

BEFORE THE DULY CONSTITUTED  
DU PAGE COUNTY OFFICERS' ELECTORAL BOARD  
FOR THE HEARING AND PASSING UPON OBJECTIONS TO THE NOMINATION  
PAPERS FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY  
BOARD OF DU PAGE COUNTY, STATE OF ILLINOIS

MICHAEL LEDONNE and	)	
SANDRA BALDWIN,	)	
	)	
Petitioners-Objectors,	)	Docket No. 2014 G-03
	)	
vs.	)	
	)	
ROBERT PEICKERT,	)	
	)	
Respondent-Candidate.	)	

**DU PAGE COUNTY OFFICERS' ELECTORAL BOARD DECISION**

NOW COMES the DuPage County Officers' Electoral Board, consisting of Cathy Terrill, Chairperson, and Christopher Hage and Art Ludwig, Members; organized and existing pursuant to law, and states as follows:

**PREFATORY REMARKS**

Pursuant to the Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/1-1 *et seq.* and in accordance with the County Officers' Electoral Board Rules of Procedure duly promulgated, approved, implemented and adopted on June 27, 2014, as required by the DuPage County Election Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "COMMISSION"), the COMMISSION was duly constituted, convened and sitting in its capacity as the DuPage County Officers' Electoral Board (hereinafter referred to as the "ELECTORAL BOARD") for the hearing and passing upon Objections to Nominating Papers.

On June 27, 2014, the ELECTORAL BOARD conducted the hearing upon the Verified Objectors' Petition (hereinafter referred to as the "PETITION") filed by Michael Ledonne and Sandra Baldwin (hereinafter referred to as "OBJECTORS"), to the Nominating Papers of Robert

Peickert (hereinafter referred to as the “CANDIDATE”), Candidate for the Office of Chairman of the County Board of DuPage County, Illinois (hereinafter referred to as the "OFFICE"), to be voted upon at the General Election to be held November 4, 2014 (hereinafter referred to as the “ELECTION”).

Within the time frame set forth by statute, the CANDIDATE filed with the COMMISSION, Nominating Papers for the OFFICE to be voted on at the ELECTION. *See* Exhibit "A," attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The PETITION was timely filed with the COMMISSION on June 9, 2014. *See* Exhibit “B,” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

A Call Notice for Hearing was issued on June 11, 2014, by Cathy Terrill, Chairperson of the ELECTORAL BOARD. *See* Exhibit "C," attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The Call Notice was issued and served upon the OBJECTORS and the CANDIDATE, by certified mail, in accordance with the Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/10-10, as evidenced by a return receipt as required. *See* Exhibit “D,” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The CANDIDATE and the OBJECTORS were also served by the DuPage County Sheriff’s Office, in accordance with the Election Code. *See* Exhibit “E,” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. An Appearance was filed by counsel for the OBJECTORS. *See* Exhibit “F,” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. An Appearance was filed by counsel for the CANDIDATE. *See* Exhibit “G,” attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

### **PROCEEDINGS**

The OBJECTORS challenge the CANDIDATE’S Nominating Papers on the grounds that (1) the CANDIDATE was not designated by the appropriate committee under the Election Code

(2) notice of the meeting to designate the CANDIDATE to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE was defective and (3) the CANDIDATE’S circulator’s affidavits are fatally flawed.

**LEGAL ANALYSIS OF ISSUES PRESENTED**

**I. WHETHER THE CANDIDATE WAS DESIGNATED BY THE “APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE” UNDER SECTION 7-61 OF THE ELECTION CODE.**

In this matter, it is uncontested that the CANDIDATE was designated by a subcommittee of the Democrat Central Committee. Section 7-61 of the Election Code states in pertinent part that “a vacancy in nomination shall be filled only by a person designated by the appropriate committee of the political party...”. 10 ILCS 5/7-61. Section 7-61 does not further define what constitutes an “appropriate” committee of a political party. Courts have previously determined that properly constituted subcommittees of a committee of a political party are “appropriate” committees to designate candidates to fill a vacancy in nomination. *Allen v. Electoral Bd. of St. Clair County*, 147 Ill.App.3d 782, 498 N.E.2d 878 (5th Dist. 1986); *Carlasare v. Will County Officers Electoral Bd.*, 2012 IL App (3d) 120699.

The OBJECTORS argue that the Election Code does not authorize the designation of candidates to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE by a political party subcommittee. The OBJECTORS argue that only the political party central committee is authorized to make such designation.

The OBJECTORS’ position is contradicted by the court’s decision in *Allen*, 147 Ill.App.3d 782, 498 N.E.2d 878. The court in *Allen* recognized the authority of a county central committee to establish a subcommittee of its own members to designate a candidate to fill a vacancy in nomination. *Id.* Specifically, the court in *Allen* stated:

Pursuant to section 7–8(i) the Central Committee may exercise all usual powers not expressly prohibited by Article 7, and may delegate its authority to

subcommittees of its own members. This necessarily implies the Central Committee may in a proper case remove voting authority from its own membership as a whole and place that authority in a smaller group. Article 7 does not specifically prohibit doing so in the situation of filling a vacancy in nomination.

We see nothing in the 2009 amendment to Section 7-61 that alters the reasoning of the court in *Allen*. 10 ILCS 7-61. In 2012, the court in *Carlasare* relied upon the court’s decision in *Allen*. *Carlasare*, 2012 IL App (3d) 120699. The court in *Carlasare* addresses a challenge to a political party subcommittee designation of a candidate for a county board district office to fill a vacancy in nomination. *Id.* In doing so the court explained that:

There is no dispute that the “appropriate committee” to make the designation in this case, as referenced in section 7–61, was a district committee comprised of precinct committeemen only from that particular district, and *that each district committee could properly delegate the task of designation to a district subcommittee.*

*Id.* at ¶ 20 (emphasis added) *citing* 10 ILCS 5/7–8(i) and *Allen v. Electoral Board*, 147 Ill. App. 3d 782, 785 (5th Dist. 1986). The ELECTORAL BOARD is bound by the decisions in *Allen* and *Carlasare* and therefore, cannot accept the OBJECTORS’ argument, as a matter of law. The OBJECTORS’ objection concerning improper designation of the CANDIDATE to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE is OVERRULED.

**II. WHETHER A FAILURE TO NOTIFY ALL CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMMITTEEMEN OF THE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE TO DESIGNATE THE CANDIDATE TO FILL THE VACANCY IN NOMINATION FOR OFFICE INVALIDATES THE CANDIDATE’S NOMINATION PETITION.**

While there is no provision in the Election Code mandating notice of a committee meeting to fill a vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE, Illinois Courts have established a “precedential” requirement that such notice be given. *Sutton v. Cook County Officers Electoral Bd.*, 2012 IL App (1st) 122528, 979 N.E.2d 515; *Carlasare v. Will County Officers Electoral*

*Bd.*, 2012 IL App (3d) 120699, 977 N.E.2d 298; *Graham v. State Officers Electoral Bd.*, 269 Ill. App.3d 609, 646 N.E.2d 1357 (4th Dist. 1995). Whether notice was actually received is not an aspect of the precedential notice requirement. *Carlasare*, 2012 IL App (3d) 120699 at ¶ 24.

The OBJECTORS argue that notice of the Central Committee subcommittee meeting, to *all* Democrat Central Committee committeemen, was mandatory under the precedential notice requirement. The CANDIDATE argues that such notice is not required where notice was provided to all Democrat Central Committee committeemen of the Central Committee Convention where the subcommittees to fill vacancies in nomination would be determined. We agree with the position of the CANDIDATE based on the reasoning set forth in the *Carlasare* and *Graham* decisions. 2012 IL App (3d) 120699; 269 Ill. App.3d 609, 646 N.E.2d 1357.

The circumstances in *Carlasare* are similar to the circumstances of this matter. In *Carlasare*, the court determined that the written notice of the central committee convention was provided to all committeemen and that because the “meeting was a central committee convention at which the party had the power to select a committee to designate candidates, *a separate notice indicating that designations would be made was not required.*” 2012 IL App (3d) 120699 at ¶ 24 (emphasis added). In this case, there is no dispute that all Democrat Central Committee committeemen were provided notice of the County Central Committee Convention and that subcommittees would be designated to fill vacancies in nomination at that time. Therefore, OBJECTORS’ position that a separate notice, to all Democrat Central Committee committeemen, of the subcommittee meeting to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE, is not persuasive.

In addition, the underlying basis for the presidential notice requirement, as established in *Graham*, does not have the same applicability where a subcommittee has been properly

designated by the committee. 269 Ill. App. 3d 609, 646 N.E.2d 1357. In establishing the precedential notice requirement the court in *Graham* stated that:

Since some form of notice is indispensable, it is immaterial the Code does not expressly provide a sanction for noncompliance. Notice is the most basic prerequisite ***to ensure the right to vote***. Failure to provide it vitiates the integrity of the democratic process.

*Id.* at 612, 1360 (emphasis added). Therefore, the court in *Graham* was concerned with the failure to provide notice to those committeemen of a meeting at which they have a right to vote.

*Id.* In this matter, once the Democrat Central Committee subcommittee was designated to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE, only those subcommittee members had the right to vote to fill the vacancy in nomination for the OFFICE. The OBJECTORS' position that all Democrat committeemen for the Central Committee were required to be notified of the Central Committee subcommittee meeting is incompatible with the reasoning of *Graham*. *Id.* Therefore, OBJECTORS' objection concerning improper notice is OVERRULED.

### **III. WHETHER THE CANDIDATE'S CIRCULATOR'S AFFIDAVITS ARE FATALLY FLAWED.**

The OBJECTORS raised a number of challenges to the CANDIDATE'S circulator's affidavits in the PETITION none of which were supported by evidence at the hearing. The OBJECTORS do not address any of these challenges in their Supplemental Memorandum in Support of Objection. Therefore, OBJECTORS' objections concerning the CANDIDATE'S circulator's affidavits are OVERRULED.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based upon the rulings made herein, it is the decision of the ELECTORAL BOARD, in regard to the PETITION filed against the Candidacy of Robert Peickert for the Office of Chairman of the County Board of DuPage County, Illinois, that the PETITION is hereby denied,

in its entirety.

Accordingly, the name of Robert Peickert shall be printed on the Official Ballot as a Candidate for the Office of Chairman of the County Board of DuPage County, Illinois, for the General Election to be held on November 4, 2014.

**REVIEW OF ELECTORAL BOARD DECISION**

Any Party seeking to review the decision and determination of the ELECTORAL BOARD shall do so in accordance with the provisions and time frame set forth in Section 10-10.1 of Illinois the Election Code. 10 ILCS 5/10-10.1

DU PAGE COUNTY OFFICERS' ELECTORAL  
BOARD

/s/ Cathy Terrill  
CATHY TERRILL, CHAIRPERSON

/s/ Christopher Hage  
CHRISTOPHER HAGE, MEMBER

/s/ Art Ludwig  
ART LUDWIG, MEMBER

Dated: July 10, 2014  
Prepared by:  
Burton S. Odelson  
Counsel for County Officers' Electoral Board  
Odelson & Sterk  
3318 W. 95th Street  
Evergreen Park, IL 60805  
(708) 424-5678