

The Virgin Islands Consortium

What's In A Name: 'Chucky', 'Chuckie', 'Chooky'?

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Sen. Alicia "Chucky" Hansen looking at BOE member Roland Moolenar count ballots.

A month ago today, voters on St. Croix went to the polls to vote into office the candidates of their choice for Governor, Senate, Board of Elections and Senator-At-Large.

One of the more controversial contests was the senatorial race, largely because of the fight Sen. Alicia "Chucky" Hansen waged in order to remain on the November 4 General Election ballot. After much legal wrangling, the Senator's name and ballot number (#10) were removed from the line up of candidates for Senate by order of the Supreme Court on Oct. 24.

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wider view.

At a Board of Elections meeting on Dec. 3, where it was decided that a recount of Sen. Hansen's votes in the Nov. 4 General Election, along with two other candidates, would begin on Dec. 4 at 1 p.m., Adelbert Bryan, Board chairman, addressed the multitude of Hansen aliases, stating that all candidates had submitted a notarized affidavit containing the way they wanted their names to appear on the ballot. He said Hansen's affidavit only contained the name 'Alicia Chucky Hansen.'

However, Board member Lisa Harris-Moorhead countered Bryan's argument, stating that in Hansen's case, because her name was eventually taken off of the ballot, her notarized affidavit was null and void.

"She was no longer on the ballot, so for write-in, she sent in something different," Harris-Moorhead said.

Former Senator and Elections Board member, Lilliana Belardo de O'Neal, chimed in.

"In my opinion, if that name is included on that list that she submitted, and that name is written under the senatorial section, I think that this Board needs to make a decision that we give it to her," she said. "These are aliases that [she is] known by."

Part of the issue, Board members say, was whether or not to give Hansen or other write-in candidates a vote if the voter only wrote in the candidate's name, but neglected to fill in the oval to the left of the name. According to instructions found on the ballot, a vote is not valid if the oval is not filled in.



Belardo de O'Neal continued to make her case for allowing non-bubbled ovals as a valid vote for a write-in candidate.

"I saw the letter; I'm not talking about the letter. I'm talking about the ballots themselves, I did not see fifty-four aliases," Belardo de O'Neal said. "There were either Chucky, Chuck, Chuckie Hansen and everything was related to how the senator wrote her name. We need to decide if we will accept the non-bubble votes and give it to her."

Harris-Moorhead eventually moved to allow write-in votes without a filled in oval to be counted as a valid vote, overriding the instructions on the ballot. Two other Board members, Belardo de O'Neal and Rupert Ross, voted in favor of the motion, allowing it to pass. Bryan voted against the motion and Roland Moolenaar did not vote. Members Raymond Williams and Glenn Webster were absent.

As Bryan continued voicing his bewilderment with the amount of names attorney Rohn submitted to the Supervisor of Elections on behalf of Hansen, Harris-Moorhead, visibly frustrated, told Bryan that Board members did not accept each of the aliases as a valid write-in name for the Senator.

"No body honored fifty-four names, you did not participate in the count," she told Bryan. "We did not honor all those names. Neither of us counted 'Chucky No. 10.' Neither of us counted anything other than this woman's name. The spelling of the name is irrelevant because you cannot disenfranchise anybody for not knowing how to spell."