

General Election – November 5, 2024

CANVASSING BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 17, 2024

IN ATTENDANCE:

Canvassing Board Members

County Judge Betsy Benson, Chair
Michael Udine, County Commissioner
Joe Scott, Supervisor of Elections

SOE Staff

Mary Hall, Chief Deputy Supervisor of Elections
Kevron Aird, Deputy Supervisor of Elections
Other members of the SOE's staff

Also, in Attendance

Devona Reynolds Perez, SOE Counsel
Scott Andron, Canvassing Board Counsel
Members of the Public

MEETING CONVENED: 10:00 A.M.

The meeting was called to order by Judge Betsy Benson at 10:00 a.m. In attendance were Judge Betsy Benson, and Supervisor of Elections Joe Scott.

Pledge of allegiance

A motion to approve the minutes from the previous Canvassing Board meeting held on October 15th was granted by the board members present.

Chief Deputy Mary Hall requested that the board first review voter intent ballots. Herman Schnell, representing the Republican Party, inquired whether it was acceptable for only two board members to review the voter intent ballots. The judge clarified that the present members would review the ballots, and any unresolved issues would be set aside until the third member arrived. Shortly after, Commissioner Michael Udine joined the meeting as the review commenced.

Elizabeth Butler, an audience member, approached the podium and asked for the microphone to be moved closer to the Supervisor of Elections (SOE) to better hear board comments. Monica Elliott from the League of Women Voters also approached the podium due to a technical issue with Zoom, which was resolved immediately. During the review, Herman Schnell raised questions about some of the markings on the voted ballots.

Following the review of the voter intent ballots, a motion to allow SOE staff to duplicate ballots and present them for public inspection was granted by the board.

Chief Deputy Hall requested permission for SOE staff to review blank ballots and bring any ballots with markings to the board for review. Herman Schnell asked that the daily count of reviewed blank ballots be included in the minutes, which Judge Benson approved. The request from Chief Deputy Hall was granted.

The board reviewed 39 ballots with overvotes. any members of the audience that saw anything questionable had the opportunity to speak up during the reviewing. A motion that 36 ballots are overvotes and to duplicate 3 ballots was granted by the board.

Chief Hall reminded the board of a prior approval allowing SOE staff to review ballots, with any discrepancies brought to the board's attention. Six duplicated ballots were presented for review, and a motion confirming the correct duplication of these ballots was granted. Additionally, Herman Schnell requested that printed materials be updated to refer to "cards" instead of "ballots" when discussing blank ballots.

The board also addressed 115 voter intent duplicated sets, granting approval for SOE staff to review the sets and report any irregularities at the next meeting.

60 Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballots signed by someone other than the voter were presented for review. Herman Schnell requested that the board, not SOE staff, review ballots from voters living in the same household. One ballot was put on hold. A motion to approve, process, and tabulate the VBM ballots was granted. Schnell's comments regarding discrepancies and handling of the pending VBM ballot were noted by the board. The board agreed to defer the pending ballot until the second ballot or cure affidavit was received.

Three challenge/protest forms were reviewed by the board:

- Precinct #C011 – Ballot set aside pending a cure affidavit.
- Precinct #N003 – A husband and wife signed each other's envelope. A motion to approve both ballots was granted.

One additional ballot was presented for review, and a motion to defer it until a second ballot or cure affidavit was received was granted.

Supervisor Scott reiterated that while the public is welcome in the transparency room, blank ballots would not be made available for public inspection without a public records request. The functionality of the public inspection process is based on the SOE and not by the board. Judge Benson affirmed that this is a procedural matter involving the SOE and his staff.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Canvassing Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

RECESS

With no further business to be conducted, a motion was granted by the board to recess the Canvassing Board meeting at 11:42 a.m.