and CEC procedures.

Paralegal Teninnah Ross serves as the CEC's recording secretary, compiling and maintaining official meeting minutes and managing the CEC's records in accordance with public records laws. Together, these Law Department staff members ensure that the Commission remains organized, compliant with legal obligations, and responsive to stakeholders. Their support will continue throughout the 2025 election cycle, as additional campaign filing deadlines and enforcement responsibilities arise.

## **V. THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION**

As the 2025 General Election approaches, the CEC has identified two primary goals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations:

First, CEC recommends that the Mayor's Office prioritize the appointment of two new members to fill the current vacancies on the Commission. With only three active members, the CEC is operating at the minimum number required for a quorum, meaning all three members must be present at each meeting to conduct any official business. Filling the remaining seats would provide greater flexibility and help ensure that meetings can proceed even if a member is unavailable.

Second, CEC recommends that the Law Department continue and expand its outreach efforts to candidates who are required to file campaign finance reports following the 2025 General Election. This outreach should include coordination with the Hamilton County BOE to educate candidates about their dual reporting obligations to both the BOE and the CEC. Improved coordination and early communication can help reduce the risk of filing errors, minimize potential violations, and lessen the administrative burden of manual data correction and entry.

Achieving these goals will enhance the CEC's capacity to fulfill its responsibilities efficiently and transparently during the 2025 General Election and beyond.

If you have any questions regarding this CEC five-month report, feel free to contact me at

\_\_\_\_\_.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Jo Krisel,  
CEC Vice Chair

# **Cincinnati Elections Commission**

**Review of 2025 Pre-Election Campaign Filings**



***Please Note:*** The findings contained in this presentation are preliminary and administrative in nature. They are provided for informational purposes only and do not represent the official findings, decisions, or determinations of the Administration or the Cincinnati Elections Commission.

## Two Issues to Consider Today:



Is the filing complete and accurate, and does it contain no overcontributions?



Is the filing timely?

# Duties of the Commission – Report Contents

- Charter Article XIII, Section 4(c):
  - Making a preliminary determination that a report filed with it is complete and accurate, and does not indicate any overcontributions
  - Immediate notice to a person alleged to have violated this Article
  - Holding a hearing that meets due process requirements for the alleged violator within 30 days of receipt of the notice
  - Sending to the alleged violator and the complainant within 30 days of the end of the hearing a written decision on the alleged violation.

# Duties of the Commission – Report Contents

- Charter Article XIII, Section 4(d):
  - If the commission makes a preliminary determination that a report filed with it is incomplete, inaccurate, or contains an overcontribution it shall conditionally accept the report and by certified mail notify the filer of its determination.
  - Within 7 days of receipt of the notice, the filer may submit an addendum that corrects the deficiency or indicates the refund or return of an overcontribution. The commission may grant an extension to file the addendum. If the filer fails to submit an acceptable addendum, the commission shall conduct further proceedings in accordance with subsection c.

# Duties of Commission – Timing of Reports

- Charter Article XIII, Section 2(a): A candidate ... that made or received a contribution or expenditure supporting a candidate for city council or mayor shall file with the commission ... a full, true, and itemized report of the contribution or expenditure in the manner and form required by the commission by not later than 4:00 p.m. on the following dates:
  1. The last business day of July of the election year [July 31, 2025] to reflect the contributions received and expenditures made from the close of business on the last day reflected in the last previously filed statement [December 8, 2023], if any, to the close of business on the last day of June of that year [June 30, 2025];

# Duties of the Commission – Violations

- Charter Article XIII, Section 4(e): **Finding a violation.**

After finding a violation of this Article, the commission **may** impose a civil fine or other penalty authorized by this Article.

# Duties of the Commission – Violations

- Charter Article XIII, Section 2(d): Penalties.
  - 1. Contribution.** When the commission chooses to impose a penalty for making, soliciting, or accepting a contribution that exceeds the maximum permitted by this section, the penalty shall be a civil fine equal to three times the excess contribution.
  - 2. Reporting.** The penalty for failure to file a report required by this section is a civil fine for each day of violation a) in a council election, \$100, and b) in a mayoral election, \$200.

# Suggested Language for Motions:

- If there **are no issues** identified with a report:

“I move that the Commission, having identified no overcontributions or other issues, accept the reports of \_\_\_\_\_ as complete and accurate.”

- If there **are issues** identified with the reports:

“I move that the Commission...

**Overcontributions:** “...conditionally accept the reports of \_\_\_\_\_ and notify their campaign to address any potential inaccuracies and overcontributions.”

**Timeliness:** “...[assess a penalty in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_ / assess no penalty] in connection with the late filing of the reports of \_\_\_\_\_.”









# Summary of Findings

Name	First submission received on:	First submission complete?	Final submission received on:	Flagged entries?
Jeffreys, Mark	8/1/25	Incomplete	8/1/25	Yes
James, Ryan	8/1/25	Complete		No
Cramerding, Jeff	7/30/25	Incomplete	8/1/25	Yes
Kearney, Jan-Michele	7/30/25	Incomplete	8/1/25	Yes
Johnson, Scotty	7/30/25	Incomplete	8/1/25	No
Frank, Brian	7/22/25	Complete		Yes
Owens, Meeka	7/31/25	Complete		Yes
Albi, Anna	7/31/25	Complete		No
Bowman, Cory	7/31/25	Complete		No
Brooks, Audricia	7/20/25	Complete (no activity)		No
Cole, Laketa	7/31/25	Complete		No
Corbett, Jerry	7/17/25	Complete		No
Farmer, Kevin	7/28/25	Complete		No
Nolan, Evan	7/31/25	Complete		No
Parks, Victoria	7/31/25	Complete		No
Prophett, Raffel	7/31/25	Complete		No
Pureval, Aftab	7/31/25	Complete		No
Walsh, Seth	7/9/25	Incomplete	7/30/25	No
Washington, Donald	7/28/25	Complete (no activity)		No
Weiner, Aaron	7/31/25	Complete		No
Favors, Gary				

# Mark Jeffreys

- Submitted: 8/1/25 (incomplete); 8/1/25 (complete)
- Flags: \$1,250 from Carolyn Gilbert





	Mark Jeffreys	Carolyn	Gilbert	400 Pike Street #814 Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$500.00	2025.05.16	 1
	Mark Jeffreys	Carolyn	Gilbert	400 Pike Street #814 Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$250.00	2024.09.17	 1
	Mark Jeffreys	Carolyn	Gilbert	400 Pike Street #814 Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$500.00	2024.12.12	 1

# Ryan James

- Submitted: 8/1/25 (complete)
- Flags: None





# Jeff Cramerding

- Submitted: 7/30/25 (incomplete); 8/1/25 (complete)
- Flags: \$2,000 from Plumbers & Pipefitters 392

	Jeff Cramerding	Plumbers &	Pipefitters 392	1228 Central PKWY. Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$1,000.00	2025.03.25	 1
	Jeff Cramerding	Plumbers &	Pipefitters 392	1228 Central PKWY. Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$1,000.00	2025.01.24	 1

# Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney

- Submitted: 7/30/25 (incomplete); 8/1/25 (complete)
- Flags: \$2,700 from IBEW PAC Voluntary Fund;  
\$4,050 from Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney



	Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney	IBEW	PAC Voluntary Fund	900 Seventh St N.W. Washington, DC 20001	Contribution	Council - Pre- Election 2025 Filing	\$2,700.00	2025.04.09	 1
	Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney	JAN- MICHELE	LEMON- KEARNEY	3 LENOX LANE CINCINNATI, OH 45229	Contribution	Council - Pre- Election 2025 Filing	\$4,050.00	2024.07.31	 1

# Scotty Johnson

- Submitted: 7/30/25 (incomplete); 8/1/25 (complete)
- Flags: None

# Brian Frank

- Submitted: 7/22/25 (complete)
- Flags: \$1,200 from Brian Frank

	Brian Frank	Brian	Frank	915 Monastery Street Cincinnati, OH 45202	Contribution	Mayor - Post- Primary 2025 Filing	\$1,200.00	2025.02.03	 1
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# Meeka Owens

- Submitted: 7/31/25 (complete)
- Flags: \$1,150 from Janet Berger

+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$150.00	2024.06.24	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.04.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.05.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.02.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.06.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2024.11.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.01.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$200.00	2024.03.07	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2025.03.18	1
+	Meeka Owens	Janet Berger	1534 Corvallis Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45237	Contribution	Council - Pre-Election 2025 Filing	\$100.00	2024.12.18	1



# Gary Favors

- No submission received by CEC or BOE
- No contact made by CEC; has not filed a “Designation of Treasurer” form with the BOE as of 8/13
- NOTE: Past filings with the BOE list < \$10k in contributions/expenditures
- Recommendation: CEC can move to ***delay*** analysis until next CEC meeting

## Filings with No Identified Issues

- Albi
- Bowman
- Brooks
- Cole
- Corbett
- Farmer
- Favors
- Nolan
- Parks
- Prophett
- Pureval
- Walsh
- Washington
- Weiner