

THE STATE OF ARIZONA
CITIZENS CLEAN ELECTIONS COMMISSION

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

Phoenix, Arizona

September 8, 2022

11:45 a.m.

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1 PUBLIC MEETING, BEFORE THE CITIZENS CLEAN ELECTIONS
 2 COMMISSION, convened at 11:45 a.m. on September 8, 2022, via
 3 video conference, in the presence of the following Board
 4 members:
 5 Mr. Damien Meyer, Chairman
 6 Mr. Galen Paton
 7 Mr. Mark S. Kimble
 8 Mr. Steve Titla

9 OTHERS PRESENT:
 10 Thomas M. Collins, Executive Director
 11 Paula Thomas, Executive Officer
 12 Mike Becker, Policy Director
 13 Gina Roberts, Voter Education Director
 14 Avery Xola, Voter Education Manager
 15 Alec Shaffer, Web Content Manager
 16 Natalya Ter-Grigoryan, Richards and Moskowitz
 17 Bill Richards, Richards and Moskowitz
 18 Jessica Painter, KCA
 19 Timothy LaSota, Esq., Kari Lake Campaign
 20 Nicole DeMont, Katie Hobbs Campaign

21 PUBLIC COMMENT SPEAKER(S):
 22 Debra Bernoff
 23 Steve Krafft
 24 Rae'Lee Klein
 25 Elisha Ferraro
 Nicole Garcia
 Jennifer Leslie
 Wendee Saunders
 Lori Gray
 Dr. Dawn Penich-Thacker
 Anthony Dewitt
 William Pounds
 Tyler Brogman (phonetic)
 Maggie Smith
 Alex Calabrese
 Lynn Ann Cottle
 Kyle Conklin (phonetic)
 Taylor Tasler

ALSO PRESENT:
 Members of the public
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1 the line or no?
 2 (No response.)
 3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. She is not.
 4 MR. COLLINS: She has a lot of other things to do
 5 today.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. All right, so let's go to
 7 Agenda Item Number II, which is discussion and possible
 8 action on Executive Director's report, enforcement and
 9 regulatory update, and legislative update.
 10 Tom, anything on that today? Go ahead.
 11 MR. COLLINS: I think -- I think we're good to go
 12 ahead I appreciate (technical disruption).
 13 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. On to Agenda Item
 14 Number III, which is discussion and possible action on the
 15 2022 general election Governor's debate, candidate proposal
 16 format, and attendance.
 17 For this agenda item, we will be discussing our
 18 general election Governor's debate.
 19 First I want to note, as we just learned, our
 20 colleague Commissioner Chan is not on the line today. She's
 21 not attending the meeting because she has recused herself.
 22 She's recused herself from any issues relating to the
 23 Governor's election because she is currently an employee of
 24 the Secretary of State's office, so she is not participating
 25 in the meeting.

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P R O C E E D I N G

1 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Good morning. My name is Damian
 2 Meyer. I am the Chairman of the Citizens Clean Elections
 3 Commission this year. It is 11:45 a.m. on September 8th,
 4 2022, and I call this meeting of the Citizens Clean
 5 Elections Commission to order.
 6 I'd like to ask that audience members please keep
 7 their microphone on mute, please, as we're doing this by
 8 Zoom.
 9 And with that, we will take attendance.
 10 Commissioners, please identify yourself for the record.
 11 Commissioner Paten.
 12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know why we're not
 13 hearing it.
 14 COMMISSIONER PATON: Hello, Galen Paton.
 15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're streaming on live,
 16 too.
 17 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Kimble.
 18 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mark Kimble is here.
 19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And then is Commissioner Titla on
 20 the line?
 21 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, I just signed in now.
 22 Here.
 23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And then is Commissioner Chan on
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1 Additionally, Bill Richards and his colleague
 2 Natalya, Natalya Ter-Grigoryan, are also available to
 3 provide the Commission legal advice if -- if we find the
 4 position where we need some.
 5 And Tom, since we're doing this virtually, I'd like
 6 you to go ahead and introduce this item. Please give an
 7 overview of the issue and then we'll hear from the
 8 Commissioners; and, additionally, I will give an opportunity
 9 for any representative of the Hobbs Campaign and the Lake
 10 Campaign to speak to the Commission; and then we will have
 11 public comments on this issue.
 12 So I'm going to take it to you, Mr. Collins, to
 13 provide the overview.
 14 MR. COLLINS: Thank you, Chairman Meyer,
 15 Commissioners; thank you everybody who is here today.
 16 I wanted to take a moment to kind of create some
 17 context about what the Citizens Clean Elections Commission
 18 is because there are a number of folks here who may not be
 19 particularly familiar with the agency.
 20 One thing, for example, is how to think about a
 21 meeting like this, right, as a public meeting. And the way
 22 that I think about it is an employee of the board is --
 23 sometimes questions come in that require me to ask my boss,
 24 and the board is my boss; and it just so happens that in
 25 order to talk to my boss, it has to be a noticed public

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<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>1 meeting, right. So it's kind of important context here to 2 understand that, you know, questions come up in every 3 election cycle that requires to have some kind of special 4 meeting like this.</p> <p>5 I also wanted to briefly -- you know, and for those 6 of who come to our meetings frequently, this will be 7 rehearsal, but I think it's important to sort of set the 8 context here -- the Citizens Clean Elections Commission is a 9 five-member multiparty board that oversees the Clean 10 Elections program, Clean Elections Act; was passed by voters 11 in 1998, and it includes voter education and campaign 12 finance reports.</p> <p>13 And so for the past 20 years under that statute 14 which calls for this debate series, the Commission has 15 sponsored debates statewide and legislative candidates. Our 16 legislative debates take place now on Zoom. They used to be 17 all the around the state. Through COVID and -- and the 18 efficiency of that, we learned that doing them on Zoom was 19 more effective; so those are happening right now.</p> <p>20 And then our statewide debates kick off on Monday 21 at -- on Arizona PBS; and you should tune in.</p> <p>22 You know, all of the Clean Elections debates 23 whether they're legislative or statewide are expressly 24 designed to encourage the free exchange of ideas, and the 25 format we have typically allows some kind of direct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Miller Certified Reporting, LLC</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p>1 candidate interaction and respects the content and viewpoint 2 neutrality that the First Amendment requires because, you 3 know, we're a government agency.</p> <p>4 We work with moderators who are journalists around 5 the state on the legislative debates; and then for our 6 statewide debates, we work with Arizona PBS and crews at 7 Horizon and Ted Simons who has been the long-time host of 8 Horizon, is an Emmy-winning award -- well, Emmy-award 9 winning debate moderator and has long served the Valley as a 10 journalist on television and radio.</p> <p>11 Clean Elections -- and this is really, I think, 12 important. Clean Elections commitment to voter education 13 and ensuring that voters can actually hear from the 14 candidates is well established as voters, candidates, and 15 even election professionals know.</p> <p>16 So our debates have been well attended by 17 candidates including Governor Ducey, Governor Brewer, and 18 Governor Napolitano, as well as countless statewide and 19 legislative candidates; and this year we anticipate, we're 20 lucky to have and we're happy to have candidates in 21 Secretary of State race, Attorney General, Superintendent, 22 Treasurer, and Corporation Commission.</p> <p>23 So I say all that to say that, you know, because of 24 this board's leadership and -- and our staff's work, 25 specifically Gina Roberts who is our Voter Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Miller Certified Reporting, LLC</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p>1 Director, you know, we have established a reputation for 2 handling our voter education program and the debate series 3 in a way that is transparent.</p> <p>4 I also just want to note while everyone is here, 5 you know, in addition, the Clean Elections Commission has 6 worked to ensure voter education guide, which also allows 7 people to hear from candidates, is widely available, and we 8 have ensured it is translated in languages from Navajo to 9 ASL. In our voter education work, we have traveled from 10 distributing voter registration forms in White River, 11 teaching campaign finance classes in Nogales, and 12 Commissioner Titla and I have even done live radio in 13 San Carlos.</p> <p>14 So, you know, the Clean Elections Act says that we 15 are to promote participation and free speech; and with your 16 leadership over the last, you know, 22 years, and certainly 17 over my experience here in the last ten, I think we've done 18 that.</p> <p>19 So that's the overview of Clean Elections for 20 everybody who may be new to this environment.</p> <p>21 We're here today, though, out of respect for the 22 people who put themselves forward as candidates for the 23 Governor's office, which is the most important office in the 24 state. And, you know, quite frankly, we're here today out 25 of respect for -- for Katie -- Kari Lake and for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Miller Certified Reporting, LLC</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>1 Secretary Hobbs who has been the chief election officer in 2 the state for the past four years.</p> <p>3 So, you know, we all know that this is in part 4 because of the Secretary Hobbs' proposal, you know, but it's 5 not the role of a bureaucrat like myself to simply dismiss 6 such a proposal out of hand.</p> <p>7 I want to also, though -- you know, I have to as 8 a -- as attorney and as administrator make a quick record on 9 where we are and how we got here, so everybody understands, 10 like, why have a Commission meeting, you know.</p> <p>11 You know, the -- the course of time here has been 12 that we sent out our initial "save the date" in July. We 13 then followed up with a detailed invitation on August 10th 14 that included the format. We asked for an RSVP by 15 August 26th because we were asking, among other partners, 16 the Arizona Broadcasters Association to reserve time for us 17 as a public service to broadcast this event as a -- to 18 voters around the state, to reach as many voters as possible 19 in the format that they would like to be reached.</p> <p>20 So we first heard from the Hobbs Campaign on -- on 21 August 22nd, and they, at that time, asked us if we had 22 changes we were going to propose to the format we had sent 23 out. You know, given that no one had proposed any changes 24 at that time, you know, we simply responded that we did not. 25 And -- and then on August 26th, we received another e-mail</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Miller Certified Reporting, LLC</p>

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1 that requested a meeting to discuss the matter. We worked
2 with the Hobbs Campaign to get that meeting together the
3 next week but, you know, that -- that -- that first e-mail
4 requesting meeting came on the day we were hoping to get an
5 RSVP. So we extended that deadline for a week, but we're,
6 you know, really faced the deadline that we had for making
7 sure we had the broadcast time.

8 We did in fact have that meeting, at that time
9 Commission staff offered time limits in a format that's
10 identical in essence to the 2020 U.S. Senate debate which we
11 cosponsored, which was -- which had won an Emmy, Rocky
12 Mountain Emmy.

13 We didn't receive a proposal from the -- from the
14 Hobbs Campaign at that time and -- or at any time prior to
15 the R- -- the new deadline day of September 2nd.

16 Now, obviously that's, you know, in the past, but
17 it's important obviously to understand here that, you know,
18 we as staff, and certainly our voter education staff and
19 Gina and her colleagues, you know, we're not part of the
20 political process, right. This is -- you know, our role
21 here is to try to bring folks together, to bring
22 information, bring candidates to voters, and connect voters
23 to candidates in an effort to promote participation under
24 the Clean Elections Act. That's how we've transacted things
25 thus far, but as I said at the outset, you know, out of
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1 Simons to help lead the conversation.

2 It stated that our goal was to provide candidates
3 professional, respectful, and meaningful environment so they
4 can communicate directly to the voters of Arizona about the
5 issues important to their campaign.

6 We -- so, you know, we -- we then provided an
7 additional document spelling out the details. That document
8 stated the arrival time. It stated, you know, what the
9 airtime would be. It described and provided an illustration
10 of the stage. You know, our primary debates featured a sort
11 of sit-down thing; we've kind of gone back and forth.
12 That's one aspect we've always kind of -- you know, between
13 sitting and standing, we felt in this case that the standing
14 worked effectively in the 2020 Senate debate, which they
15 said award winning, which is important to us, and we -- so
16 we featured that illustration.

17 The format described how Ted Simons would moderate,
18 that Ted would have editorial control of the questions, and
19 we -- you know, we don't provide specific debate questions
20 ahead of time. Each candidate would have a one-minute
21 opening statement that would be in the order that would be
22 randomly selected. The format was set as follows: That Ted
23 would follow -- in the first half Ted would follow a formal
24 format in directing questions to specific candidates and
25 maintaining control over time and interruptions. While
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1 respect to the candidates who put themselves forward with --
2 to run for Governor, we felt the need that, you know,
3 elevate the question to the board.

4 So that's what's in front of you today.

5 I know it's a lot of background and I apologize
6 about going on too long, but I did want to sort of set the
7 stage for this.

8 Obviously we have a perspective on certain aspects
9 of this that we're happy to, you know, answer -- take
10 questions about if you have specific questions, and that
11 kind of introduces the issue from our perspective.

12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Tom, one question: In the
13 communications, you know, back in July, the invite on
14 August 10, was there an explanation to the -- to the
15 campaigns as to what the format of the debate would be; and,
16 if so, can you elaborate on that a little bit?

17 MR. COLLINS: Yes, there was a -- there was a
18 communication. I will have it up for you now.

19 So the August 10th invitation explained that this
20 will be a "first of its kind" event in terms of the
21 broadcast reach that the Broadcasters Association was
22 offering; it -- debate that was planned at that time would
23 have aired across dozens of TV and radio stations in
24 Arizona. The debate itself was set to be at Arizona PBS
25 studios at Downtown Phoenix. It would rely on moderator Ted
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1 there's no set time limit on the initial communications or
2 responses, Ted will ensure that discussion progresses; and
3 then for the second half of the debate, we proposed that
4 each candidate would be allowed to respond to questions with
5 more interaction between the candidates, and that Ted would
6 moderate to ensure that no one candidate dominated the
7 debate.

8 We described some of the issues around -- technical
9 issues around, you know, where candidates would be situated
10 before the debate, who would be permitted in the studio, and
11 then -- and then the reach, and some further planning
12 purposes, you know, how media -- how other media members
13 would -- you know, how they would be situated at the
14 physical location.

15 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And then that was August 10 I
16 believe you said; and then on August 22nd you heard from the
17 Hobbs Campaign about format changes. Can you elaborate on
18 what specific format changes they suggested, if any.

19 MR. COLLINS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. At that time
20 the -- the communication from the Hobbs Campaign was to --
21 we had -- we had sent two subsequent communications, one
22 about COVID and one about protocols at ASU, and one about
23 another -- telling them that we had added additional
24 partners to our live stream. And they wrote in on the 22nd
25 and said: Do you have an -- will you -- will you be having
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1 any additional changes to the -- or to the format?

2 And at that time, as I said, we -- we didn't -- our

3 response was we didn't because we hadn't been -- none had

4 been suggested to us. In other words, we did not have, if

5 you will, sua sponte changes to the debate format that we

6 were -- that we suggested at that time, so.

7 But we -- and we did not receive a proposal or --

8 or details as to what changes the Hobbs Campaign was

9 (technical disruption).

10 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And if I understand the history

11 correctly, Tom, the -- the Hobbs Campaign has not come

12 forward with specific format changes such as two minutes per

13 question, you know, equal time, you know, things that you

14 might expect to see in a negotiation of debate format. Has

15 that ever come forward specifically?

16 MR. COLLINS: Well, I mean, we had -- we had -- we

17 received the letter on September 2nd, that was the first

18 proposal we received that had details. There was one

19 inter- -- intervening conversation between the Hobbs

20 Campaign and the Clean Elections and PBS staff, but that

21 conversation again, you know, was one that in effect was

22 "What changes are you, being Clean Elections and PBS,

23 proposing?" But it wasn't -- we didn't -- we didn't receive

24 a proposal from the Hobbs Campaign until the 2nd of

25 September.

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1 interview and ask the questions of his choosing.

2 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Okay. So Tom, I just want to

3 make sure that the original deadline to -- to accept the

4 invitation was September 26th, and it wasn't until a week

5 after that deadline that you got this proposal that

6 essentially changes it from a debate to two town halls; is

7 that correct?

8 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Kimble,

9 yeah, the original date was August 26th, and then on

10 September 2nd we received -- received the -- the change.

11 The -- and I would say that the proposal says "town

12 hall," I mean we haven't -- I don't -- I'm not sure exactly

13 what that term means but, yeah, that -- that was the --

14 that's the chronology.

15 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Paton or Commissioner

17 Titla, do you have any questions for Tom on this?

18 Okay. And then --

19 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, and this is

20 Commissioner Titla.

21 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Go ahead, Commissioner Titla.

22 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah Tom, did you receive a

23 response from the other candidate --

24 MR. COLLINS: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER TITLA: -- on this issue?

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1 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.

2 Do any other Commissioners have any conversations

3 for Tom on sort of the chronology and timeline of events

4 there?

5 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mr. Chairman, this is

6 Commissioner Kimble.

7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Go ahead, Commissioner Kimble.

8 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: So Tom, what -- what exactly

9 was the proposal that you received from the Hobbs Campaign

10 on September 2nd?

11 MR. COLLINS: Sure. That proposal -- this is in

12 your materials at -- well, it was -- I think this is the

13 first item you received with the agenda on -- on -- on --

14 on whatever day you received the agenda, I apologize, my

15 memory -- so that -- that -- that proposal, at the second

16 page of that proposal, details that in place of the current

17 debate structure, the Hobbs Campaign said "we would like to

18 provide voters with a venue that allows Arizonans a chance

19 to compare the ideas, policies, and solutions of their

20 candidate, and we proposal each candidate conducts a

21 separate 30-minute town-hall style interview with Ted Simons

22 which would -- could appear back-to-back in the same hour.

23 Each candidate would have one minute to make opening and

24 closing statements, as in the original proposal, and

25 Mr. Simons would then have full license to conduct his

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1 And what did that response say?

2 MR. COLLINS: Yes. Mr. Chairman, Commissioner

3 Titla, yes, we did. We received one last night which the --

4 which we were able to distribute to you-all late last night.

5 That -- with respect to the specific response

6 format-wise I think you're asking, Commissioner Titla; am I

7 correct there?

8 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, can you read -- can you

9 read what the response said?

10 MR. COLLINS: So Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Titla,

11 I'm going to read specifically from the aspect -- and I can

12 read the whole thing if you want me to, but I'll start with

13 the aspect of the --

14 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Can you read -- can you read

15 the entire thing?

16 MR. COLLINS: Sure. Mr. Chairman,

17 Commissioner Titla, I'm happy to.

18 CHAIRMAN MEYER: It's a couple pages long,

19 Commissioner, but...

20 MR. COLLINS: Well, I'm happy to. I'm -- I'm happy

21 to.

22 So this was dated September 7th.

23 (Reading.)

24 To Whom It May Concern, we are sorely

25 disappointed but not surprised with Katie Hobbs

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1 sabotaging the Clean Elections Commission's efforts
 2 to put together a gubernatorial debate as it has
 3 successfully done for years up until now.
 4 As a former award-winning journalist, Kari
 5 Lake passionately believes that the voters of
 6 Arizona deserve at least one opportunity to see
 7 their two candidates side by side debating the
 8 issues of the day. That's why she made it clear
 9 she would accept the Commission's invitation to
 10 debate with any format with the reasonable
 11 expectation that Katie Hobbs would be on stage with
 12 her.
 13 The town hall format that Katie Hobbs
 14 proposed last week is not a debate but a safe space
 15 for any serious criticism or scrutiny of her
 16 record.
 17 Perhaps Katie Hobbs is worried that Kari Lake
 18 will bring up -- bring up her record of -- and,
 19 obviously -- well, record of convictions for racial
 20 and sexual discrimination on live television. She
 21 should be, but facing criticism and taking
 22 responsibility for your record in front of the
 23 voters is one of the most basic qualifications for
 24 leadership. Hobbs is failing at it spectacularly.
 25 Kari Lake will not take part in the town hall
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1 dangerous new precedent that allows candidates to
 2 hide from the voters without any repercussions.
 3 In addition, we are calling on Commissioner
 4 Chan to recuse from herself from the Commission's
 5 deliberations and vote on this matter given that
 6 Chan currently works as general counsel in the
 7 Katie Hobbs' Secretary of State's Office. Her
 8 involvement invokes a clear conflict of interest
 9 that would taint the Commission's decision.
 10 We look forward to scheduling the debate with
 11 you, and we sincerely hope that Hobbs ultimately
 12 decides to attend.
 13 Thank you, Kari Lake for Governor.
 14 (Reading concludes.)
 15 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Thank you, Tom.
 16 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Any other questions from
 17 the Commissioners?
 18 Okay. So now -- I mean, Tom, I have some thoughts
 19 on this. I don't know if you want me to share those now or
 20 if you want me to -- if we want to hear from the Hobbs and
 21 the Lake campaigns first?
 22 MR. COLLINS: You know --
 23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I think --
 24 MR. COLLINS: -- it doesn't -- sorry.
 25 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I think it might make more sense
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1 format that Katie Hobbs has proposed, and we call
 2 on the Commission to reject it as well.
 3 On September 7th Lake and Hobbs are taking
 4 part in the style of forum put on by the Chamber of
 5 Commerce with that Hobbs-demanded setup. Once
 6 again, this is has highlighted how afraid and
 7 unsure Katie Hobbs is of her own positions and
 8 policies. Clean Elections Commission is the only
 9 organization in the state that has the opportunity
 10 to put together a genuine debate with the
 11 candidates for people of Arizona. Kari Lake will
 12 not go along with Katie Hobbs' attempts to sabotage
 13 it and neither should the Commission.
 14 We're calling on the Commission to schedule
 15 the debate as planned with two podiums on stage.
 16 Kari Lake will be there to answer any and all
 17 questions from the moderator. If at some point,
 18 Katie Hobbs decides to show up, Kari Lake will be
 19 more than happy to share the stage with her. If
 20 she does not show up, that is a revealing fact that
 21 the voters of Arizona deserve to know as well.
 22 Hobbs' strategy may be to avoid facing any real
 23 scrutiny from voters or the press for this entire
 24 campaign, but the Clean Elections Commission cannot
 25 allow itself to become a pawn in her game and set a
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1 for me to maybe share those now to give them an opportunity
 2 to address sort of how I'm seeing things, and maybe we'll
 3 have our Commissioners sort of share their thoughts so that
 4 way, we get a more focused discussion from any
 5 representative of the Hobbs or Lake Campaign that wants to
 6 speak.
 7 Does that work for you?
 8 MR. COLLINS: And Mr. Chairman, I mean, it's
 9 your -- I think on that, it's certainly your discretion
 10 to -- to -- unless Bill says otherwise, to -- to do it in
 11 that way, and I think that that might be an orderly way to
 12 kind of narrow the issues to the extent that you monitor as
 13 you go through.
 14 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I guess I should ask, do we have
 15 representatives from the Hobbs and the Lake Campaign here to
 16 speak or no?
 17 MR. COLLINS: I think -- okay.
 18 MR. LaSOTA: I'm here on behalf of Kari Lake for
 19 Arizona, Mr. Chairman. Timothy LaSota.
 20 MS. DeMONT: And I'm here on behalf of the Katie
 21 Hobbs Campaign.
 22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And I'm sorry, what was your
 23 name -- okay, Nicole.
 24 MS. DeMONT: Nicole DeMont.
 25 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.
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1 All right, well I kind of want to share my thoughts
2 here, and then we'll open up the floor to other
3 Commissioners and then we'll hear from Mr. DeSoto (verbatim)
4 and Ms. DeMont.

5 But, you know, I have spent -- I have some notes
6 here. I've spent a lot of time thinking about this issue
7 since, you know, last Friday when we received Ms. DeMont's
8 letter, and I've tried to approach this from two
9 perspectives. That is, one, what is the purpose of the
10 Clean Elections Commission; and, two, you know, what is best
11 for Arizona voters.

12 And on the first issue of what the purpose of the
13 Clean Elections Commission is, I mean Tom shared a lot of
14 that, spoke on that in his comments. So I'll just say, you
15 know, from my perspective, you know, voter education is at
16 the top of the list of what we do. We provide voters of
17 information on candidates via the Clean Elections voter
18 guide and, you know, of course we provided voter education
19 and opportunities for voters to evaluate candidates in the
20 debates that we have aired with PBS. And we've done that
21 for 20-something years.

22 As Tom said, Ted Simons has moderated the debates
23 and he does a -- in my opinion -- does a great job and
24 others as well as he's an Emmy award winner.

25 On the second issue of how I've approached this,
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1 debate.

2 Now I do want to say that Clean Elections staff
3 cannot do this on their own, they need engagement from the
4 campaigns of each of the candidates.

5 So -- so what I -- where I'm sitting right now and
6 what I want to see happen is I want the Clean Elections
7 staff to work with both the Hobbs and the Lake campaigns to
8 come to an agreement on a fair and reasoned debate format
9 that will give Arizona opportunities -- or Arizona voters
10 the opportunity to evaluate these candidates. Okay?

11 So those are -- are my thoughts. Excuse me, so I
12 think what we should do is I would like to see staff go work
13 with the campaigns for two weeks, come back, see what you
14 can accomplish on getting a -- a debate format in place. I
15 don't support the town-hall style. That's -- that's not
16 what the Commission has done; I don't think it's beneficial
17 to -- to the Arizona voters.

18 So there's my thoughts and then I want -- I'd like
19 to hear from the other Commissioners on where they stand,
20 and then we'll turn it over to the respective campaigns
21 to -- to speak to the Commission.

22 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mr. Chairman?

23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Go ahead, Commissioner Kimble.

24 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Let me say first of all I
25 agree with you, but only up to a point.

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1 and that is what is best for Arizona voters, in my opinion
2 it would be most beneficial for Arizona voters to have an
3 opportunity to see a live debate between our two candidates
4 for Governor. So from my perspective, where I'm sitting
5 right now, is I don't believe that the Commission should
6 accept Secretary Hobbs' proposal of these back-to-back
7 30-minute town hall interviews.

8 I do, however, I want to acknowledge the concerns
9 of the Hobbs Campaign that any debate needs to be a fair and
10 reasoned debate, okay.

11 Now I want to be clear, I'm not -- I'm not agreeing
12 or disagreeing with the statements that Ms. DeMont made in
13 her letter on September 2nd regarding Republican primary
14 debate. That -- that's not my role; that's not my job. My
15 point is that it is in the best interest of Arizona voters
16 for these two candidates to have a fair and reasoned debate
17 where candidates get equal time to answer questions that are
18 uninterrupted by the other candidate and other, you know,
19 reasonable standard debate rules and formats which -- which
20 we have -- which we can provide.

21 So -- so this debate I believe is scheduled for
22 October 6th. Today is September 8th. We have time. I
23 don't see any reason why these two campaigns cannot work
24 with Clean Elections staff and come up with a debate format
25 so these two candidates can hold a fair and reasonable

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1 Setting aside all the posturing, campaigning in --
2 in statements from both campaigns, it seems to me that we
3 have a format that we have used for a number of years that
4 has been successful, that has given the voters of Arizona
5 the opportunity to compare and contrast the candidates
6 face-to-face; and I think there's a problem with timing in
7 this.

8 We -- we send out the proposed format in -- in
9 first half of August, and then not until September do we get
10 a response from the Hobbs Campaign proposing not minor
11 tinkering around the edges, but a complete revamp of the
12 whole thing. And while I would -- while I would like to
13 hope that some agreement could be reached between the two
14 sides, I think that's unrealistic.

15 I think that it's -- it's incumbent on us to say:
16 Enough, this is the format that we have set up it. I think
17 it would be unfair to either campaign if at the last
18 minute -- and this is almost the last minute in terms of
19 setting up a debate of this magnitude -- late in the
20 process, we change the process. And I -- I don't -- I would
21 not support that.

22 And I would like to to like to think that these two
23 sides could have a kumbaya moment and come together and say
24 "let's do this," but as you said, Mr. Chairman, I do not
25 support a town hall agreement -- I mean a town hall setup.

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1 I -- I think the debate setup that we -- that we have and
 2 the moderator that we have has proven in the past to be
 3 effective and a service to the voters, and I would support
 4 just moving ahead with that right now.
 5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Commissioner Kimble.
 7 Commissioner Paton or Commissioner Titla?
 8 COMMISSIONER PATON: Yes, this is Commissioner
 9 Paton. I'm sorry, I've been ill for a while, but I do have
 10 thoughts on this matter.
 11 For six years I've been on the Commission I've
 12 really pushed for debates, as many as we could get, as
 13 informative as we could get, to put them in schools, to
 14 put -- to go -- to educate the electorate. The electorate
 15 often is busy and whatever, and our job as I see it is -- is
 16 to get these candidates together and the electorate can see
 17 them face-to-face challenged by each other and defending
 18 their platforms and their records in similar.
 19 And so I agree with the other two, I think we --
 20 we -- our mission is to have debates, not town halls. They
 21 want to do town halls, they can do that somewhere else with
 22 somebody else sponsoring it. I think our -- our mission is
 23 to do debates; and -- and I challenge them to find anybody
 24 more fair than Gina Roberts and -- and -- and Tom to put
 25 these together to -- to be fair to all, to educate
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1 Chairman said and I agree with that, maybe give them a
 2 couple weeks and see what they can come up with.
 3 With regard to the debate or talk between the
 4 campaigns itself, I kind of agree with Hobbs regarding her
 5 proposal because I think that in any debate or any talks
 6 coming up, there has to be fair and reason, like the
 7 Chairman said; and there should be, you know, reasonable
 8 people talking, not speaking over each other, not insulting
 9 one another in front of people. That -- that that --
 10 that's -- I mean that's just not reasonable and just not
 11 fair to each other.
 12 So if you're going to have really unreasonable
 13 debate where all you're doing is rehashing the 2020 election
 14 and you're insulting the other person and not bringing your
 15 own ideas for the state of Arizona forward, then that is no
 16 debate and that's not fair, that's not reasonable; and
 17 that's not good for the state of Arizona, the citizens.
 18 Now, I'm an Apache from San Carlos Apache
 19 Reservation. In the Apache way leaders are given, you know,
 20 time to speak but they need to respect each other. They
 21 don't insult one another; they don't speak over one another.
 22 And they give fair time to each other, and that's what the
 23 people -- the citizens, the Apache people, that's what they
 24 like. In this case I think that we should have the same
 25 thing; we should have fair, reasoned debate without insults,
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1 everybody.
 2 This is our top elected official. You want to
 3 represent almost 8 million Arizonans; we need to see a
 4 debate between these two.
 5 And that's my -- my response.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Commissioner Paton.
 7 Commissioner Titla, do you have any thoughts you
 8 want to share with the Commission?
 9 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yes. Thank you, Chairman.
 10 I agree with Chairman's statements here. I think
 11 that regarding the fair and reasoned debate that he was
 12 talking about, and I agree that we need to -- our job in the
 13 statutes of Clean Elections is to reach out to all the
 14 people in the four corners of the state of Arizona is what I
 15 say, including all -- all peoples that are in Arizona. So I
 16 agree with that.
 17 And as far as a fair and reasoned -- reasonable
 18 debate is concerned, I think that, like the Chairman said,
 19 there is time for the two campaigns to get together with our
 20 staff and see if they can come up with some sort of a
 21 solution that will be fair to all. And there will be some
 22 sort of negotiation, not everybody is going to be happy
 23 with -- with what they want in the respective talks they're
 24 going to have, so.
 25 But I think that we have time here like the
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1 without talking to one another. And if you're going to have
 2 that kind of thing, that's no debate at all. And like Hobbs
 3 says, you know I think that -- I just don't agree with that.
 4 So I kind of lean toward Hobbs here in what she's
 5 saying, but then I agree with Chairman here also that we
 6 give them a couple weeks, see what they can work out and
 7 let's come back in a couple of weeks, and see what we can do
 8 here to be fair to everybody concerned.
 9 Thank you, Chairman.
 10 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Thank you,
 11 Commissioner Titla.
 12 At this point in time, I would like to hear from
 13 Ms. DeMont at -- from the Hobbs Campaign. Ms. DeMont.
 14 MS. DEMONT: Yes, thank you for having us and for
 15 this discussion.
 16 I think I might just start by clarifying a
 17 logistical thing, which is that on August 29th Clean
 18 Elections sent us a revised date for the debate; it had
 19 originally been scheduled for October 5th and then it came
 20 to the -- your-all attention that that was a Jewish holiday,
 21 and it was rescheduled for October 12th. And Clean
 22 Elections gave the campaigns until September 2nd to respond,
 23 and so we did respond by the deadline. So I just wanted to
 24 be clear about that.
 25 And then since you read the Lake Campaign's entire
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1 letter and didn't do the same for us, I think I might just
2 drop that in the chat so that everybody has access to that
3 because I think it's an important part of this conversation
4 and so -- I'm echoing.

5 Okay. Well, just to reiterate some of what is in
6 that letter and to be clear about our intention here,
7 Secretary Hobbs firmly believes that every Arizonan deserves
8 the opportunity to evaluate their candidates for public
9 office and she is willing and enthusiastic to participate in
10 a substantive conversation that would allow Arizonans the
11 chance to compare the ideas, policies, and solutions of
12 their candidates.

13 However, we don't believe that is what Kari Lake's
14 intention is here, and I think it's pretty clear that she
15 only wants to create another spectacle like we saw in the
16 GOP primary debate.

17 One thing I would point out, too, as more evidence
18 she's only intending to create a spectacle and something
19 that wasn't mentioned here. If one candidate does not agree
20 to the debate, the way Clean Elections proceeds is by
21 hosting a town hall style forum with just one candidate; and
22 so that has happened in the past, and Clean Elections did
23 confirm to me that Kari Lake previously said she would
24 participate in that town hall style forum if our campaign
25 did not come to an agreement; and then yesterday she went

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1 cameras in classrooms to spy on children; and she wants to
2 let anyone own rocket launchers without any restrictions
3 whatsoever.

4 So we would be eager --

5 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Ms. DeMont. Ms. DeMont, I just
6 want to --

7 MS. DeMONT: -- to have this conversation.

8 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Ms. DeMont, I apologize but
9 let's -- I want to try to constrain the -- the comments to,
10 you know, the debate format. I don't want this to create a,
11 you know -- I don't want this to be a forum for -- for, you
12 know, advocate -- issue advocacy on either side. So let's
13 try to just focus on -- on the central issue here, which is
14 the issue of a debate.

15 MS. DeMONT: Right.

16 CHAIRMAN MEYER: So sorry to interrupt you, please
17 continue.

18 MS. DeMONT: Right. So the last thing I was going
19 to say is that given that she has shown no ability and no
20 interest in participating in anything that would resemble a
21 public debate about substantive -- substantive policy
22 proposals, we on September 2nd as I just dropped in the
23 chat, proposed very sensible modifications that are based on
24 the Clean Elections' format that would give the voters an
25 honest look at the candidates' policy plans, but also avoid

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1 back on her commitment and now has declined that invitation,
2 and so I think that's how you can very much see this is just
3 her next PR stunt, and she's not actually interested in
4 debating real solutions.

5 But on top of that, I would just add, you can't
6 debate a conspiracy theorist; and at the last debate, she
7 brought the conversation back to the 2020 election no less
8 than a dozen times. So when she decides to come back to
9 reality and accept the results of our free and fair
10 elections, then we can start to have a real policy debate.

11 And I think another piece of evidence of this is
12 she has repeatedly responded to the debate request with
13 thinly veiled threats that are reminders of the violence
14 that election officials like Secretary Hobbs are dealing
15 with on a daily basis because of the big lie conspiracy
16 theorists like Kari Lake.

17 And so all of these things, you know, don't give us
18 a lot of hope that she would come to this debate hoping for
19 a real substantive policy discussion.

20 And I just would add that we are very eager to
21 contrast our positions with the dangerous positions that
22 Kari Lake has been spewing on this campaign trail. You
23 know, everything from healthcare where her position is to
24 outlaw abortion with no exceptions for rape, incest, or the
25 life of the woman; on education, her answer is to put

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1 the pitfalls of the GOP primary debate that turned Arizona
2 into the subject of national ridicule.

3 And so we do look forward to continue -- continuing
4 to engage with you all and finding a mutually agreed-upon
5 date for this conversation.

6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Well, let me ask DeMont, is there
7 any scenario in which Secretary Hobbs will share the stage
8 with Ms. Lake in a traditional -- you know, what I think we
9 all can view as a traditional debate format?

10 MS. DeMONT: I'm not going to answer a hypothetical
11 question right here; but if you want to lay out what that
12 would look like in writing, we're happy to review it.

13 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I don't think it's a hypothetical
14 question.

15 You've been -- is there any scenario where -- where
16 Ms. Hobbs will share the stage with Ms. Lake in a debate?

17 MS. DeMONT: We would need to see what the details
18 of that proposal and --

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I want to share the stage.

20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I'm sorry, I'm not sure who that
21 was.

22 But do any other Commissioners have any questions
23 for Ms. DeMont?

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Thank you, Ms. DeMont. And

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1 then I'd like to hear from Mr. DeSoto.
2 MR. LaSOTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of
3 the Commission; and it's actually Timothy LaSota.
4 And I do want to stick to the topic of this, what
5 this Commission is here to decide; but I think before we do
6 that, since Ms. DeMont got into some details, I'd certainly
7 like to say that we look forward to contrasting Kari Lakes'
8 agenda with Katie Hobbs' radical left-wing record. And --
9 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Mr. LaSota, I'm going to --
10 MR. LaSOTA: Well, Mr. Chairman, you let her
11 (simultaneous crosstalk) -- you let her attack Kari Lake.
12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Mr. LaSota. Move on. Move on,
13 please.
14 MR. LaSOTA: Okay.
15 So this is an unprecedented request by a
16 gubernatorial candidate to alter the rules of the debate.
17 Now I'd like to share, we've been having these debates for
18 20 years ever since we've had the Clean Elections
19 Commission. We've never had one instance where a
20 gubernatorial candidate said, "Oh, no, I can't debate, you
21 know, it would be unfair."
22 Well, let's -- let's look at what this Commission
23 has done in the past. It's had Ted Simons, which is very
24 well respected; the Commission won an Emmy award for its
25 last debate, that was a contentious Senate -- Senate
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1 step in here? Has this --
2 MR. COLLINS: Sure.
3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Has this graphic been cleared with
4 staff? I haven't seen it; it wasn't part of our agenda
5 materials.
6 MR. COLLINS: Sure. No, I apologize and that's
7 on -- that's my -- that's -- that's on me.
8 Yes, it's a -- it's a -- it's a screenshot of
9 the -- our website, and I believe it's the attendance. We
10 have -- we keep a running --
11 CHAIRMAN MEYER: If it's from our website, go
12 ahead, share it.
13 Thank you, Mr. LaSota. I hope you understand why I
14 just wanted to clear that.
15 MR. LaSOTA: Okay. So you can see, this is
16 straight from the Commission website. You see every single
17 state-wide race. In fact, this now needs to be updated to
18 include Blake Masters and Mark Kelly who have agreed to be
19 participate.
20 Well, so you go down and you see checkmarks in
21 front of every single candidate. Except you get to the
22 bottom and there, what do you see? No checkmark in front of
23 Katie Hobbs. She's the only statewide candidate who has an
24 issue with actually debating.
25 So this should tell the Commission every single
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1 election and there was no issue there.
2 This is not only an insult to the voters of
3 Arizona, that they can't look at these candidates and make a
4 judgment for themselves, it's an insult to this Commission,
5 and it's an insult to Mr. Simons. And it's a cop out.
6 It's -- it's typical the way -- and the fact that Katie
7 Hobbs tries to blame someone else because she's simply
8 unwilling to show up on the same stage and debate her
9 record, debate the issues, that is nobody's fault but Katie
10 Hobbs. And it -- it's reminiscent of when she was found to
11 have racially and sexually discriminated against Talonya
12 Adams that she blames (simultaneous crosstalk) --
13 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Mr. LaSota, we're not -- we're not
14 going down -- this is not a political stage for you. So
15 please conform this -- this to the debate issue.
16 MR. LaSOTA: So in terms of the -- I'd like to
17 share a graphic with this --
18 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Chairman?
19 MR. LaSOTA: -- Commission.
20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Has this been provided to staff
21 before this, Mr. LaSota?
22 MR. LaSOTA: Yes. It's right here.
23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: No. Do not share your screen,
24 please. I -- I...
25 Okay. So I'm going to ask, Tom, can you sort of
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1 thing it needs to know.
2 You know, this business about, well, let's go back
3 for another two weeks and -- and see if we can come up with
4 a solution, there's two things wrong with that. First of
5 all, this Commission, as Commissioner Kimble pointed out,
6 this Commission actually -- they have a standard format,
7 they have a very well regarded moderator; this Commission is
8 a pro at doing this. There's no need to actually talk about
9 additional details. The candidates know what's coming.
10 The other thing is is Katie Hobbs has already told
11 you no, she's not coming to any debate that's anything but a
12 Katie Hobbs' informercial where she doesn't have to face
13 tough questions about her record.
14 So we already know the question (verbatim) to that,
15 you heard Ms. DeMont dissemble when -- when that question
16 was put to her directly, so we already know the answer is
17 no.
18 The other thing I -- I would point out, look, if
19 the Commission capitulates here, I mean, these debates are
20 going to become a thing of the past because every single
21 candidate who is afraid of their own record is going to say,
22 you know what, I'm not doing a debate and -- and I'm -- you
23 know, we got to have this and we got to have that. It's not
24 fair if we just debate with Mr. Simons, that's unfair. It
25 will be a spectacle.
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1 So you can -- this Commission has done the public a
 2 very good service over the years. Tom Collins did a nice
 3 job going over it, and that will become a thing of the past
 4 if this Commission capitulates here because it's going to
 5 have to say yes to every single candidate that demands
 6 changes. It should nip this thing right in the bud and
 7 not -- not allow candidates to dictate how this forum goes
 8 about.

9 The other thing I would say is, you know, your
 10 statutory mandate is clear, it says: "The Commission shall
 11 sponsor debates among candidates." This 30-minute Katie
 12 Hobbs' infomercial is not a debate. So that's not a debate;
 13 it's not in your statutory mandate. It's not -- the
 14 administrative code talks about that also, it says
 15 "candidate debates." And nobody would call, you know,
 16 somebody standing in talking-head fashion on the stage and
 17 just talking, that is not a debate, and it should not be
 18 entertained by this Commission.

19 Now, the other thing -- in terms of, you know,
 20 this -- this is just a -- it 's -- it's a defining moment
 21 for the Commission and it has to stick to its guns. The
 22 Commission has done a fine job in the past of having good,
 23 robust debates. Mr. Simons is completely capable, I've been
 24 watching him for years, he's been doing these for years.
 25 Gubernatorial campaigns have been having these debates for
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1 abusive behavior, or advocating a political agenda of either
 2 candidate.

3 On an agenda item like this, some of the
 4 Commissioners may have questions for a member of the public
 5 giving comment.

6 If you are interested in making public comments, we
 7 ask that you click the reaction button -- which I see many
 8 of you have -- and then click the raised hand button. If
 9 you have raised your hand, we will get to you. When you are
 10 recognized, please slowly and clearly state your name for
 11 the record as our meetings are being transcribed, recorded,
 12 and live streamed, okay.

13 So with that, I will turn this over to our meeting
 14 coordinator to take public comment on this issue.

15 And I would also ask that if you are making public
 16 comment, you please turn your comment on so we can see you.
 17 Go ahead.

18 I'm sorry, I was muted there. We have several
 19 hands raised, I'll turn this over to the meeting coordinator
 20 to sort of do this in order, take these folks in order.

21 MS. PAINTER: Go ahead Debra Bernoff.
 22 SPEAKER BERNOFF: Thank you.
 23 Hello, everybody, my name is Debra Bernoff. I've
 24 lived in Arizona since 1980; I'm a mom, my number one job; I
 25 also open a small business here with my husband and
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1 years. Every other statewide candidate says yes.

2 It's ridiculous at this last hour to be making
 3 changes because a candidate simply is afraid to debate.

4 So I'd ask you to turn down this proposal. We will
 5 be at the debate on October 12th.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Mr. LaSota.

8 Does anyone have any questions for Mr. LaSota, any
 9 Commissioners?

10 'Kay. Tom, do you have any comments or questions
 11 after we've heard from the campaigns?

12 MR. COLLINS: No, Mr. Chairman. Obviously I and --
 13 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.

14 MR. COLLINS: -- the remainder of the staff are
 15 happy to answer any questions that any Commission member
 16 has.

17 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. We will now be taking
 18 public comment on this issue.

19 And just so we set forth some ground rules here
 20 on -- on public comment, each member of the public who
 21 wishes to speak will be given two -- will be given up to 2
 22 minutes. Our meeting coordinator will try to give you a
 23 10-second warning before your time is up.

24 I will be maintaining order and decorum, and I ask
 25 that anyone who speaks refrain from profanity, yelling,
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1 absolutely love Arizona. You know, we are part of our
 2 community and we're active in the school, and as I said we
 3 own our business, and Arizona has always returned the favor
 4 for our efforts.

5 And I look back at this, you know, hearing all
 6 these words here today and, you know, I'm sure over the past
 7 few months my head's been spinning, our friends, our fellow
 8 small business owners, parents, our heads are spinning, and
 9 it just reminded me today --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, shit.

11 SPEAKER BERNOFF: -- back in 1980s, I was on the
 12 speech and debate team at Marcos de Niza High School in
 13 Tempe, and being on the debate team allows you to have an
 14 opportunity to say what you want to say, but to show
 15 everybody how you show up in the face of pressure; and I
 16 don't know any job in the state of Arizona that's more
 17 pressurized than being the Governor.

18 So I personally would love to see both of the
 19 candidates on stage and have a conversation. Have a
 20 conversation that we can see. And, you know, I saw the
 21 Chamber of Commerce video; both candidates were eloquent in
 22 so many ways. Let's get them together.

23 As a small business owner, this morning my alarm
 24 went off at 4 o'clock, I worked and worked and worked --
 25 many of us do; we can't find employees, we have interviews
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1 and people don't show up even though they've said they're
2 going to show up. We cannot interview people if they are
3 not there. I feel this is similar. I worked, I worked, I
4 took my daughter to school today. It was emotional --
5 excuse me. There was a gun threat the day -- yesterday --
6 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.
7 SPEAKER BERNOFF: Thank you.
8 -- across the street. Parents are concerned.
9 There are real issues out there that we as Arizona small
10 business owner parents want to hear from our Governors.
11 And I'll leave you for this, my daughter is running
12 for student body president, I talked to her about this
13 campaign debate, she said, "Mom, 'fear' stands for: 'Face
14 everything and rise.'" And I look forward to our candidates
15 doing the same.
16 And forgive my emotions, talk about my kids.
17 Thank you.
18 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you very much, Ms. Bernoff.
19 SPEAKER BERNOFF: Thank you.
20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Much appreciated.
21 MS. PAINTER: Steve Krafft.
22 SPEAKER KRAFFT: Hi, everybody. I'm Steve Krafft
23 and I hope to take a whole lot less than two minutes.
24 For me this is not a partisan thing, and where the
25 problem on the Democratic side with a Democratic candidate
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1 you today.
2 I just wanted to respectfully disagree with Steve
3 on this. I am a young voter here in the state of Arizona,
4 22 years old, and I represent a demographic of voters who
5 are just getting into to politics, this world. I'm a
6 graduate of Arizona State University.
7 And the debate is something that -- that our
8 generation very much looks forward to. I think this is an
9 opportunity for both candidates to express their positions
10 on very critical issues to our nation right now; and it
11 allows the opportunity for we, the people, to decide who is
12 the best person to represent us. We have 7.2 million
13 Arizonans out there who are going to be led by this person
14 and it's our job to hire them, and the debate is our chance,
15 it's to see them in an interview setting. It's to see how
16 they respond to pressure, how they respond to challenges. A
17 debate is not supposed to necessarily be the most friendly
18 setting; it's supposed to provide pressure and to instigate
19 those challenging questions that a Governor and any elected
20 position are going to have to face at one point or another
21 during their -- during their term.
22 So I think it's very important that we recognize
23 this as a staple of our democracy in allowing us to see both
24 candidates on a stage together.
25 And I appreciate Commissioner Meyer's comments on,
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1 would be just as much of a problem; but that's not a
2 situation.
3 A debate is supposed to be a clash of ideas, what
4 candidates would do if they were elected Governor so voters
5 can take the measure of the candidates. It's just that
6 simple.
7 This unfortunately would not be a debate. It would
8 be an insult fest; and for proof, you need look no further
9 than the Republican primary debate for Governor, that was an
10 insult fest. It was national joke.
11 Kari Lake unfortunately has made it a foundational
12 campaign strategy to ridicule not just questions but
13 questionnaires to mock --
14 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.
15 SPEAKER KRAFFT: -- the political process itself,
16 doing a disservice to voters. Clean Elections should send a
17 message, not allow this to happen. If you want voters to
18 have the information they need to make a decision on
19 election day, it would be much better to have a town hall
20 format.
21 MS. PAINTER: All right. Rae'Lee Klein.
22 SPEAKER KLEIN: Thank you, Commissioners. I
23 appreciate the opportunity for you opening up this up to the
24 general public, I think it shows your dedication to the
25 voters of Arizona in allowing us to share our thoughts with
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1 you know, the voter education is your number one focus right
2 now, and this is our chance. This is a great opportunity to
3 educate voters on -- on the stances of both candidates. And
4 it's not the job of one campaign or the other to dictate
5 what we, the people, are able to hear or not hear from both
6 candidates.
7 So I appreciate you guys opening up this floor,
8 allowing us to share our thoughts, and I strongly encourage
9 the Corporation and the Commissions to -- to move forward
10 with this debate on behalf of Arizonans.
11 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you for your comments.
12 MS. PAINTER: Elisha Ferraro.
13 SPEAKER FERRARO: Hi, I'm Elisha Ferraro, and I've
14 lived in Arizona since 2005. I live in the East Valley; I'm
15 a mom of two. My husband owns some small businesses. You
16 know, I'm just a typical mom that really doesn't know a lot
17 about the political world, and for me, I make a lot of my
18 decisions when I see candidates debate. And I know that
19 there's a large majority of Arizona who really look forward
20 to these opportunities to hear both candidates in whatever
21 race that they're running to really get that information
22 that they're looking for, so that they feel comfortable
23 moving forward with their vote.
24 I -- I feel personally that a debate really does
25 show a lot about a person's character and how they can
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1 respond under pressure and to tough questions. A lot of
2 times voters know when someone is hiding from an answer just
3 in the way that a candidate responds. And for me
4 personally, I look forward to these debates and I respect
5 what the Clean Elections does. And I think if any changes
6 were made for the gubernatorial debate, it would just really
7 change a lot for the future. And I personally respect what
8 you guys are doing and providing clean elections for
9 everybody. And I think it's really important that a debate
10 does move forward as it typically has in the past.
11 And just for me personally as a mom who -- who is
12 just trying to understand this political world and wanting
13 to make the best decision for my children, I really do
14 respect the debate forum, and I really do look forward to
15 hearing what the candidates have to say on both sides
16 because I need to be educated as a mom so that I'm putting
17 the vote into the person that will do the right thing for my
18 children's future.
19 Thank you for the opportunity to share my comment.
20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Ms. Ferraro.
21 MS. PAINTER: All right. Nicole with Fox; and can
22 you please state your last name for the record.
23 SPEAKER GARCIA: Good afternoon, Nicole Garcia with
24 Fox10 News.
25 Actually just had a couple logistic questions about
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1 SPEAKER GARCIA: And last question, what happens if
2 there's a tie when you vote?
3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Well, in that situation we have
4 our legal counsel here and I -- I don't want to venture to
5 say what might happen there. We might need to go into
6 executive session to -- to get advice on what happens if
7 there's a tie, so.
8 SPEAKER GARCIA: Okay. Thank you so much.
9 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Yes, you're welcome.
10 And Tom, do you have anything to add to that?
11 MR. COLLINS: Absolutely not.
12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. All right.
13 MS. PAINTER: All right. Jennifer Leslie.
14 SPEAKER LESLIE: Hi, my name is Jennifer Leslie and
15 I'm a mom of two; I've lived here since 2007.
16 And I believe the debates are beneficial to the
17 public, the general public here, to really grasp and
18 understand how the candidates will support everyone here,
19 whether it's one direction or another direction. And I
20 truly appreciate this and I would really love to see a
21 debate happen soon.
22 Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to
23 voice my concerns.
24 Thank you.
25 MS. PAINTER: All right, thank you.
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1 the decision. I know there were -- there are five
2 Commissioners but one has recused herself. So is this going
3 to go into a vote at some point? Are you guys going to go
4 into executive session and make the decision and then
5 announce it afterward in this virtual format? How are --
6 how does -- how is this going to proceed?
7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Nicole, well of course any
8 Commissioner is entitled to make a motion on how they want
9 the Commission to proceed. So if -- if a Commissioner makes
10 a motion, we will take a vote; and, of course, if it
11 carries, we'll move forward in that way, and if it -- if it
12 fails, I -- I believe the status quo will remain.
13 But as far as which way we're going at this time, I
14 can't answer that. But, yes, I anticipate that we will
15 reach a decision today as to how we want to proceed on this.
16 SPEAKER GARCIA: And would it just be four
17 Commissioners in this vote since Ms. Chan recused herself?
18 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Yes.
19 SPEAKER GARCIA: Or is she voting as well?
20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: There are -- there are five
21 Commissioners, but Ms. Chan, because of her relationship
22 with the Secretary of State's office, I believe she's an
23 employee of that office, she has recused herself. So there
24 will be four of the five Commissioners that are present and
25 only those four, only the Commissioners have a vote.
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1 Wendee Saunders.
2 SPEAKER SAUNDERS: Hi, everyone. My name is Wendee
3 Saunders; and I have lived in Arizona for 39 years, and I'm
4 a mom of two.
5 And first and foremost, thank you to the Commission
6 for what you guys do for our state. We appreciate it.
7 And I was actually very concerned when they said
8 there wasn't going to be a debate because obviously, you
9 know, our democracy is that we debate. And I -- I guess I
10 was concerned because, you know, without a debate, how do we
11 know who stands where and who -- what -- what people's
12 beliefs are.
13 And, you know, I agree with Commissioner Titla --
14 hopefully I'm pronouncing your name correctly -- in that
15 there needs to be boundaries, but the same time, you know,
16 the Governor is a position that if you can't handle yourself
17 under pressure, under shots fired so to speak, how will you
18 handle yourself with regards to the issues of our state and
19 standing up for us as Arizonans?
20 And, you know, people will say that Katie Hobbs is
21 a coward, and I -- I don't believe she's a coward because a
22 coward wouldn't actually run for Governor. However, when
23 someone doesn't want to debate and stand up for what they
24 believe in, that just leads me to believe that maybe they're
25 worried about the things that they believe in and sharing
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1 those candidly with people.

2 So I believe as Arizonans, we want to see who

3 really has our best interest at heart and see how they, you

4 know, perform in the ring so to speak so that we can make

5 our decision.

6 So thank you guys so much for what you do, and I

7 appreciate being able to speak today.

8 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Ms. Saunders.

9 MS. PAINTER: Lori, can you state your name for

10 the -- your last name for the record?

11 SPEAKER GRAY: Lori Gray.

12 MS. PAINTER: Thank you. You can go ahead with

13 your comments.

14 SPEAKER GRAY: Hi, I just wanted to say thank you

15 so much for allowing me to speak and hearing my voice.

16 Our -- our family moved here in 2015 and we chose

17 Arizona on purpose because of the wonderful state that it

18 is, and learned -- I've learned over the last five or

19 six years that all politics in my opinion are local, so I've

20 been hyper focused on what happens locally; and the

21 governorship is, you know, the highest in the state, and I

22 think that that affects us more, even maybe more so than the

23 presidency.

24 So I have no way -- you know, myself, my family and

25 friends, we have no way of knowing exactly who we're dealing

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1 pretty much my entire adult life.

2 One thing I wanted to share is that the objective

3 of this body I understand it and of these, you know,

4 televised appearances is for voters to learn about the

5 candidates. The goal is the learning. The goal is not how

6 we learn.

7 So as I mentioned, I'm an educator. I know that I

8 want to reach my objective, and if I have to get there

9 different ways for different students, then that's my job.

10 Things change, personalities are different. In the three

11 years into COVID -- almost -- we know that we can change and

12 adjust to get to the goal.

13 And so to me, you know, "we've always done it this

14 way" is not a valid reason when we know that we adjust all

15 kinds of different things to do a better job for the

16 objective of learning about the candidates.

17 Another point I wanted to make and I don't think

18 anyone has made it yet, is that following the so-called

19 debates, kind of the, you know, the shouting matches and the

20 constant interruptions makes it absolutely impossible for

21 voters who are not Native English speakers or who have

22 hearing impairment to learn anything, because ASL cannot

23 keep up with the constant interruptions and yelling; and

24 closed captioning and translators cannot keep up with

25 constant interruptions and yelling.

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1 with as far as who to vote for if we don't see a debate.

2 I mean, people know Kari Lake, she was -- she's

3 been in people's living rooms for 20-something years I

4 guess. And you know, Ms. Hobbs, I don't really know her.

5 So I think it's important to have a debate. And I mean if

6 there's going to be some craziness or whatever the concern

7 is from one of the campaigns, then so be it and let -- let

8 us make that decision. That seems to make sense to me

9 anyway.

10 But I thank you so much. This has been a very

11 educational process for me. And I enjoy the Clean Election

12 debates, they've helped me a lot in my decision-making

13 this -- over the few last few cycles; and they're always

14 done well. So I -- I hope they have a debate so that we

15 can -- so that we, the voters, can make a decision because

16 I -- we don't know these people.

17 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.

18 SPEAKER GRAY: Thank -- thank you so much.

19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Ms. Gray, thank you for your

20 comments.

21 MS. PAINTER: Dr. Dawn Penich-Thacker.

22 SPEAKER PENICH-THACKER: Hello. Thank you all for

23 doing this and for opening it up in this way.

24 Since everyone is sharing their bio, I'm a mother,

25 an educator, and have been a no party-designated voter for

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1 So I watch these appearances with my parents who

2 are not Native English speakers, but are dedicated voters --

3 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.

4 SPEAKER PENICH-THACKER: -- and they learn nothing

5 because of the ways that these debates have become.

6 So I would rather that every voter gets to learn

7 through a town hall than stick to a format just because it's

8 the way it has been done for a couple decades -- but not

9 even that long, really.

10 So --

11 MS. PAINTER: Please wrap it up.

12 SPEAKER PENICH-THACKER: Thank you.

13 MS. PAINTER: Thank you.

14 Anthony Dewitt.

15 SPEAKER DEWITT: Hi, Chairman and Commissioners. I

16 appreciate the opportunity.

17 My name is Anthony; I'm 20 years old. I've been

18 born and raised here in Arizona. I have to say I appreciate

19 you guys opening this up, I think it's really important that

20 you guys are listening to opinions and it means a lot; and,

21 you know, I know staying neutral is, like, not something we

22 see very much, so I appreciate that.

23 You know, I do want to say, you know, I'm very

24 disappointed in the fact that, you know, somebody who wants

25 to run our state as a representative and CEO, the highest

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1 office, and, you know, would be too afraid to debate, you
 2 know, that people have been doing for 20 years, to debate
 3 her opponent.
 4 I think that, you know, not only, you know, not
 5 setting a good precedent, but I think it also is indicative
 6 of, you know, leadership that we would see. I think that as
 7 a CEO and representative of Arizona, it would -- we need
 8 somebody who is not afraid to stand and not afraid to take
 9 heat.
 10 And -- anyway, I digress. But, you know, I
 11 definitely support having a debate style. I -- I fear if we
 12 go down the route of, you know, changing format and, you
 13 know, changing completely the way that things have been
 14 done, in future elections people who don't want to
 15 participate or people who don't, you know, want to have
 16 their record challenged are going to want to change and, you
 17 know, make -- you know, make things better for themselves
 18 and, you know, maybe kind of influence the way that voters
 19 are able to learn about record and how they are able to
 20 stand on their feet.
 21 And I --
 22 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.
 23 SPEAKER DEWITT: And I think that debates have a
 24 very important role and we don't -- this is probably going
 25 to be the only one that we see.

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1 how I think it will be with just the three of us on stage.
 2 Thank you for allowing me to bring my words to your
 3 attention, members of the Commission.
 4 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Collins
 5 (verbatim).
 6 MS. PAINTER: All right. And we did have one
 7 person that had to leave, Ashley Trussell. I would like to
 8 read her comment as it was put in the chat.
 9 She said (Reading): Must leave, but for public
 10 comment the entire meeting has been about a debate.
 11 If Hobbs does not want to debate, then she is
 12 declining the invitation. What's best for Arizona
 13 is to have both women debate.
 14 So then with that, we will go to the next person,
 15 Tyler. And can you please include your last name for the
 16 record and then proceed with your comments.
 17 SPEAKER BROGMAN: Yes. My name is Tyler Brogman
 18 (phonetic) and, I'm sorry, I missed the beginning of this
 19 meeting. I had another meeting to go to.
 20 But I appreciate all of your help with, you know,
 21 leading this -- this meeting. I'm born and raised in
 22 Arizona; I'm 28 years old now, and I was never into
 23 politics, but at this point in my life I -- I understand
 24 that politics is important. And I don't know too much about
 25 it yet. You know, trying to follow it, but you can see

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1 So I do ask really quick maybe, you know, instead
 2 of two weeks, I think that's too much time, I think, you
 3 know, maybe just one more deadline of something like
 4 tomorrow and hand it to both campaigns if you -- if they
 5 want to commit then, you know, maybe by tomorrow --
 6 MS. PAINTER: Please wrap.
 7 SPEAKER DEWITT: -- with their answer.
 8 Thank you.
 9 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you, Anthony.
 10 MS. PAINTER: Lamone Vellia-Flores (phonetic).
 11 SPEAKER POUNDS: I had no idea that my phone had
 12 still said that. Well -- so I'm using my mother's Zoom that
 13 she uses on this phone. So my actual name is William
 14 Pounds. I am a candidate for Arizona Governor, and I'm not
 15 going to promote my campaign with this time allotted to me
 16 to speak before the Commission. I'm only here to ask a
 17 question: Will you let me debate given the vacancy that you
 18 may have on the stage should you choose to pursue a
 19 traditional election?
 20 I am hoping that the Commission considers inviting
 21 both me, the Independent Green Party candidate, and my
 22 Libertarian opponent, Barry Hess, to this debate to engage
 23 Kari Lake in a civilized exchange of ideas.
 24 Debates are meant to change the minds of your
 25 opponents; and that is how they should always be and that's

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1 these attack ads and this and that on TV, and, you know,
 2 from multiple campaigns and you don't know who to believe
 3 and what's true and, you know, where people really stand on
 4 issues.
 5 And I really feel like, you know, as a -- as a
 6 former athlete, you know, the best way to set the record
 7 straight is for both candidates to come to the table and --
 8 and explain their stance on -- on various issues. And I
 9 know people have referred to this potential debate as, you
 10 know, bullets flying, and I don't see this as being a war
 11 zone and it shouldn't be. It's -- it's a job interview to
 12 be the CEO of our state, and that would be a bipartisan
 13 issue. You know, people should have to answer the tough
 14 questions on both sides of the aisle and really give the
 15 Arizona voters a realistic and practical view and image of
 16 who they really are.
 17 And I think going to some town hall that somebody
 18 mentioned, you know, those can be tailored to, you know,
 19 really highlight a certain candidate and cover, you know,
 20 any dirt.
 21 And what I want as a voter is to see both
 22 candidates there together on a neutral playing field so to
 23 speak. And, you know, I want both candidates out to answer
 24 tough questions and speak to their stance on -- on issues
 25 that affect us on a daily life and -- and, you know, so on

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1 and so forth.

2 So, you know, I think politics are important. I

3 don't think this is going to be some super hostile

4 environment --

5 MS. PAINTER: 10 seconds.

6 SPEAKER BROGMAN: If you walk into a job interview,

7 you're going to be asked tough questions. And that's

8 exactly what this is and both candidates should have to

9 answer to that.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. PAINTER: All right, Maggie Smith.

12 SPEAKER SMITH: Hi, everyone. My name is Maggie.

13 I was born in Illinois, but I moved here when I was five, so

14 I've been here for most of my life. I'm 22 years old.

15 And so the reason why I wanted to just come on here

16 and -- first off, thank you so much for opening to everyone.

17 But the reason why I wanted to comment is because I've been

18 seeing a lot on social media that no matter what side of the

19 political aisle people are on, there's been a lot of people

20 that have been saying, like, "Katie, like, you need to

21 debate. Like, what's going on?" And I agree with that. I

22 think that it should be a formal debate and traditional. I

23 believe that both candidates should be on stage.

24 And for all my life I've been really out of the --

25 out of the way, I haven't really been involved with politics

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1 What is best to make sure that happens?

2 I think we should really, you know, consider --

3 consider that.

4 And if that's a different way of doing it, maybe,

5 you know, that -- that really should be considered.

6 And if it's not, then how do we make sure that

7 happens so that the voters are best informed? That's what

8 matters most to everyone I believe.

9 So thanks for letting me share my thoughts.

10 MS. PAINTER: Thank you.

11 Cottle, could you please state your full name for

12 the record and then proceed with your comments.

13 SPEAKER CONKLIN: Yeah, Hi.

14 SPEAKER COTTLE: I am --

15 SPEAKER CONKLIN: Oh. Hi, can you hear me?

16 SPEAKER COTTLE: Did you say Cottle?

17 MR. COLLINS: Yes.

18 MS. PAINTER: Yes. Cottle.

19 And Kyle, I can get to you next.

20 SPEAKER COTTLE: Okay. Yes, my name is Lynn Ann

21 Cottle and I am a resident of Mesa, Arizona; I'm married and

22 I've got four children.

23 And thank you so much for the people that have put

24 this together, it's so much appreciated.

25 And as a voter, as a resident of Arizona for

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1 too much. But now that this is -- could be a big change, I

2 just feel like that if they made drastic changes on behalf

3 of the -- of the committee -- or, I'm sorry, of the

4 Commission, I think that it would cause a lot of issues and

5 a lot of stress; and even a big impact -- negative impact, I

6 would say, in the future for future Arizona elections.

7 And as a voter, I am ready. I am ready to hear it;

8 I'm ready to hear the questions. I'm ready to hear both

9 candidates answer the questions on stage. I don't think

10 it's going to be a screaming match; I don't think it's going

11 to be hostile at all. I think it's going to be something

12 that all voters of Arizona should be looking forward to from

13 all sides of the spectrum.

14 Thank you for putting this on, I appreciate it.

15 MS. PAINTER: Thank you. Alex Calabrese.

16 SPEAKER CALABRESE: Hi. Thank you.

17 Thanks to the Commission for opening this up as

18 well. I appreciate being able to have our voices heard.

19 I just -- I am an educator like Dr. Penich-Thacker

20 as well and have lived here since 2000 in Arizona.

21 And I really wasn't planning on speaking, to be

22 honest, but I've enjoyed listening to this, but I did feel

23 compelled to because I think what's most important is that

24 voters know the stances on the issues, right? And that they

25 are informed; and everyone wants that.

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1 18 years, I'm more and more concerned about my future and my

2 children's future. And I love Arizona; I love it dearly.

3 And I believe that -- I'm actually really surprised that

4 this is even a question of having a debate for the people

5 that are running to be -- to be able to have the position to

6 say whether our businesses are going to be closed or not

7 because of the mandate or -- or some health risk or whatever

8 it might be.

9 I really feel that in that position, as a voter, I

10 want to see live; I want to see gestures and -- and facial

11 expressions and the word -- choice of words that they use to

12 see who is going to be the very best person that is going to

13 keep my business open, keep us healthy, keep education

14 strong, all the things that are important to all of us. And

15 the way to do it I feel is to really see face-to-face -- you

16 know, whether it's on the screen or I'm there in person, it

17 doesn't matter -- I really feel that it needs to happen.

18 And I'm surprised also that only one debate is a

19 topic. I think there should be more than one if possible.

20 Thank you so much.

21 And also just a shout out to the 20-somethings that

22 are on the call, you guys are great.

23 Thank you so much.

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.

25 Do we have -- do we have one more for public

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1 comment? Or...

2 I know we have Kyle I believe.

3 SPEAKER CONKLIN: Yeah, right here. If I can just

4 make a quick statement.

5 Thank you for your time and thank you for

6 everything that you do. I've been up in Show Low; Arizona

7 resident for the past 15 years and --

8 MR. COLLINS: Can we get your name for the record,

9 please?

10 SPEAKER CONKLIN: Yeah, Kyle Conklin (phonetic).

11 Thank you.

12 And what I did back home was I was a hockey coach,

13 and every training camp it seemed like we had one spot at

14 the end of the camp and we had two bodies for that; and we

15 always wanted to have like this face-to-face pose down to

16 see what everybody could do when -- when the pressure was

17 on, and that's what I feel that your debates are. If they

18 just want to speak for 20 minutes or a half hour, they can

19 do at any one of their current campaign spots.

20 You doing the debate changes the dynamic of that,

21 so everybody in the state can see what it's like when the

22 pressure is on, when they're face-to-face. And this is a

23 tough job. It's not in an incubator; they need to make

24 tough decisions at difficult times.

25 That's why I think the debate in the current format

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1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Heather McClain (phonetic),

4 mobile.

5 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I'm not sure what that was, but I

6 don't think it was public comment.

7 Okay. So now I kind of -- I want to open it back

8 up to the Commissioners. And I'll just make a note, I was

9 sort of trying to keep track of a tally of -- of the public

10 comment, and I -- and I do want to thank the public and all

11 of you who spoke and shared your opinions. That is very

12 valuable to me; I really appreciate that.

13 And I sort of kept a straw tally, and of the 16

14 public comments -- or maybe 17 -- we have -- I had 13 who

15 want to see a debate, 3 that are willing to sort of either

16 no debate or town hall. And so 13 to 3 in favor of the

17 debate, I just wanted to make that known.

18 And I guess I want to open it up, is there any

19 comment from the other Commissioners after -- after public

20 comment?

21 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Chairman -- yeah, Chairman?

22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Go ahead, Commissioner Titla.

23 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Steve Titla.

24 I would like to make a motion that we go along with

25 what you said earlier, that we give the two campaigns two

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1 is exactly what we need.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.

4 Is there anyone else for public comment?

5 MS. PAINTER: We did have one person include their

6 comment in the chat as they are unable to speak due to their

7 location, so this is from Rachel Vaillancourt.

8 She says (Reading): I moved to Arizona to start a

9 family and I deserve to know my options for

10 Governor. By refusing to debate Kari Lake, Katie

11 Hobbs is paving the way for any future

12 gubernatorial candidate who may be afraid or

13 unwilling to debate.

14 This decision affects not just the next four years,

15 but the future of Arizona and breaks a tradition

16 from the last 20 years of gubernatorial races. I

17 can watch media interviews, town halls and press

18 conferences from either candidate, but the

19 gubernatorial debate is a specific format that

20 Arizonans deserve and have to -- and have portray

21 both candidates' intentions for the office of

22 Governor of Arizona.

23 And that is the end of her statement.

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.

25 So just to confirm, no one else for public comment?

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1 weeks to see whether we can come up with some resolution of

2 the -- of the talks that are to come up, you know, keeping

3 in mind what the public said here.

4 And I think that one thing that was very important

5 to me was that our job is to reach the voters, voter

6 education, and one of the people that spoke said that it was

7 very hard for people that did not speak the language or that

8 were learning and people that were hard of hearing to

9 understand when there were -- when there were shouting and

10 when they were speaking over each other and interruptions.

11 So we need to come up with some boundaries as far as that is

12 concerned so that everybody can -- we can reach everybody in

13 the state.

14 So I'd like to make that motion.

15 CHAIRMAN MEYER: All right. So I guess,

16 Commissioner Titla, I would -- I would like to table that

17 motion and see if we have other comment from the other

18 Commissioners before we vote on that.

19 I believe I'm allowed to do that.

20 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Tom?

22 You're muted, Tom.

23 MR. COLLINS: You're testing my Robert's Rules

24 here.

25 Mr. Chairman, just to make the record clear, it --

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1 it -- it might be helpful if just to make the record clear,
2 if -- if you were able to ask Commissioner Titla if he was
3 willing to --
4 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Sure.
5 MR. COLLINS: -- withdraw the motion momentarily
6 with the understanding that we will -- that there will be
7 more discussion before that, and that way at least the
8 record is clear if possible.
9 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Sure. Thank you.
10 Commissioner Titla, I -- I respectfully, I
11 appreciate your motion, I would ask, can we get more
12 discussion or at least the opportunity for discussion among
13 the Commissioners before we vote on that motion?
14 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, I think -- I think that
15 would be good, yeah.
16 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.
17 COMMISSIONER TITLA: That's good.
18 CHAIRMAN MEYER: So just for the record here, are
19 you -- I'm allowing you to -- you know, I'm asking that you
20 withdraw your motion but giving you the right to reassert it
21 here after we have a discussion. Does that work for you,
22 Commissioner?
23 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yes.
24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.
25 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, okay. I withdraw the
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1 45 years old, and we are living in a political environment
2 that we have not seen before in the divisiveness that is
3 going on in our country today.
4 And I think that due to the reality of what we're
5 currently living in, I think that there is merit to trying
6 to maybe give a little more structure and some minor
7 modifications to this debate process, just so we have a
8 complete -- both candidates have a complete understanding of
9 what the rules will be, what the consequences will be if
10 those rules are broken, whether that's turning someone's mic
11 off, whether that's -- you know, whatever that might be.
12 But I do want to make clear: In no way are we
13 talking about regulating content of what either candidate
14 can or cannot say. That is -- if someone wants to make a
15 claim, then they're going to have to live with that claim,
16 but I don't think it's this Commission's or anyone else's
17 role to tell people what they can and can't say.
18 So I -- I think I am still of the opinion that I
19 want to see a debate happen. I would like to give -- if
20 nothing else, I'd like to give both campaigns the
21 opportunity to accept this invitation to debate -- to agree
22 to a debate on October 12th, and not just decide today
23 either yes or no going forward with it.
24 So that is sort of where I am at. I still think it
25 makes sense to send -- ask the staff and the campaigns to
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1 motion until we have more.
2 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Sure. I guess just a couple --
3 couple comments I'll make. And that is, you know, I think
4 the public comment is consistent with what several of us are
5 saying, is that we want to see a debate happen. I want to
6 see a debate happen; I'm not going to speak for the other
7 Commissioners -- and I -- I am personally not interested in
8 town hall.
9 I do want to note, I think -- I think these
10 candidates can have the opportunity to do a town-hall type
11 interview or process in other forums, other -- other media
12 outlets I think would provide that opportunity.
13 And one other thing I want to say is as I -- you
14 know, I do appreciate concerns about altering the format of
15 the debates and altering it in a significant way, and -- and
16 when I had suggested earlier that we give our staff and the
17 campaigns a chance to discuss format, I am not advocating
18 for a significant change, just that there's a firm
19 understanding of who gets what time; interruptions won't be
20 tolerated; just, you know, maybe, you know, tightening
21 things up a little bit so every candidate understands --
22 both candidates understand what those rules would be.
23 And one of the reasons I think we should consider
24 doing that -- and whether it's a week, two weeks, I'm not
25 sure is significant -- is I -- I think it's fair to say, I'm
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1 work together to tighten up the procedure and the format and
2 have that debate on October 12th.
3 So that's -- that's where I am at and I want to
4 sort of open it up to other Commissioners and their
5 thoughts.
6 I see Commissioner Paton on my screen. Do you have
7 anything to add, Commissioner Paton?
8 COMMISSIONER PATON: Yes. Well, maybe Tom can talk
9 about the reasons for whatever deadlines. I mean, I don't
10 know -- I don't understand their logistic problems and so on
11 so maybe he could address that before we just throw out a
12 date.
13 MR. COLLINS: Sure. Yes. Mr. Chairman, if I may?
14 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Yes, please.
15 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Paton, so,
16 you know, the -- couple things. I mean, we have -- and Gina
17 is here and she can correct me if I'm speaking completely
18 wrongly, but the October 12th date we have the PBS time
19 still, one way or the other, because we were going to use it
20 one way or the other under the terms that we had.
21 Now, the thing we won't have, for sure we won't
22 have, is the broadcast reach and all that other -- there's
23 no way to ask the Broadcast Association and the Newspaper
24 Association to just, you know, hold that -- that time that
25 long. So, you know, that's what we lose.
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1 Literally speaking, you know, I think that, you
2 know, the reasons for -- so -- so the reasons we had set the
3 deadline on the 2nd was to, you know -- because after that
4 we really can't guarantee things.
5 I do still have the October 12th date. What we
6 were to do if we were to get -- you know, given some time
7 here we would, first of all, obviously contact PBS to, you
8 know, make sure we have that date and all that set in place
9 and that -- and that still works for them, which I believe
10 it will.
11 And then, you know, but the -- the main reason --
12 the additional reason to, you know, have a deadline here is
13 twofold. Number one, we need a deadline in order to ensure
14 that, you know, we can actually properly tell people this
15 debate exists, right? This is part of a broader voter
16 education plan that the Commission approved in, I want to
17 say, January or February; and so, you know, there are
18 important dates in that that we -- you know, as I said the
19 statewide debates start next week. So we want to be in the
20 best position to let voters know that in fact, you know,
21 this event is going to occur; and then obviously we want to
22 make sure that Ted Simons and his staff at PBS have the
23 amount of time they need to prepare for whatever is there
24 and to work through any technical requirements that would be
25 necessary in order to ensure that any rules that we might be
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1 may?
2 Yes, Tom, I'm very hesitant even with two weeks
3 just from an administrative standpoint. Purely from
4 administrative standpoint, I would be hesitant to look at
5 two weeks.
6 A week is -- you know, at this point, you know, we
7 are well past our -- our deadline that we have asked; and,
8 again, for many of the reasons that Tom noted, but public
9 communication is a big one of them. We do outreach to
10 voters across the state soliciting questions; we have
11 questions coming in now. And so I think clarity for voters
12 on how the format will proceed, which candidates are
13 participating are important to solicit their input to shape
14 the conversation of the debate, which is what we want. We
15 put a priority on voter questions as they come in.
16 Also I think it's important that, you know, the
17 candidates have enough time as well to prepare for whatever
18 that agreed-upon format is.
19 Also there is, as Tom had mentioned, our
20 partnerships with the Arizona Broadcasters Association and
21 the Arizona Newspapers Association. These folks are -- are
22 giving up revenues and time for this public service to
23 stream these. Sometimes in some cases they have to get
24 permission from their corporate offices; and so being able
25 to secure those partnerships, which is very important to
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1 able to come to an agreement with the candidates on were
2 done.
3 So that's I think -- I think -- I hope that answers
4 your question, Commissioner Paton. Gina obviously --
5 COMMISSIONER PATON: I guess what's the drop dead
6 date then?
7 MR. COLLINS: The drop dead date is a very
8 difficult question. Because if we were to say that the
9 drop -- like, if we -- I mean, essentially, if we were to
10 say to PBS, well the drop dead date, let's say it's
11 5 o'clock on October 12th when the lights go on, right?
12 That's not reasonable to -- to PBS for prep time; it's not
13 reasonable to actually get the public aware of what's
14 happening.
15 So I think that -- and it's also not reasonable
16 because it -- it -- we just haven't had the engagement we
17 need from the candidates and we haven't had the sort of
18 infomatter of the Commission to -- to undertake what we
19 would undertake under Mr. Chairman's and Commissioner
20 Titla's point.
21 So I would say the two weeks would be about as
22 long -- and Gina, correct me, you know, jump in here and
23 tell me, but I would say the two weeks at the outside would
24 be, you know...
25 MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, if I
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1 making sure that voters across the state, not just Maricopa
2 County, but our rural areas, all four corners of the state,
3 have access to the debate is very important.
4 So, you know, I think having confirmation on how we
5 will proceed as soon as possible is in the best interest of
6 the voters for having clarity, for knowing how to submit
7 their questions and what to expect, but also for the
8 candidates in how to prepare; and then also from an
9 administrative standpoint for us to be able to solicit those
10 questions, to answer questions with our partnerships,
11 whether it's the Broadcasters Association or Arizona PBS, to
12 ensure we have the logistics in place. Just from an
13 administrative standpoint, you know, we're at the point, in
14 my opinion now, where clarity would be much appreciated at
15 this point.
16 But in terms of how much time do we have to extend
17 it, I -- I would see that we do not go past a week is --
18 would be my preference just, again, purely administrative.
19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Gina, thank you for explaining
20 sort of the -- how complex this is and how much these
21 behind-the-scenes things need to happen to make this work.
22 And that's why these dates were put out there in the first
23 place. So I -- I do appreciate that.
24 You know, the other comment I want to make about
25 any sort of minor changes to -- to format or sort of -- just
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1 sort of tightening up the format is, you know, I know our
 2 staff had already, you know, engaged and met with the Hobbs
 3 Campaign, you know, for that purpose. So I don't feel like
 4 that is an unusual thing that we do in debates for this
 5 level of office.
 6 It's typical to meet with both campaigns and sort
 7 of iron out the minor details; is it not? Tom or Gina?
 8 MR. COLLINS: Oh. Mr. Chairman, my -- our view has
 9 been that, you know, we -- you know, we get feedback from
 10 candidates regularly. And, I mean, most of the time
 11 candidates/representatives are quick to pick up the phone
 12 and get a hold of Gina. It's pretty much been that standard
 13 of practice, and we regularly deal with capitulated concerns
 14 about -- and that is to say directly articulated to the
 15 Clean Elections Commission staff concerns about -- about
 16 debates, and we do try to work through that.
 17 Now, as far as the format stuff, obviously this
 18 is -- this is different -- you know, different in kind --
 19 different sort of in kind in terms of that particular
 20 suggestion we started with today.
 21 But, yeah, I mean that's sort of -- that's sort of
 22 been our -- I don't know, Gina, you can probably answer this
 23 better than I can. But I mean, that's sort of how
 24 everything has always gone. We always felt like our doors
 25 are open, our phones are on, our e-mail is available; we
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1 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Yes, Commissioner Kimble.
 2 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: I initially was opposed to
 3 any delay, and I listened to all the comments and I thought
 4 many of them were very thoughtful and I think I'm still
 5 opposed to a delay.
 6 I -- I don't understand what we're going to do
 7 during this week period or whatever it is. Are we saying
 8 that it is going to be a debate and we'll tinker with some
 9 of the format, but we're going to put some guidelines on it
 10 saying it's going to be a debate?
 11 Well, I think Secretary Hobbs has already made
 12 clear that that is not acceptable to her, and she -- she
 13 doesn't want anything resembling a debate for the reasons
 14 she's outlined.
 15 I -- I'm not sure what we're hoping to accomplish
 16 if we delay this for a week. If we just say: Go out and
 17 try to get together on some things and come back in a week,
 18 I -- I think at the very least, if we do that, we've got to
 19 say, okay, it's going to be a debate, both sides are going
 20 to talk. I mean, what -- what are we going to negotiate on
 21 in the next week that we can't decide on now?
 22 It seems to me both sides have made their positions
 23 very clear. Mostly what we heard during the public comment
 24 was fears about what might happen if this proceeds as a
 25 debate; and I have a lot of trust in Ted Simons to control
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1 reply promptly, we believe in transparency with the
 2 candidates and the representatives.
 3 We're a government agency. We're not a political
 4 agency; we're not part of any other -- we're not a private
 5 foundation. We are a government agency, and this is how we
 6 think we ought to do business.
 7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Commissioner Paton, do you
 8 have anything --
 9 COMMISSIONER PATON: Yes.
 10 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- to add?
 11 I'm sorry, do you anything more to add,
 12 Commissioner Paton?
 13 COMMISSIONER PATON: I mean, I would -- I would not
 14 be opposed if Gina is okay and Tom is okay to go the extra
 15 mile to say: All right, so you got a week and either get
 16 this done or we don't.
 17 As far as going to another format, I'm totally --
 18 as far as like town halls or whatever, do that on your own;
 19 I have no interest in that. I think it's trying to subvert
 20 what we've been doing, and it will cause problems in the
 21 future.
 22 And so I would be willing to say let's give them --
 23 give them a week, and if -- if that's not satisfactory, we
 24 can't get it done, then I guess we don't have the debate.
 25 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mr. Chairman?
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1 this thing. One of the speakers, Lori, talked about if some
 2 craziness does break out, let us make the decision. That's
 3 part of what the debate is for; and I thought "I totally
 4 agree with that."
 5 I -- I don't really understand what kind of benefit
 6 we're looking for if we delay this for any amount of time.
 7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay. Well I guess, Commissioner
 8 Kimble, I mean, the question I pose then is what -- what is
 9 the alternative that we're suggesting? That we say, I mean,
 10 that -- I mean, let me back that up, okay.
 11 So from my chair one reason why we would entertain
 12 a seven-week -- or seven-day process here is, you know,
 13 Secretary Hobbs made that proposal to us that -- that she
 14 would prefer a town hall. I think it's -- I think it's
 15 clear from what three out of the four of us have said is
 16 that there's not an interest in the Commission doing that.
 17 So -- so now Secretary Hobbs' campaign knows that that's not
 18 something the Commission is interested in doing, and then we
 19 can, you know, close the book on that idea and go back to,
 20 okay, how do we address, you know, the concerns that are set
 21 forth in their letter?
 22 And if we can do that in seven days, you know,
 23 why -- my thought is -- I mean, again, thinking of voters,
 24 why would we not give the candidates the opportunity to --
 25 to get in front of the voters and why do we not give, you
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1 know, seven more day to the voters, let the candidates work
 2 this out.
 3 As far as parameters, I leave it to staff to -- to
 4 iron that out, but I think it's -- it's very clear to me
 5 that what we're saying is, yes, we want a debate, we want
 6 Ted Simons to moderate it, and we want both candidates on
 7 stage, and we want the campaigns and staff to agree upon,
 8 you know, the particulars that -- that happen in, you know,
 9 most debates of this level as I understand it.
 10 So that -- that's what I'm suggesting. And I'm not
 11 saying it's a perfect solution, but that's sort of how I see
 12 it.
 13 That -- that's the best result. It provides
 14 opportunity for the candidates and the voters to make this
 15 debate happen. Or the alternative is, what did we do today
 16 just say: We're not having the debate because Hobbs said
 17 no? I don't like that alternative.
 18 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mr. Chairman, no, I would
 19 suggest the alternative would be we're sticking with the
 20 format and the date that we -- that we mentioned in our
 21 correspondence with both candidates about a month ago.
 22 If -- if there are -- were going to be serious
 23 discussions about how the debate or how the program should
 24 be -- should unfold, it seemed like there was adequate time
 25 to bring this up between August 10th when the letter first
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1 this debate. We need to tighten up the rules and some
 2 parameters, some boundaries would be helpful, and I think in
 3 a week's time that could be done.
 4 Instead of two weeks, I think a week's time based
 5 on the comments made is what I would like to do.
 6 Thank you.
 7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: So I guess playing this out, Tom,
 8 Gina, if we -- if we give staff and the campaigns a week to
 9 try to come -- you know, to tighten this up, I guess as I've
 10 been saying and -- and you are unable to do that, what is
 11 a -- what then, I guess? Do we just say in a week that
 12 there will be no debate?
 13 I mean, how do we handle that?
 14 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, so I think -- I mean,
 15 you know, as we kind of think through, you know, we don't --
 16 we haven't drafted like a specific proposed motion for this
 17 because we wanted you all to have a real -- I mean, it
 18 brought me back a second. I mean, I think that it's
 19 demonstrable the seriousness with which the Clean Elections
 20 Commission has taken Secretary Hobbs' proposal by spending
 21 this discussion, having a rich, full discussion of all
 22 aspects of the proposal; and every one of you has recognized
 23 every aspect of the proposal and considered it fully on the
 24 record here today, and we have received extensive public
 25 comment.
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1 went out and the end of August/the beginning of September
 2 when the deadline was; and it seems at some point, we need
 3 to make a decision and not just say, okay, let's wait a
 4 while longer and see if we can make everyone happy.
 5 'Cause I don't think that's going to happen.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Titla or Commissioner
 7 Paton, do you have anything more to add?
 8 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah. Thank you, Chairman.
 9 Steve Titla again.
 10 I think that, you know, one of the things that
 11 probably was not anticipated was for the minorities or for
 12 the second language people or for the hard of hearing
 13 people, I don't think that we anticipated that. And so in
 14 order to tighten up those, how do we reach those people and
 15 how do we tighten up the rules of the debate; and now based
 16 upon all the discussions that have been had by the public
 17 and by you-all, probably a debate is the best -- what I'm
 18 thinking now also.
 19 Although taking the points of Hobbs in order where
 20 you have one of the young ladies in the comment that, you
 21 know, really the shouting or the interruptions or talking
 22 over each other, you know, the people hard of hearing,
 23 people second languages, a lot of them are minorities in the
 24 state of Arizona, we need to really tighten up those rules
 25 of what happens if, you know, something like that happens in
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1 I think that for purposes of the staff direction
 2 here, you know, in thinking forward for the next few minutes
 3 in terms of what a motion that one or the other of you might
 4 want to make, I think we're looking at something along the
 5 lines of the -- you know, the Commission authorizes the
 6 staff to, you know, work with the candidates to establish
 7 rules for the gubernatorial candidate debate; that, you
 8 know, as best as possible, accommodate concerns about
 9 interruptions and -- and similar disruptions of -- of the
 10 flow of the debate, and do so within one week.
 11 That would -- you know, something along those
 12 lines.
 13 So, and then I think that should that time expire,
 14 right, and that week has happened, it should be the
 15 understanding -- it certainly will be our understanding as
 16 staff -- that we proceed under the -- the proposal that we
 17 initially sent out with respect to format; and that
 18 therefore, you know, unless we were to alternatively receive
 19 like an RSVP to that event, right, the actual event we
 20 already proposed by a week from now, we proceed with the --
 21 with the way we stated in our August 10th letter.
 22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. But I guess maybe I'm
 23 asking a different question. If I understood what Gina was
 24 saying, right, about, you know, all the things that need to
 25 happen behind the scene, don't we need a yes or a no within
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1 one week from today?

2 I guess I don't see if -- if one campaign says yes

3 and the other campaign says no --

4 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

5 CHAIRMAN MEYER: If we don't have two yeses within

6 a week from today, how do we just proceed and say we're

7 going to have a debate like we set forth in August? Or do

8 we just say: We don't -- there is no debate?

9 MR. COLLINS: Okay. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I

10 believe I -- I thought I answered that question in there,

11 but the answer to that question is if we were to not

12 receive -- I mean, so there's a question -- I guess what

13 I -- there is a question in front of you about whether or

14 not this needs to be captured in a motion that I don't want

15 to lose site of, okay.

16 But relate -- but directly to answer your question,

17 yes, if we have not heard in one week based on -- I think --

18 I don't -- I don't see how we would -- I think we would need

19 to hear a "yes" from both -- from -- well, actually, we

20 would need a "yes" from Secretary Hobbs campaign by -- by

21 one week.

22 MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, if I

23 could clarify too.

24 So under our current procedure, if a candidate

25 declines to attend, the format turns into a 30-minute Q&A

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1 is going to go in this direction, I think it does have to

2 set parameters. I think what Mr. -- what you mentioned

3 earlier, Chairman Meyer, was a good start. But I think it

4 should be clear and -- and I think it has been from the

5 discussion, but I think this should be in the motion that

6 the Commission is not interested in anything but a real

7 debate, and I think that has to be set out.

8 You know, I think the other interesting thing is

9 that, you know, the Hobbs' team hasn't even said whether

10 they will engage at all in this process. I can speak for

11 Kari Lake, and we do view it as -- as probably unnecessary

12 and it looks like Katie Hobbs is sort of trying to run out

13 the clock, but we would engage in that process.

14 I also do believe that this body should come

15 together in a week's time and -- and the decision can be

16 formalized at a public hearing. I think it was very wise,

17 very appropriate, of Mr. Collins to bring this matter before

18 the full Commission, and I think the same thing should

19 happen in a week's time. Unless, of course, there is --

20 there is actual agreement.

21 But I think -- regardless, I think this is a

22 decision for the Body.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: You're welcome, Mr. LaSota.

25 Any other comments from the Commissioners?

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1 session. We have already received confirmation from

2 Ms. Lake that if she is the only candidate, she will proceed

3 with the 30-minute Q&A.

4 So in terms of a production standpoint, what we

5 need to know a week from now is: Are we proceeding with a

6 30-minute segment or a 60-minute segment?

7 And then if I could also, because accessibility is

8 important to us, to the Commission, Chairman and

9 Commissioners, just to clarify, we -- throughout the entire

10 process, we have been looking at how do we make sure that

11 this debate is accessible for all voters. So we will have

12 live Spanish translating, we are looking at adding a camera

13 for live ASL. Arizona PBS, because they are public

14 broadcasting, they are under certain requirements where they

15 must have closed captioning. So we do make sure that we

16 take into consideration as much as possible how can we make

17 sure that all voters have access to -- to the debate.

18 So I just wanted to share those. That is

19 definitely upon consideration for staff as we proceed with

20 production.

21 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. I see Mr. -- Mr. LaSota has

22 his hand raised.

23 Go ahead, Mr. LaSota.

24 MR. LaSOTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 I just wanted to say I think that if the Commission

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1 Well, I guess I would like to make -- I think this

2 is going to be a two-motion process, just so you understand

3 what's coming from me.

4 The first -- the first motion would be a motion --

5 I'm going to move that we I guess reject Secretary Hobbs'

6 proposal to do a town hall. And then we'll move --

7 depending on where we are there, I may have another motion

8 to make.

9 But I guess I -- I first move that the Commission

10 reject the town hall proposal set forth by Secretary Hobbs

11 campaign in the letter to the Commission dated

12 September 2nd, 2022.

13 That is my motion. Is there a second to that

14 motion?

15 COMMISSIONER PATON: This is Galen Paton. I'll

16 second that motion.

17 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay, we have a first and a

18 second.

19 I'm going to call the roll on the vote. I will

20 start with Commissioner Paton, how do you vote?

21 COMMISSIONER PATON: Aye.

22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Kimble.

23 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Aye.

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Titla.

25 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Nay.

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1 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. And I'm Commissioner Meyer,
 2 and I vote -- I vote aye.
 3 So the motion -- that motion carries 3 to 1.
 4 And then I have a second motion I'd like to make,
 5 and that is -- I'm going to try to do this as artfully as I
 6 can: I move that the Commission authorizes Clean Elections
 7 Commission staff, over the next seven days, to attempt to
 8 engage and work with both campaigns to agree -- to agree to
 9 a debate format that will lead to the two candidates
 10 participating in a debate for the purpose of aiding Arizona
 11 voters in evaluating these two candidates.
 12 And for the record, by "debate" I mean with both
 13 candidates on stage at the same time to be moderated by
 14 Mr. Simons.
 15 That is my motion. Is there a second to that
 16 motion?
 17 COMMISSIONER PATON: This is Galen Paton. I'll
 18 second that motion.
 19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay. And I guess I should back
 20 up. Tom, that motion, is that sufficiently detailed, do you
 21 believe?
 22 MR. COLLINS: Well --
 23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I guess --
 24 MR. COLLINS: Well maybe -- yeah. Yeah, we can
 25 make it work.

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1 undertaken actions, and we will continue to work on that to
 2 make sure we have the best format as possible in terms of a
 3 production so the debate is accessible to those who are hard
 4 of hearing or -- or any other concerns, and we will make
 5 sure we can provide a production value that is equitable.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And -- and Commissioner Titla, I
 7 would urge you to make another motion after we vote on this
 8 one if you like. Would that work, sir?
 9 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah, yeah. That's okay.
 10 Because your motion was my motion, remember that?
 11 CHAIRMAN MEYER: It was very similar, yes. Yes, it
 12 was.
 13 Okay. Well that's a little precursor of how this
 14 might go. But, okay.
 15 So let's call the roll then. Commissioner Paton,
 16 how do you vote on my motion?
 17 COMMISSIONER PATON: Aye.
 18 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I'm sorry?
 19 COMMISSIONER PATON: Aye.
 20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Aye.
 21 Commissioner Kimble, how do you vote?
 22 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: I agree with all of your
 23 motion except the delay, so I'm going to vote no.
 24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay. Commissioner Titla, how do
 25 you vote?

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1 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Okay. So we have a first
 2 and a second. So now let's call the roll on that.
 3 Commissioner Paton --
 4 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Chairman?
 5 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Oh. Go ahead.
 6 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Chairman, I have a question on
 7 that. In your motion, to clarify, are we going to ensure
 8 that second language people, hard of hearing people --
 9 are -- that we can reach them, that the debate will be able
 10 to, you know, have parameters so that they can be accessible
 11 to those people, minorities?
 12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Sure. And, well, I guess my
 13 response to that is, of course we want those -- the -- that
 14 to happen, we want minorities, non-English language speakers
 15 or ASL, but I believe Gina Roberts told us that that is
 16 already going to happen and that that is something that's
 17 already been taken care of, so I don't know that that needs
 18 to be included in the motion.
 19 So, Gina --
 20 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yeah.
 21 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- is that something that you can
 22 confirm?
 23 MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Titla,
 24 Commissioners, we can continue to look on how we can improve
 25 that and make that a priority. So, yes, we have already

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1 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Aye.
 2 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay. And --
 3 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Aye.
 4 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- I vote aye as well.
 5 So the motion carries 3 to 1.
 6 And Tom, just so we have clarity on the record, we
 7 just passed a motion 3 to 1 that authorizes staff, over the
 8 next seven days, to attempt to engage both the
 9 Secretary Hobbs campaign and the Lake Campaign to attempt to
 10 agree to a debate format with both candidates on stage in
 11 what will be a traditional debate to try to come to a
 12 process in the next seven days, okay.
 13 And if -- it's my understanding based upon the
 14 prior comment that if we cannot get an agreement on that,
 15 then it would revert to two 30-minute town halls; is that
 16 correct? Or, no?
 17 MR. COLLINS: No. Mr. Chairman, you rejected that.
 18 It will be -- it will be the --
 19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Well, I rejected doing that now,
 20 but I think what Gina said is by statute we have to do that.
 21 Is that...
 22 MR. COLLINS: No. No. No, I'm sorry.
 23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.
 24 MR. COLLINS: I'm not trying to argue with you; I
 25 just need to correct you about what we have proposed. We

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1 have never ever proposed two 30-minute town halls.

2 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay.

3 MR. COLLINS: The -- the --- essentially the way

4 that it operates is the debate is set, someone doesn't RSVP,

5 the debate still goes on except it turns into a Q&A, and

6 that's with one -- with the candidate that agreed to the

7 debate.

8 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. All right, thank you. I

9 think that corrects the record.

10 I -- Tom, is there anything else --

11 MR. COLLINS: I --

12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- on the agenda or --

13 MR. COLLINS: No, I --

14 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- any other clarity? I mean, do

15 we want to set a meeting for next week?

16 MR. COLLINS: Well, Mr. Chairman, to answer your

17 question, first, I do think we need to make sure we capture

18 whatever -- however Commissioner Titla would like to...

19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Oh. Yes.

20 MR. COLLINS: We had talked about the second motion

21 to -- you know, to get some teeth or encouragement on the

22 accessibility and language issue, I want to -- I don't want

23 to lose that.

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.

25 Commissioner Titla, the floor is yours if you'd

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1 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner

2 Kimble. I second that.

3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: 'Kay. All right, we'll call the

4 roll.

5 Commissioner Paton.

6 COMMISSIONER PATON: Aye.

7 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Kimble.

8 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Aye.

9 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Titla.

10 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN MEYER: And is Commissioner Meyer, I vote

12 aye.

13 So that motion carries 4 to 0.

14 And I think -- just I think the intent of that

15 motion is that the Commission do what they can on those

16 issues.

17 So other than that, there is -- Tom, is there

18 anything else that we need to cover today? I see your hand

19 raised.

20 MR. COLLINS: Oh. No. I mean, I -- I --

21 Mr. Chairman, I don't -- I mean I don't think so.

22 I mean you had mentioned briefly if you want to

23 meet next week. I mean, I -- I -- my personal view is that

24 you've decided we have the timeline; we have a clock on it.

25 So I will not need additional direction I don't think, I

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1 like to make a motion on that issue.

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Titla?

4 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yes, I got -- I got knocked

5 off.

6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: No, I -- I said the floor is yours

7 if you would like to make a motion regarding the issue of

8 accessibility that you had raised?

9 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Yes. I'd like to make a

10 motion that the staff work on accessibility of minorities

11 and second language people and people hard of hearing to

12 ensure that they are able to get all the information they

13 can from this debate that we are planning, and that the

14 boundaries be established so that the interruptions or

15 talking over each other or shouting, you know, not -- not be

16 tolerated so that all voters can have access to everything

17 that is being said.

18 That's my motion.

19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Can we get that read back?

20 THE STENOGRAPHER: I just want to make sure you can

21 hear me, Chairman.

22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I can.

23 (Record read by the stenographer.)

24 CHAIRMAN MEYER: All right. Is there a second to

25 that motion?

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1 would not need an additional meeting because I feel like the

2 decisions here are -- have been made.

3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: I guess essentially it's

4 self-executing here; we don't need to get together again to

5 discuss it?

6 MR. COLLINS: I mean -- I mean, look, I mean, I

7 always -- let me put it this way, as I said at the outset,

8 you-all are my bosses. So, therefore, when I am in a place

9 where I don't have a very good sense of what to do, I do try

10 to exercise my judgment and not unreasonably have this whole

11 thing -- you know, meeting, but. And so in this particular

12 case, you know, I -- I would never say we would never ask

13 for a meeting if we need to; but as it stands now, my

14 expectation is and just so everybody knows, there's not

15 going to be a meeting necessary to complete this act.

16 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. Okay.

17 Then we had the time to call a meeting if we need

18 one, and we don't need to make that decision today.

19 Okay. So that moves us on to Agenda Item

20 Number IV, which is public comment.

21 This is the time for consideration of comments and

22 suggestions from the public. Unlike comment on specific

23 Agenda Item Number III, action taken as a result of public

24 comment will be limited to directing staff to study the

25 matter or rescheduling the matter for further consideration

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1 and decision at a later date or responding to criticism.
2 Does any member of the public wish to make comments
3 at this time?
4 You may send comments to the Commission by mail or
5 e-mail at CCEC@AZCleanElections.gov.
6 Do we have any comment from the public?
7 I see one hand raised.
8 All right. I will turn it over to our meeting
9 coordinator here. As far as time, I'm going to give
10 everyone here 60 seconds on this.
11 But go -- I'm going to turn it over to our meeting
12 coordinator. Go ahead, please.
13 (No response.)
14 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Is our meeting coordinator there
15 still?
16 MS. THOMAS: Jessica, can you hear us?
17 MS. PAINTER: Hi, yes.
18 Anthony Dewitt, if you want to go ahead.
19 SPEAKER DEWITT: Hi. Thanks again for the
20 opportunity. I appreciate you guys diligently working
21 through this and thank you guys for, you know, continuing
22 forward with the debate format. I appreciate you guys
23 working to do everything you can.
24 I would just definitely implore you, you know, I
25 am -- I am kind of concerned that after you guys meet, I
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1 I just want to say I am deeply concerned that it
2 would be an option that either candidate could say no to
3 this debate. That scares me to death as a resident of the
4 state that the person running our state would decline and
5 have -- have the permission to decline when it comes to
6 representing us.
7 So I don't know if that's like a rule, I'm not that
8 smart to know that, but I will tell you that is so
9 concerning to me that it would even be an option to say no.
10 Thank you.
11 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.
12 MS. PAINTER: All right, thank you.
13 And Cottle, if you could state your full name for
14 the record and then go ahead.
15 SPEAKER COTTLE: Yes, hi. My name is Lynn Ann
16 Cottle and I'm in full agreement with what Ms. Sanders --
17 Saunders just said.
18 And I was wondering if in the future if -- I don't
19 know if it's the role of the clean collec- -- I'm sorry,
20 Clean Elections Commission to make it a -- it is a must,
21 a -- it's something that if you are a gubernatorial
22 candidate and, of course, you can select whichever
23 candidate, you know, go down the line; but that it is
24 imperative, it is a must that they do debate. I think
25 that's something that should happen this election and in
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1 don't know if you guys are going to do another open forum
2 like this, but I do implore you, please don't cancel this
3 debate depending on what the outcome is. If one campaign or
4 another decides not to show, the one's who have already said
5 they don't want a debate format, if they continue with
6 that -- with that not -- with not wanting to, you know,
7 participate, I would still implore you guys to continue with
8 the debate.
9 I think it will be -- I think it will be very
10 powerful for voters to see, you know, who take that step;
11 and, you know, I think it would be a travesty and I think it
12 would set a bad precedent if you guys were to cancel after a
13 week because one person doesn't want to show up.
14 So that's just my concern. You know, whether this
15 debate happens, if someone decides not to show up, I think
16 we still continue with the debate as you guys have proposed
17 and, you know, we'll let the voters decide what to think on
18 that.
19 Thank so much. I appreciate it.
20 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.
21 MS. PAINTER: All right, thank you. And Wendee
22 Saunders.
23 SPEAKER SAUNDERS: Thank you so much. Really
24 appreciate being a part of this today and thank you for the
25 clarification on the e-mail.
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1 future elections, especially the role of Governor.
2 Thank you so much.
3 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.
4 MS. PAINTER: All right, thank you.
5 And Taylor Tasler.
6 SPEAKER TASLER: Hi, yes, Taylor Tasler with KTAR
7 News.
8 I just had a quick clarification question. So if
9 you don't hear back from one of the candidates or they
10 decline, so will it default to a 30-minute Q&A; is that the
11 default option here?
12 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Tom, correct me if I'm wrong, but
13 what I heard you say is if one candidate --
14 MR. COLLINS: Yes.
15 CHAIRMAN MEYER: -- agrees to participate and the
16 other does not, then it defaults to a Q&A with the candidate
17 that agreed to participate. Is that -- do I have that
18 correct?
19 MR. COLLINS: Yes. I would like to put a lot more
20 legal stuff in there but, yes.
21 SPEAKER TASLER: Perfect. Thank you.
22 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Thank you.
23 Okay. Is there any more public comment?
24 (No response.)
25 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Okay. I would entertain a motion
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1 to adjourn from -- oh. Wait. Before I do that, I just want
 2 to say to the Clean Elections Commission staff. I know how
 3 hard you've been working on this; I appreciate everything
 4 you've done.
 5 Commissioner Paton gets my vote for best comment of
 6 the day when he said you're not going to find more fair
 7 people than Gina Roberts and Tom Collins. I know you've
 8 been working hard on this; I know we've asked you to work
 9 hard for another seven days -- or hopefully you have the
 10 opportunity to do that -- and I want you to know that
 11 it's -- I sincerely appreciate that. And I know we're
 12 asking a lot of you, but I really do appreciate this and
 13 I -- I'm -- I'm asking you to do this for the Arizona voters
 14 and I really, really appreciate what you do.
 15 So if any other Commissioners want to comment, I
 16 will -- I will allow comment or a motion to adjourn. So,
 17 whichever is next.
 18 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Motion to adjourn.
 19 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Motion to adjourn. All right, is
 20 there a second to that motion?
 21 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Commissioner Kimble, I
 22 second.
 23 CHAIRMAN MEYER: All right. We have a first and a
 24 second.
 25 Call the roll. Commissioner Paton.

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1 COMMISSIONER PATON: Aye.
 2 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Kimble.
 3 COMMISSIONER KIMBLE: Aye.
 4 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Titla.
 5 COMMISSIONER TITLA: Aye.
 6 CHAIRMAN MEYER: Commissioner Meyer, aye.
 7 We are adjourned. Thank you, everyone.
 8 (Whereupon the meeting concludes at 2:00 p.m.).
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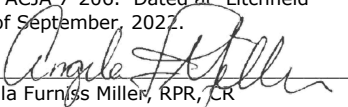
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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
 2
 3 STATE OF ARIZONA)
 4) ss.
 5 COUNTY OF MARICOPA)
 6
 7 BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were
 8 taken before me, Angela Furniss Miller, Certified Reporter
 9 No. 50127, all done to the best of my skill and ability;
 10 that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and
 11 thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

12 I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the
 13 parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome
 14 thereof.

15 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have complied with the
 16 requirements set forth in ACJA 7-206. Dated at Litchfield
 17 Park, Arizona, this 12th of September, 2022.

18 
 19 Angela Furniss Miller, RPR, CR
 20 CERTIFIED REPORTER (AZ50127)

* * *

21 I CERTIFY that Miller Certified Reporting, LLC, has
 22 complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-201 and
 23 7-206. Dated at LITCHFIELD PARK, Arizona, this 12th of
 24 September, 2022.

25 
 Miller Certified Reporting, LLC
 Arizona RRF No. R1058

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