

Appeals Committee Majority Opinion

Statement of Facts of the Matter

On May 30th, 2026, the Lynchburg Republican City Committee (LRCC) conducted a canvass to nominate three candidates for Lynchburg City Council. Ten candidates qualified for the canvass, with a goal of nominating three candidates to proceed to the November General Election.

The Party conducted an election at Brookville Ruritan Club from 8:00am to 3:00pm. Tabulation and counting continued until late that evening. Republican Party of Virginia (RPV) staff, RPV Chairman Jeff Ryer, Acting LRCC Chair Sarah Kalafian, Electoral Board Members Steven “Doc” Troxel, as Chairman, Jeffrey Helgeson, and Betty Gibbs were all in attendance. Following the vote tally and announcement of the victors, the RPV State Central Committee received three separate appeals from aggrieved parties that participated in the Mass Meeting.

The duly filed and formed Appeals Committee consisted of Tim Parrish and Trevor Webb, appointed by the Appellants, John Massoud and Caleb Cruvey, appointed by the Appellees, and Carey Allen as the mutually agreed fifth member of the Committee. The Appeals Committee began their hearing on June 9th, 8:45pm listening to arguments from Chris Woodfin, counsel for the Appellants, and Doc Troxel and Susan Oliver, representative and counsel to the Appellees, respectively.

That evening, the Appeals Committee agreed on a vote of 3-2 to side with the Appellants. The Appeals Committee then reconvened the following day with RPV Counsel Chris Marston to discuss and vote on remedies which are explained later in this opinion.

Statement of Alleged Violations & Reasoning For Decision

For the purposes of this section, the Appeal submitted by Stephanie Reed and Chris Boswell is the “Reed/Boswell Appeal”, the Appeal submitted by Chris Faraldi is the “Faraldi Appeal”, and the Appeal submitted by Dexter Gaines, Beth White, and Dwight Williams is the “Gaines Appeal”.

The Appellant’s argument consisted of several allegations of malfeasance and impropriety during the Canvass. Their allegations included Party Plan violations in Articles I, VII, and VIII. A detailed listing of those alleged violations are below:

“Late in the evening on May 29th, 2026, hours before the start of their party canvass, the Lynchburg Republican City Committee – through official channels – sent a citywide email blast

entitled “Elective Office Committee Report for May 30th, 2026 Republican Firehouse Primary” - **Reed / Boswell**

Article VII, Section I Violation (Endorsement Clause)

The Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellant*** on this matter as the “Elective Office Committee Report” represented a clear violation of Article VII, Section I of the Party Plan based on an anti-endorsement of three candidates. The LRCC used their official email address to send this Report despite it offering an anti-endorsement of three specific candidates. Further, the exclusion of a Lynchburg School Board member’s voting record seemed a targeted action against the three candidates not “endorsed” by the LRCC. This is further backed by written comments by Acting LRCC Chair Sarah Kalafian, where she says, “Therefore, they [Reed, Boswell, and Taylor] are not endorsed by the LRCC”. This is a clear violation of Article VII, Section I of the Party Plan.

“For the entire duration of the May 30th, 2026 Party Canvass, official members of the Lynchburg City Republican Committee distributed copies of a report from the Elective Office Committee (Exhibit C) stating it was paid for and authorized by the LRCC to participants in the party canvass on sight.” - **Reed / Boswell**

Article VII, Section I Violation (Endorsement Clause)

The Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellant*** on this matter as the “Elective Office Committee Report” was distributed to prospective voters on the May 30th, 2026 canvass based on testimony received by RPV Executive Director Nicholas Proffitt. In his testimony to the Appeals Committee, he said that acting Chair Sarah Kalafian relayed that roughly 100 of these Reports were passed out to prospective voters. Additionally, it had to be relayed on *three separate occasions* that the Reports were being passed out to voters. This is a clear violation of Article VII, Section I of the Party Plan.

“Further, the Elective Office Committee’s primary objective stated in the LRCC bylaws is to hold accountable to the “Republican Party in the city” – not the Republican Party of Virginia. This alone is a violation of the Party Plan.” - **Reed / Boswell**

Article VII, Section H (RPV Supremacy Clause)

The Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellant*** on this matter as the Elective Office Committee’s bylaws put it out of step with the RPV Party Plan’s supremacy on lower units and their subsidiaries. Local unit committees operate as an extension of the RPV and the Party Plan supersedes all bylaws. No additional qualifiers may be added to control a process or vet candidates. This is a clear violation of Article VII, Section H of the Party Plan.

“One of the three “LRCC Electoral Board Members” stated on a local radio show the names of Firehouse Primary Voters/participants will be published in the local News & Advance” - **Faraldi**
Article VII, Section J Violation (Ethics Clause)

The Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellant*** on this matter as these comments by an Electoral Board Member were meant to intimidate voters and discourage participation in the Party Canvass. With these comments, this Electoral Board member was not acting “in good faith, with reasonable care, skill, and diligence.” This is a clear violation of Article VII, Section J of the Party Plan.

“The night before the Firehouse Primary, several signs were placed and paid for and authorized by the LRCC stating: “Republican Membership Required”.” - **Gaines**
Article I, Section A Violation

The Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellant*** on this matter as this sign was in direct conflict with Article I, Section A of the Party Plan. It states, “All citizens of the United States who are legal and qualified voters under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, regardless of race, religion, national origin or sex, who are in accord with the principles of the Republican Party, and who, if requested, express in open meeting either orally or in writing as may be required their intent to support all of its nominees for public office in the ensuing election may participate as members of the Republican Party of Virginia in its mass meetings, party canvasses, conventions, or primaries encompassing their respective election districts”

The sign displayed outside of the polling precinct said, “Republican Party Membership **REQUIRED**”. This was a clear violation of Article I, Section A of the Party Plan. Appellees argued that a similar sign was approved by RPV Counsel Chris Marston. Upon further investigation, this argument did not hold weight as conversations with Counsel revealed that the sign he approved for the 2024 Mass Meeting to elect an LRCC Chairman was *drastically different* from the sign displayed on May 30th, and for two separate elections - one for party office, another for public.

There were also several complaints regarding the conduct of the process and amendment of the tabulation method from ‘Ranked Choice Voting’ to ‘First Past the Post’, or in some cases referred to as ‘Plurality’. These were alleged violations of Article II, Section 21, Article VIII Section A(2), and Article VIII, Section A(3) - **Faraldi Appeal**. In these cases, the Appeals Committee ***agreed with the Appellee*** and did not determine that these allegations were a violation of the Party Plan. However, it is noted that simply because an action does not violate the Party Plan, does not make it just. The Appeals Committee recommends a revision to the Party Plan that does *not allow for changing of the method of tabulation once absentee ballots have been distributed*.

In this case, voters who had returned their absentee ballot voted in a Ranked Choice election, but those that chose to participate on May 30th, participated in First Past the Post election - fundamentally separate voting styles.

It must be noted that the Appellees attempted to discard the merits of the complainant's appeals on the basis that they did not have the requisite number of signatures. This argument did not hold weight as the signers of the appeal, though not having their ballot counted, were determined to be voters in the canvass on May 30th, 2026. The Appellees approach a slippery slope - "*if I toss every vote of my opposition, then there is no one to contest my election*".

Additionally, the Appellees claimed that since multiple aggrieved parties signed similar appeals, they were not in order. No member raised objections to the formation of the Appeals Committee.

Finally, Appellees contended that the Appeals were not duly filed in the proper venue. RPV Chairman Jeff Ryer spoke with 5th District Chairman Rick Buchanan prior to forming the Appeals Committee and it was determined the 5th Congressional District Republican Committee *did not intend on taking up the matter*. Therefore, this is a State Central Committee matter, and this was a duly formed Appeals Committee. Any claims against forming this Appeals Committee are foolish.

Ultimately, this opinion does not even begin to contest the potential legal implications of this improperly conducted canvass. However, we would be remiss if we did not mention the brutal optics of a Chairman of the Lynchburg Republican City Committee who, based on testimony, appointed the overseers of an election *that she planned on participating in as a candidate* before renouncing her Chairmanship. This, in addition to irregular provisional balloting procedures, **voting via email**, disenfranchisement of military members, intimidation of voters, improper submission of election forms, and a myriad of questionable actions from the Party that is supposed to defend election integrity is puzzling at best, conniving at worst. This Appeals Committee agreed that the violations of the Party Plan, of which there are many, represent egregious violations of the basic tenets of the Republican Party of Virginia. This canvass, and the actions of certain actors in the LRCC, have tainted the reputation of the local Party beyond repair, and for that, there must be consequences.

Final Determination

The Appeals Committee determined that there were many instances in which the RPV Chairman, Counsel, and staff advised the LRCC to take particular actions to prevent appeals to be brought forward against the Committee. Repeatedly, those suggestions and directives were dismissed. It

is for this reason, and for the aforementioned Party Plan violations, that the Appeals Committee agreed to the following remedies:

1. Declare the Lynchburg Republican City Committee to have failed to function and therefore be defunct and;
2. Direct Chairman Ryer to appoint replacements of the LRCC Executive Committee within 30 days of this ruling and; *(Unanimously agreed to by the Appeals Committee)*
3. Direct Chairman Ryer to appoint a committee with the assistance of General Counsel Marston to review the bylaws of the LRCC for compliance with the RPV Party Plan and the Code of Virginia and; *(Unanimously agreed to by the Appeals Committee)*
4. Nullify the results of the Party Canvass and allow all interested candidates to file as Independents in the General Election without penalty and;
5. Current executive officers of the LRCC shall be banned from serving in a LRCC leadership position for the remainder of the current term, with the exception of Doc Troxel, if he holds such a position currently and;
6. Steven “Doc” Troxel is hereby commended for his efforts to attempt a fair process for the May 30th Party Canvass and; *(Unanimously agreed to by the Appeals Committee)*
7. Jeff Helgeson is hereby censured and barred from all party offices, including LRCC membership, for the remainder of the current term. *(Unanimously agreed to by the Appeals Committee)*

Respectfully Submitted,

Carey Allen, Chairman

Tim Parrish

Trevor Webb