

# City Council Special Called Meeting Transcript – 11/21/2022

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[9:35:52 am]

Good morning America time. Alison alter. Their reign the necessary quorum of the city of Austin city council. I call this meeting to order it is Monday, November 21st 2020. 29 36 am we are meeting in the council chambers at 301 west second street. We have a council members tovo Kelly and harper-madison attending virtually council member pool Fuentes, myself and council member vela are on the diet, as you know. Under state law, only two council members are necessary for a quorum to canvas an election but we have another item on the agenda. So a

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regular quorum and members are necessary for that. So thank you for joining us. This morning. We will now take up item number one to approve a resolution canvassing the results of the November 8th 2022 general in special elections. I'm going to read the returns, and then I believe we have one speaker, to speak. In the general election. The returns of the election show and this is long. So bear with me. In the mayoral race, there were 7340 votes for Phil. Compare a para brow 122,377 votes for Celia Israel 106,883 votes for Kirk Watson. 7137 votes for Anthony Bradshaw. 56,313 votes for Jennifer Virden and 5815 votes for Gary spelling . Gary S. Spelman was Celia, Israel and Kirk Watson receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city of Austin mayor in the district one race, there were 6065 votes from

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a cell rap D Ramos 2519 votes for Clinton Rarey 2649 votes for Melanie house-dixon 12,000. 773 votes for Natasha harper-madison , with Natasha harper-madison receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district one. In the district three race there were 7674 votes for Jose Velazquez 7260 votes for Daniella silva 1078 votes for gavino Fernandez junior 2318 votes for Jose new way L. E S 1947 votes for Yvonne Weldon and 812 votes for a solid wueschner. With Jose Velasquez and Daniella silva receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city

council member district three. In the district five race. There were 7933 votes for Ryan alter. 4861 votes for bill Welch. 6274 votes

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for Ken Craig. 9600 votes for Stephanie Bazin. 3295 votes for Aaron Velasquez webman. And 796 votes for Brian Anderson, the second with Ryan alter and Stephanie basin, receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district five. In the district eight race. There were 20,491 votes for Paige Ellis. 10,066 votes for Richard Smith 1590 votes for Antonio DI Ross and 3311 votes for Kimberly P. Hawkins with Paige Ellis receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district eight. In the district nine race. There were 1555 votes for xena Mitchell. 10,870 votes for zohaib zo qadri. 3162 votes for Greg Smith 1951 votes for joah spearman. 1031 votes for Kym Olson. 7677

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votes for Ben Leffler. 8066 votes for Linda Guerrero and 1878 votes for Tom Wald, zohaib , zo qadri and Linda Guerrero receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district nine. In this special bond election. The returns of elections show that there were 223,505 votes four and 91,707 votes against proposition a. Before we take a motion, is there anyone who signed up to speak on this item? No. They're not here. Surprised them, too, okay? There being no speakers. I will entertain a motion for item one and I'm going to council member Fuentes makes the motion council member of pool seconds. I'm going to read the motion to make sure that we have it correct for the record council member Fuentes moves that we approve the resolution canvassing and accepting the

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returns for the November 8th 2022 general and special election. Declaring Natasha harper-madison in district one is elected and declaring Paige Ellis in district eight, is elected. Declaring that a runoff it is election between Celia, Israel and Kirk Watson is necessary for the office of mayor. Declaring that a runoff election between Jose Velasquez and Daniella silva is necessary for district three. Declaring that a runoff election between Ryan alter and Stephanie basin is necessary for district five. And declaring that a runoff election between zohaib zo qadri and Linda Guerrero is necessary for district nine and declaring proposition a is adopted. So we have a motion from council member Fuentes, the second from council member, pool. Congratulations to our colleagues, council member Ellis and harper-madison. And to all of those who made it, to the runoff. We will now take a vote all those in favor. It is.

[9:42:00 am]

Council member tovo. Harper-madison looks like your hands there. Okay it's unanimous on the diet with councilman rapport, Fuentes, alter and vela on the dais voting for council member kitchen, Kelly, harper-madison and tovo, on the virtual dais voting yes, as well and the balance of the other three members absent. Thank you. I will now entertain a motion for item number to approve an ordinance ordering a

runoff election to be held in the city of Austin on December 13th, 2022 for the purpose of electing city council mayor and council members. Single member districts for district three, district five and district nine, making provisions for the conduct of the election and declaring an emergency. Council member pool makes that motion seconded by council member vela wanted to ask before we take speakers if Myrna can speak to the exhibits that were just posted I'm sure. But we also have one speaker,

[9:43:00 am]

just going to call them in case they're here, general mohs. Go ahead. Come on up. I wanted to have you speak first, so that you could clarify what was going on so that they would know. Know that before they spoke, so the polling location sites have been published this morning. We have a total of 86 early. No, I'm sorry, 86. Election day sites and 17 early voting. There was a question about utilizing additional college campuses. UT has confirmed and they will be serving as a polling location for early voting and election day. However there are other universities that were requested and it is to speaking with the county. It is too late to, go through the process for them to be able to justify or verify and

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confirm that the locations are meet the Ada requirements and all of the requirements that they are expected to. I hereby to the doj and so moving forward . It is. It is something that Travis county will coordinate with these locations to see if they can serve as future polling locations. Thank you, Mr Ramos. Your three minutes. You can come up here. Technically, I think they both were all right. Well good morning. Members of the council. My name is Jen Ramos. I currently serves as the senior political analyst for jolt action. We are a statewide nonpartisan C three C four civic engagement organization that focuses on mobilizing an uplifting Latino voters. In 2018 . It was announced that Travis county's largest registered voting bloc is between the ages of 18 to 35. Per the Travis county, Texas as a collector's

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office today, 320,986 registered voters of a grand total of 827,466. And Travis are between the ages of 18 to 35. This is 38.79% of the entire county electorate. According to the 2020 U. S census. The median age of Travis county is 35.5. It goes without saying that our city has a very young population . Yet when we look at the allocation of polling locations within Travis county, there is a disparity in equity among how we allocate polling locations among the concentrations of youth, just a couple of other numbers take into consideration with the college campuses that are located within Travis county. 4600 students are within the vicinity of St Edwards university, which is also a hispanic serving institution. 1045 students are located at Houston till it's a university with significant portion of the population living on campus. 51,991 students are located at

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the university of Texas and a grand total of 60,100 students are located all across the Austin community

college campuses. Statistically speaking, we should have anywhere from 5 to 7 polling locations within the university of Texas alone, and when we account for Saint Edwards they should have at least one polling location and should have a point location within walking distance of all esala campuses. However you T only had two polling locations for the 2022 midterm election. St Edwards university was not allocated a polling location until election day, which disenfranchised multiple students. Houston Hilton university did not receive a polling location until election day, and the Austin community college campuses only had one polling location within walking distance. When we account with the populations of U T and a C C. These populations as a whole are comparable to the city of Kyle in Hays county, as well as New Braunfels. It seems almost ridiculous to only allocate polling locations about the minimum of one or two for populations that could be considered six or seven. And if

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you think about it, would it make any sense to only offer to polling locations within the city of Kyle? Where disenfranchising our populations by not allocating these locations? Furthermore considering that the university of St Edwards had a lonely location on early vote, there's no reason why we should not be able to allocate a polling location at St Edwards university. For early votes, and something has already been cleared with 80 accessibility in the past, so I'm here to testify on the agenda item number two in hopes that we can offer the statistics and encourage more equity and parity as we look at polling locations across campus, and I'm here to answer any questions you may have. Thank you, Miss. Mr. Rose. Is there any way to use the prior certification? First St Edwards for their early vote location, confirmation for the ADA accessibility. I am not familiar with those processes. This is something that Travis county coordinates directly with all entities. It is up to each entity on whether they will

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agree or disagree to participate. I did receive an email with regard to St Ed's, and they spoke. They coordinated with Liz Johnson. And they agreed that it was just simply too late. For an early site for the upcoming runoff, and they offered the election day site on December 13th, but they agreed St Ed's agreed that it's pointless since all students will be gone. But again, these are court. These are all coordinated through Travis county and each it is up to each entity to agree or disagree to utilize their facilities with regard to the city of Austin. We do have more say if they if it is a city facility, and so that there is where I can work with the city manager to make sure ensure that these you know locations are accessible and available for use. Would it be possible for you to speak with Ms Ramos to

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just get a little bit more background on the prior certification as a D? A. That you can perhaps, speak with the clerk to see if that would be possible so that we could have the early location sure will put her in touch down that you do not control either, saying Edwards is availability or the and the decision is up to the county clerk, but I, but you are in touch with them, and you might be able to facilitate that conversation to make sure that we've we've uncovered every stone that we can to make sure that these students can vote. And it's my understanding that we can ratify this that our November if we if something does change, we can add an exhibit. If we're able to do it, it is worth a try, understand? It

may not may not be possible candelabra. Fuentes. Did you want to speak? Thank you and in college. I just want to highlight that. St Edwards university was willing to host an early vote and voting day location. But it seems that conversations took place between St Edwards university and Travis county. And and for whatever

[9:50:08 am]

reason, the location is not moving forward. And so I just want to understand what can we do? A and as the council when there is a voting location that is proposed that there's hosting location willing to do it, yet Travis county decides not to do it. What is the process then? I can't respond for Travis county. I would I don't know the exact process. I just know bits and pieces, and I know that they need to there is an extensive list, that they need to go through so that, they adhere to all the doj requirements and so I know that that's time consuming and so particularly specific to the runoff. It was there's just not enough time. But moving forward. I'm sure they they're open. I mean, the more locations we have, the better. Thank you. Yes and along I mean, I just want to express my sentiments and I know that there will be a new Travis

[9:51:09 am]

county elections clerk who will take office in January and to the extent that we can provide direction on this item, you know , miss Ramos brings up an excellent point that we should be having multiple voting locations. At all of our universities across the city. So for our next election, I would hope that when we are approving the voting locations that we see equitable access throughout our city for our students, thank you. Council member vela and I appreciate all the comments and I also would urge that we particularly when we have concentrations of folks, I don't know exactly enrollment for St Ed's, but I think it's about 3000 or so students and it's in district three, so they have to elections to vote on the mayoral election and the city council election in particularly I think in those patients, honestly, we should do it just as a as an across the board, no matter but particularly when their city council race is going on. That

[9:52:11 am]

specifically applies their area . I really think we have to make the effort to, to get those early voting and election day sites at those locations, so I just reiterate what mayor pro tem and council member Fuentes said. Well, I also agree that it would be wonderful if we could have those sites there. That's a decision that Travis county clerk must make. I do hope that the students will find the other early voting locations. There are additional early voting locations in each of the districts that have council run offs. So hopefully there are many of the students are living near those locations and can take advantage of the ones that are off campus that are near where they're living as opposed to where they're going to school. There's a mix of folks who are living on and off campus, so hopefully they will still be able to participate. Thank you, Mr Ramos. For being here we have a motion and a second. Mayor pro tem? Yes I'm sorry. Thank you, councilor. Thank you miss my hand. Thank you. I agree with my colleagues

[9:53:12 am]

and this this is an issue that's come up from time to time and we have been able to affect some change during some elections. And so I really support the direct and believe but it's absolutely critical to make sure that students have access and invited places, including on on their student campuses, and I'd like to suggest that in in the future, so engaged with our college student commission, which has representatives from utf saint S Houston till it's and, plus have that conversation with our county with our new county clerk as well. I think that could be a very good mechanism. Because their liaisons between kind of the city process and therefore campuses and that might be a way to really make sure that there's some vigilance around. Around getting out getting out there and being proactive about this in the future, so thank you to our city clerk for the explanation. Thank you, Mr Ramos for being here to advocate of the students, and I hope I hope their college student commission and our new Kenny Clarke can help help make sure that this

[9:54:13 am]

isn't a recurring conversation that we're having every election cycle. Any further comments. Okay we'll take a vote all those in favor. Unanimous council member harper-madison. Okay, I can see you sort of so that's unanimous on the diets, with council members, Renteria, mayor Adler. And Ellis off the dais. Thank you. Thank you all for joining us. You are welcome to stay for our audit and finance committee. If you'd like, I will now adjourn the special called meeting of the Austin city council at 9 54.