



Connect with your Neighbors.....Change the World

Prepared by: Jennifer Devor

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Committee Name: Votes4Philly

Campaign Address: P.O. Box 58895 Philadelphia, PA 19102

### CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: **Jen Devor**

Office Sought: **City Commissioner**

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Please complete, sign and return this form via email in Word format to: [info@phillynn.org](mailto:info@phillynn.org) and mail a copy with the signature page to

**Gloria Gilman**  
**121 South Broad Street Suite 1720**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19107**  
**215-568-4990**

### BACKGROUND

- 1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?** Democratic Committeeperson, 36 Ward, 37 Division since 2014.
- 2. If you are an incumbent in an office for which you are seeking re-election, or if you have previously held this office, what do you consider your three greatest achievements while serving in this position?**
- 3. If you are a challenger, what about your background qualifies you to hold this office?** I believe all people should have an equal opportunity to access a positive and empowering voting experience. As a community leader, election poll worker, committeeperson, block captain, and marketing professional, I recognize the direct correlation between election education and voter turnout in my neighborhood and across the city. I'm running for City Commissioner because I want to empower Philadelphians to register, vote, and ensure their voice is heard and protected.

**4. Both incumbents and challengers: What three things would you most want to accomplish if elected?**

- Ensure Election Day is running smoothly, so every Philadelphian is confident their vote is counted and their voice is heard.
- Protect voter rights, so every Philadelphian who is eligible to votes knows their rights and feels welcome at their local polling place.
- Increase voter turnout, so every eligible Philadelphian is empowered to cast a vote.

**ISSUES**

Although many of the questions below call for a simple yes or no answer, please feel free to provide an explanation for any of your choices. If you have not yet come to a final decision, please state which way you are leaning and what additional information you would need before deciding, if any.

**I. Public Education**

Describe what would you do to:

1. **Educate the public about voting issues:** My vision for this office is to transform it into a public information agency by building coalitions and distributing tools and resources from the office to better equip existing voter registration and engagement efforts. I will work with organizations and community leaders to talk with Philadelphians about their right to vote and the role they can play as citizen's year-round, not just a few weeks before Election Day.
2. **Educate those under 18 about voting issues:** I will be working with teachers and education professionals across all grades to create open-source civics lesson plans (projects, assignments, etc.) which will be available on the City Commissioners website for teachers to download to incorporate into their classroom for free. Through this initiative, civics can be incorporated into any subject, whether it be math, science, english, art, etc.
3. **Increase voter registration, particularly among high school and college students, and other traditionally under-registered groups?** Yes. There needs to be more clarification on voter eligibility - whether it's pre-registering almost-18 year olds, reaching out to those with criminal convictions, explaining residency requirements to college students, or mobilizing those affected by homelessness. By serving as a public information agency and building coalitions, the Commissioners can provide every entity that serves constituents with information about registration, voting rights and engagement opportunities. This includes committeepeople, block captains, social workers, re-entry programs, student leaders, city-employed translators, etc.
4. **Increase voter turnout, particularly among high school and college students and other traditionally low-voting groups?** Yes. Studies have shown that when people feel more connected to the issues and understand what they are actually voting for and how it affects their daily life, they are more likely to vote. This office should be providing easy-to-understand, non-partisan resources to the many different services and organizations that work throughout the city to make sure voting is always part of the conversation, year-round. This includes committeepeople, teachers, social workers, re-entry programs, block captains, nonprofit organizations and anyone else working with the diverse communities that make up the city. People deserve to know the responsibilities of the offices they're being asked to vote for, to understand the charter questions, to know their voter eligibility status, and they should be engaged with voting year-round, not just right before Election Day.
5. **Increase the number of people willing to serve as election staff (e.g., judge of elections) on Election Day?** Yes. According to recent data from the City Commissioners website, only about 51 percent of elected seats are filled. In fact, 28 percent of polling places don't even have a Judge of Elections. We need consistent

and fully staffed election boards, better trainings for those staffers, and we must incorporate more customer service best practices. I would also work to change the format of how we staff our polls, by allowing two shifts and removing the barrier of the position being elected. I believe if we advertise the opportunities across the city and make it easier and more realistic for people to participate we can fill all open positions and create a pipeline to fill those soon-to-be-open due to retirement. College students, high school students who are 18+, and anyone who wants to be civically engaged in their community should be targeted with branded, coordinated outreach campaigns (both on- and off-line, partnered with many different organizations) promoting the opportunity to work the polls on election day.

6. **Assure that election staff are well educated for carrying out their duties on election day? What, if any, changes would you make to the current training program?** Yes. Having worked as a Machine Inspector for several elections and going to the trainings each time, I would advocate for a more hands-on experience, rather than observational. Staff should practice checking-in voters through role-play, have hands on training with the machines (or scanners), and fully understand the ADA-compliant accessories. There should also be a Frequently Asked Questions component of the training and customer service best practices, with a printed guide included in the training manual for reference. At the end of the training, participants should receive a quiz to review what was learned. The quiz results would self-graded, and simply used as a mechanism to confirm that the training information was absorbed.
7. **Familiarize the public with the process for running for office?** Yes. I do not believe this is a priority of the office, but certainly falls under the Commissioners wheelhouse and could be an additional service. Similar to the Board of Ethics, the Commissioners should have useful resources and in-person workshops on how to run for office. Filing, petitions, campaign finance and the ward system are all topics that could use clarification to encourage people to run. My campaign is already doing this work through our Facebook Live Better Elections Q&A series, which consist of short videos explaining complex issues around voting and running for office. You can see an example at [www.facebook.com/jendevor](http://www.facebook.com/jendevor) under videos.

## II. Public Communication

1. **Do you think there should be a regularly maintained published schedule of meetings among the commissioners open to the public?** Yes. The City Commissioners Office currently has very little visibility. Many Philadelphians don't know it exists, let alone understand the importance of its mission. As a result, there is little accountability for its actions and little public input for the incredibly important decisions the Commissioners make. The recent decision to purchase a new voting system is a strong example of this. I also believe the Office should be sharing the work it is doing year-round to advocate for state election code reform. Commissioners should interact with other areas of government, regularly participate in the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, as well as hold regularly schedule meetings inclusive of all constituents, particularly low income communities and communities of color.

Every public meeting will be live streamed, and reports will be sent to anyone who subscribes to a listserv. Transcripts will be made available in the office (printed on-demand to avoid paper waste) and digitally through the website and social media.

2. **Do you think the pros and cons of advocating for the purchase of new voting machines has been discussed and debated adequately with the public? If not, what more do you believe should have been done?** No. I do not believe that the public had adequate opportunity to weigh in. Furthermore, it seemed that the RFP was tailored to fit the product offered by ExpressVote XL voting system by Election Systems & Software, LLC.

Under my leadership, Philadelphia would have held multiple public forum sessions with ample notification, starting as early as December 2016 (well before the state mandate) when it became clear that Philadelphia machines could not produce a proper recount. My team and I would have spent time both visiting communities and promoting online surveys requesting feedback from voters and Election Board members on their needs and requests for new system features. There would have also been an expo in Philadelphia County where the public could demo the different types of systems (the closest demo was an hour away and not promoted by the

Commissioners through sufficient channels). City Council members would also be asked to be part of the process, as they will ultimately approve the budget to purchase the recommended system and therefore should be equally well versed in the subject matter.

3. **Would you advocate publishing the names and contact information for all committee persons online?** Yes, and I would do the same for Block Captains, too. These are elected positions (Block Captains need 75% of their block to sign their approval) and are meant to serve their neighbors, and therefore must be accessible.
4. **Do you think that the public should be entitled to obtain free copies of voter registration lists?** Yes. Voter rolls are necessary tools to conduct advocacy and candidate campaigns. To limit the availability of these lists is to impede on a citizens ability to advocate for change in their community. I do believe we need some sort of record of who checks out information so that if information were misused by an individual or entity (sales, harassment, etc.) there would be accountability.

### III. Voting Policies

Would you:

1. **Support early voting? If so, what would you do to get this policy implemented? If not, why not?** Yes, I would support early voting. I believe the Commissioners should operate in part as an advocacy agent, to promote research, data and testimony to push for state election code reform. By acting as an expert and providing evidence to make a strong case for new initiatives, such as Early Voting, Philadelphia will set the state-wide (and perhaps) national model for voting reform, with the belief that modernizing voting and eliminating barriers will increase voter turnout.
2. **Support voting by home computer? If so, what would you do to get this policy implemented? If not, why not?** Absolutely not. Election integrity experts around the world agree that hand-marked paper ballots are the most secure way to vote. Any voting system that is hooked up to a modem/internet is at risk of being compromised.
3. **As you are no doubt aware, the City of Philadelphia is under a mandate to purchase and implement a voter-verifiable paper record voting system no later than December 31, 2019. What type of voting machine system do you support for the City to purchase? Please be specific and give reasons why you support this system over the other ones that are available.** On February 21, the Commissioners confirmed that they would be purchasing the ExpressVote XL voting system by Election Systems & Software, LLC. I firmly agree that hand-marked paper ballots with optical scanners and limited Ballot Marking Devices (BDMs) is the most secure, efficient and cost-effective way to vote. In addition to being secure, paper ballot systems provide more opportunities to offer better translated materials (in more languages), are "voter verified" so that the public has trust that their vote was counted, and I believe it to cost less money over time with storage, staff and maintenance expenses.
4. **Support voting over the course of several days? If so, what would you do to implement this policy? If not, why not?** Yes, for the same reasons I support Early Voting - if we can make the electoral process more convenient and accommodating to citizens, we will see an increase in participation. This is another advocacy effort I believe the Commissioners Office should be taking to the state.
5. **Do you think the office of City Commissioner should continue to be an elected one? If so, why? If not, would you have City Commissioners appointed, and by whom?** No. Overseeing elections requires a specific, hard skill set, and therefore should be an appointed position based on experience and credibility in business administration, civic engagement and community organizing - similar to what the Committee of 70-led Better Philadelphia Elections Coalition called for in their 2017 lawsuit. As quoted in a May 2016 press release: "the Coalition called on City Council to create a new Department of Elections administered by a professionally-accredited Election Director appointed by the Mayor, with oversight provided by an appointed, non-salaried, and bipartisan Philadelphia Board of Elections."

By reformatting the office, I believe this work would become a non-partisan effort (because everyone should have equal access to fair elections), have the ability to operate leaner (through combining resources that currently sit with three siloed offices), and would be modernized and professionalized (with less patronage and more

skill-based hires).

**6. What system do you think should be implemented to improve the registered voter check-in system on election day? What would your plan be to implement this and when? If your plan involves the purchase of an electronic system, how do you believe that the security of the voter registration list can be maintained?**

Poorly run voter check-ins contribute to long lines at the polls and missed opportunities to capture votes so it is important that we consider ways to make the process smoother. I believe it makes sense to go to an electronic system, or an E-poll Book, especially in such a large jurisdiction as Philadelphia. The decision to purchase E-poll Books was made on February 21, and the selected vendor is Knowink LLC. One advantage includes the ability to hold the entire voter registration list, so if a voter's name is not at a specific division, they can easily be informed of where they should actually be voting. E-poll Books can update voter data in a more timely fashion as opposed to the paper option needing to be printed weeks prior the election, and most importantly it will reduce voter verification from minutes to seconds, since no one has to physically thumb through paper cards. My plan for implementation would start with city-wide demos open to the public. This will not only get existing Election Board workers in front of the E-poll Books, but can be used as a recruiting tactic for more Election Board members. Then the Commissioners Office will work with the vendor to create a written training resource available in print and online. The creation of this resource would be part of the final negotiated deal with the vendor so the city's resources aren't stretched too thin. Finally, as we get closer the first election that these would be used, there would be more detailed, hands-on trainings followed by a self-graded quiz and reference sheet for all Election Board members and committeepeople. On Election Day, there would be a small volunteer task-force hotline and in-person service (perhaps working with the Committee of 70, college political clubs and/or the Bar Association, etc.), solely dedicated E-poll Book troubleshooting.

There are of course issues with E-poll Books, which obviously start with network security and the decision to purchase any one brand should include a consultation with an independent cyber-security expert. These devices are not related to the actual voting systems in any way, but there is risk of data breach. E-poll Books absolutely should never be connected to the Internet. It's important that the systems are secure and that the people using them are well trained. At least 27 states have selected the E-poll Book option, with mostly positive experiences and results.

*Jen Devor, City Commissioner Candidate, additional materials*

**Here are two pieces of published work that shows examples of my platform:**

**1. Philly needs new voting machines. Here's why the buying process must be kept transparent**

Written by Jen Devor, Generocity.com January 9, 2019

Full article: <https://generocity.org/philly/2019/01/09/philly-is-buying-new-voting-machines-heres-why-the-process-must-be-kept-transparent-jennifer-devor/>

Philadelphia is poised to make a major, multimillion dollar decision that will impact each and every Philadelphian for years to come: Those giant, push-button electronic voting machines that we've used for decades are headed for the voting machine graveyard.

But what will replace them?

Because voting systems with a paper ballot are more reliable, eliminate the threat of cyber attacks and ensure meaningful post-election audits, the Pennsylvania Department of State informed counties in April of 2018 that they must replace their paperless electronic voting machines with new systems that are certified by both the federal and state governments.

These new voting systems are to be purchased by the close of 2019. Philadelphia has earmarked about \$22 million toward the purchase of new voting machines, and the state is offering additional funding.

According to leading national experts, the most secure and reliable way to record votes is to let voters mark a paper ballot by hand, with a pen, so there's no technology between the voter and the ballot, and then put it in a ballot box that includes a scanner. For voters who have difficulty hand marking a ballot, there must be one ballot-marking device in each polling place. That's typically a touchscreen computer with assistive input devices, plus a printer. Several of the available systems have these qualifying features and more are being certified.

But other systems are being certified, too. Some require all voters to use touchscreen ballot-marking devices instead of a pen — these systems put more technology between the voter and their vote and are more vulnerable to power outages and technical problems. They also lead to longer lines and costs significantly more both in initial purchase and in maintenance, storage and moving expense.

There are signs that the selection process won't be as public and transparent as it should be. While it is up to City Council to approve the purchasing decision, it will likely listen to the recommendations of the City Commissioners. With barely three days notice, the city commissioners announced two public comment sessions: one on Thursday, Jan. 10, at 6 p.m. and the other on Saturday, Jan. 12, at 9:30 a.m., both at 520 N. Columbus Blvd., 6th floor.

The commissioners certainly have years of expertise in running elections in Philadelphia, but the voters of Philadelphia have years of experience in participating in them. It should not be just the commissioners and the city's Office of Innovation & Technology determining which voting system the city should purchase. As a city that celebrates its diversity and inclusiveness, Philadelphia should be a leader in inclusiveness and accessibility with voting, empowering informed voters to participate effectively in our democracy.

The city commissioners, committee people and concerned citizens alike should work together to develop an educated decision process that includes public hearings with sufficient advance notice and off-line promotion, public demonstrations of the various systems, and feedback from the voters who will soon be using them.

The city commissioners and Philadelphia City Council must prioritize the public interest to protect citizens' trust in the election process. As citizens, we have a role to play not only on Election Day but in calling on our elected officials today — both in the city commissioners office and in City Council — and asking them to be transparent about this critically important decision.

Voting issues in our city have national implications when it comes to Pennsylvania's representation in the U.S. House and Senate. As a city, we must prioritize public input. It's time for better elections in Philadelphia, starting with better machines.

## **2. Philadelphia needs Election Day Workers**

Written by Jen Devor & Anton Moore, Philadelphia Inquirer, August 20, 2018

Full article: <https://www.philly.com/philly/opinion/philadelphia-election-day-workers-vacancy-vote-polls-20180820.html>

Marching. Voter Registration. Running for Committeeperson. These are just some of the ways people have shown their interest in local politics. However, there has been one form of engagement that seems to be overlooked: working the polls on Election Day.

There are a minimum of 5,058 people needed to fully staff the 1,686 polling places in Philadelphia. According to recent data from the City Commissioner's website, only about 51 percent of elected seats are filled. In fact, 28 percent of polling places don't even have a Judge of Elections, the lead position on the Election Board.

This presents an opportunity for a few thousand Philadelphians to participate in democracy, fulfill a civic duty and quite frankly, make a little extra cash.

Each member of the Election Boards make \$95 to \$100 a day, plus \$30 if you attend a one-hour training. Staffers are either signing people in, resetting the machines and troubleshooting questions. You are also responsible for a fair and honest election, and protecting voters rights. There may be an occasional hiccup, a machine breaking down, someone needing translation services that aren't easily accessible (and if you can serve as an Election Day translator, that pays \$75 for the day). Though it's a long day, most jobs can be done sitting down. With voter turnout in the city an unfortunate 17 percent last May, it can be a slow day.

But ask any of the hard working people who currently serve on Election Day, the authors of this op-ed included, and you'll hear how much we love it. We love seeing our neighbors, hearing local news from the block, and, depending on who your Ward Leader is, you may even get a free hoagie for lunch.

Speaking of Ward Leaders, this is traditionally how seats are filled: by Ward Leaders encouraging constituents to run for these positions. With several new Ward Leaders throughout the city, and many newly politically engaged residents, there is a real opportunity to fill these seats. And it's not just people already involved in local politics that are eligible — any registered voter 18 or older can participate. That means high school students should also be encouraged. All Philly public schools are already closed that day, and many require or encourage students to complete community service. It's a natural way to connect students to civic engagement. It also looks great on college applications and to add to a young person's resume.

Positions won't be up for re-election until 2022 but there are still ways to join thousands of others as poll workers this November. Seek out your Ward Leader and ask them to help you get an appointment from the Court of Common Pleas: Trial Division. You may also be elected the morning of Election Day through what is known as a curbside election — a very Philly-sounding term where there is a vote by other Election Board members.

Ask yourself; do you have the privilege of taking Paid Time Off from work? Are you under-employed and can use some extra cash? Are you a guardian, parent or yourself a high school students who is 18 or older? If the answer is yes to any of these, then the City of Philadelphia needs your help. We must build a consistent pipeline of poll workers, especially with new machines on the horizon. With all of the political energy across the city, collectively we should be able to fill the 49 percent of open seats on our local Election Boards.

***More articles and press can be found at [www.jendevor.com/press](http://www.jendevor.com/press)***