

2026 Organizational Meeting

January 2, 2026

Attendance: Democratic Commissioner Luz Torres, Republican Commissioner Nacole Ellis, Democratic Deputy Commissioner Christopher Burt, Republican Deputy Commissioner Natalie Green, Democratic Elections Administrators Amanda Fox, Assistant County Attorney Nathan Harp.

Meeting Opened by Commissioner Torres at 9:02am.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ellis

The Chautauqua County Board of Elections met at 9:03am on Friday January 2nd 2026, Per Section 3-212 of the New York State Election Law requires an annual organizational meeting. Democratic Commissioner Luz Torres and Republican Commissioner Nacole Ellis are beginning their second year of a four-year term. Republican Commissioner Ellis appointed Natalie Green during the 2025 year as her Republican Deputy Commissioner, while Democratic Deputy Commissioner Burt still remains within that appointment. The Commissioners have adopted procedures for the appointment of president and secretary for the Board in 2025, It will be as follows – Secretary Republican Commissioner Nacole Ellis and President Democratic Commissioner Luz Torres and these two positions will reverse each year.

Democratic Commissioner Torres appointed Democrat Nancy Rowe as one of the two trainers, Commissioner Ellis appointed Republican Ruth Eckstrom as the other trainer. The Board of Elections follows the county’s guidelines related to mileage and pay rate.

The Chautauqua County Board of Elections has set the following adopted rates:

Paper copy of voters:	\$0.50 per sheet (raised \$.25)
Copies:	\$0.50 per sheet (raised \$.25)
E-mailed lists and information	No charge

All Primary and General Election Inspector costs will be absorbed by the County. Inspector’s will be paid in the amount of \$16.00 per hour and Poll Site Coordinators will be paid \$19.00 per hour unless on the County payroll. Any inspector being trained and is scheduled to work will be paid \$35.00 for attending one of the training dates.

Any March Village/May School Scheduled Elections will be a minimum charge of \$1,600.00 plus other fees if applied which includes delivery fee charge. Any off-cycle election is subject to different rates including schools. This fee will be set by both Commissioner Torres and Ellis. Any off-cycle election will be a minimum charge of \$3,500.00 plus other fees if applied which includes delivery fee charge. Ballot charges are also \$.37 per ballot (raised \$.05). If for any reason more ballots need to be made in an election, the School/Village/Library will be charged an **additional** \$400.00 (raised \$200.) and the \$.37 per ballot.

The Board of Elections will assign inspectors to the polling sites. We will be training all of our election inspectors again this year as described in Election Law. Training will take place in August 2026, any additional trainings would be based on need thereafter. The County Finance department process's personnel paperwork for new inspectors. The Board of Elections will be conducting our poll site assessment survey and will provide such information to the State Board. This will detail ADA compliance, proper signage, proper parking etc.

The weekly staff meetings will continue to be held as needed unless otherwise noted. Formal decisions will also be entered in the minutes. Minutes will be kept in a folder on the County's BOE I-drive.

The County Board of Elections sends letters to the schools informing them of the school election date and offering to do a presentation to their students or provide them registrations forms so they can register students.

Commissioner's Torres and Ellis are notaries. Deputy Commissioners Burt is also a notary.

The County Board continues our outreach with the schools, library, City, Town, Village Clerks office and all Post Office locations.

We continue to use our webpage as a means to communicate and share information with the public to keep them informed. Our website is continuously updated.

Our year end statistics ending December 31st, 2025 includes total active registrations of 80,296 Voters and inactive registrations at 5,809.

Republican Commissioner Ellis and Deputy Democratic Commissioner Burt are Co-Chairs for NYSECA (New York State Election Commissioner Association) for Region 6.

Commissioner's and Deputies will participate in monthly calls from the NYS BOE.

At this time is there any comments or suggestions from anyone? (Discussion) Call from Councilman Mike Civelletto was to address the possibility of moving his district (Dunkirk 4-1) over to PTECH. Concerns from the Board are not only Safety (railroad tracks) his area closer for walking as he pointed out poorer of the city with no means of transportation but the other side of the district would have the same issue or concerns. The Board of Elections now offers Early Mail Voting (New last year) in addition to absentee voting, Early Voting for 9 Days prior to Election Day. The Board has discussed the concern, printed maps of the district and has made the decision to leave district 4-1 at the Clarion where it has been for 2 years.

All changes have been voted on as unanimously and we look forward to 2026

A Motion to adjourn by Democratic Commissioner Torres was seconded by Republican Commissioner Ellis at 9:14am.