

Clark County Election Board

Meeting Minutes

Thursday August 27, 2026 - 4:50 PM

Clark County Judicial Center Board

Board Members Present

- Andrew Steele, Chairman
- Tony Singleton, Member
- Ryan Lynch, Clark County Clerk, Secretary of the Board

Also Present:

- Election Board Staff
- Sarah Stivers, Challenger
- Mickey Weber, Counsel for the Challenger
- John Benningfield, Candidate
- Jeremy Snelling, Republican Party representative and witness
- Members of the public

1. Call to Order

The hearing was called to order at approximately 4:50 PM by Chairman Andrew Steele. The sole matter before the Board was the verified challenge filed by Sarah Stivers regarding John Benningfield's candidacy for Clark County Council District One.

2. Candidate Challenge Hearing

A. Appearances and Oath

Chairman Steele identified the parties and explained the order of the hearing. Sarah Stivers, John Benningfield, and Jeremy Snelling were placed under oath. Stivers confirmed her name, address, Indiana voter registration, and residence and voter status in Clark County Council District One.

B. Challenger's Presentation

Stivers stated that the challenge concerned respect for Clark County voters, election integrity, and compliance with the law. Her counsel, Mickey Weber, argued that Benningfield was disqualified when he was nominated and placed on the ballot because felony convictions remained in effect at that time.

Weber submitted certified records concerning the convictions, which Chairman Steele marked collectively as Petitioner's Exhibit 1. Weber advised that two expungement petitions had been filed that day and argued that no qualifying expungement order had been entered before Benningfield's nomination. A copy of the petition filed in Clark Circuit Court Four concerning the felony convictions was identified as Petitioner's Exhibit 2. Weber asked the Board to grant the challenge and remove Benningfield from the ballot.

C. Candidate's Response

Benningfield stated that he had no formal written answer to the challenge. Documents concerning the expungement process, including correspondence reflecting prosecutorial approval, were tendered for the Board's consideration. Benningfield explained that he believed his attorney had completed the expungement and that he learned only recently that additional action was required.

Benningfield described his recovery from addiction and his community work. He stated that he intended to follow the law and would respect the Board's decision.

D. Testimony of Jeremy Snelling

Jeremy Snelling testified as a Clark County Council District One resident, a representative of the Republican Party, and on behalf of Benningfield. Snelling stated that the party believed the expungement had been completed when Benningfield was nominated and that Benningfield had relied on counsel to handle the matter. He asked the Board to consider Benningfield's reliance on that advice, his community service, and the documents submitted at the hearing.

During questioning, Snelling acknowledged that he had not personally reviewed an expungement petition or order before the nomination and had relied on information he received concerning counsel's work. He also described the party's recruitment of Benningfield and its review of his residency and party eligibility.

E. Additional Statements and Board Discussion

Weber questioned Snelling and responded to comments concerning his prior representation of Benningfield. Weber stated that he respected Benningfield and his accomplishments but maintained that the timing and legal effect of the expungement controlled the challenge. He also stated that Stivers filed the challenge within the applicable filing period.

The Board discussed the newly filed expungement documents, the absence of directly controlling case law identified at the hearing, and the need for additional legal research and guidance before ruling. Chairman Steele stated that the Board would not deliberate outside a public meeting. Clerk Lynch emphasized that the matter concerned application of the law and the relevant dates, not Benningfield's character or recovery.

Chairman Steele left the record open through the reconvened hearing so that either side could submit additional written materials. Submissions were to be provided through the Voter Registration Office for distribution to the Board and the opposing side.

3. Public Comment

Chairman Steele invited written comments for the Board's consideration and asked whether anyone present had further comments or questions. No additional comments were offered.

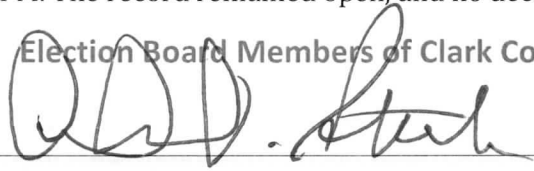
4. Recess

Motion by Singleton to recess the hearing until Monday August 31, 2026 at 4:45 PM.

Second by Steele

The hearing was recessed until Monday August 31, 2026 at 4:45 PM. The record remained open, and no decision on the candidate challenge was made at this hearing.

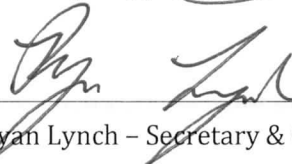
Election Board Members of Clark County:



Andrew Steele – Chairman, Democrat Appointee



Charles (Tony) Singleton – Member, Republican Appointee



Ryan Lynch – Secretary & Clark County Circuit Court Clerk