



When we invite candidates to reserve a proposed date, we do so to accommodate requests for changes in date or time. One candidate alerted us to his conflict shortly after receiving our first letter (in July), and we moved to a date that worked for everyone well before Labor Day.

Two candidates, who asserted religious conflicts **after** we canceled their forums, did not respond to our July letter, nor to a stream of subsequent emails, texts and calls over many weeks. When we finally made contact in mid-September, they did not mention any conflict: One said they "couldn't commit" because they were "unsure what might come up," and the other said they needed to check with their party (and then texted a refusal).

Although it is difficult to arrange an alternate date within 4 weeks of early voting, we would have tried had they taken our invitation seriously enough to look at their calendars when asked. When candidates just refuse to participate without letting us know the date or timing is causing a religious or personal conflict, we have no choice about canceling the forum.

Both **Paul W. Jardonne** running in **Nassau County Legislative District 10** and **Liza A. Chafian** running for **TNH Council District 5** were disappointed when their opponents decided not to participate.

Because we now are led to believe that all four candidates would participate if the date in question is not a religious or personal conflict, we have found a suitable venue and hope to see all four on October 23, the two listed above as well as **Mazi Melesa Pilip** and **Yaron Levy**. We will keep you posted.

On another note, two other candidates who were eager to participate had their forums unexpectedly canceled this fall:

- Nassau County Legislative District 11 incumbent **Delia DeRiggi-Whitten** learned her challenger had changed his mind about appearing less than a week in advance.
- More understandably, Town of North Hempstead Clerk challenger **Jason Lew** was disappointed when incumbent **Ragini Srivastava** came down with a nasty Covid infection and refrained from participating on September 25 for personal and public health reasons.