

General Election – November 5, 2024

CANVASSING BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 24, 2024

IN ATTENDANCE:

Canvassing Board Members

County Judge Betsy Benson, Chair
County Commissioner Lamar P. Fisher
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 included, but were not limited to, Camille Coolidge and Herman Schnell, representing the Republican Party, and Larry Davis, representing the Democratic Party.

MEETING CONVENED: 2:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Judge Betsy Benson at 2:00 p.m. In attendance were Judge Betsy Benson, Judge Deborah Carpenter-Toye, and Supervisor of Elections Joe Scott.

Pledge of allegiance

A motion to approve the minutes from the previous Canvassing Board meeting held on October 22nd was granted by the present board members.

Chief Deputy Supervisor of Elections, Mary Hall presented 53 ballot cards with overvotes and 69 with voter intent issues.

The Canvassing Board began by reviewing the 53 overvote ballot cards. Camille Coolidge, representing the Republican Party, noted a change in the ruling regarding write-in candidates since the previous meeting, and the board acknowledged her comment. The board then approved a motion that 50 of the 53 ballot cards contained overvotes and to be tabulated, while 3 were set aside for further review. Ms. Coolidge requested that a ballot card with a presidential race be preserved, to which the board agreed. The board then moved to the next stack of 69 voter intent ballots. Herman Schnell, also representing the Republican Party, asked the board to review an unflagged race on one of the ballot cards.

After completing the voter intent ballot review, the board approved a motion allowing the Supervisor of Elections (SOE) staff to duplicate the ballot cards.

9 Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballots received from deceased voters were stored in a bin sealed with #0391924 and #0391925. Herman Schnell requested details on how deceased voter status is determined. Larry Davis, representing the Democratic Party, clarified that if a voter cast a ballot and then passed away before election day, the vote remains valid. Judge Benson added that ballots would be counted within the law. 6 VBM ballots from precincts M006, F004, X015, N013, C006, and R001 were accepted as valid ballots, while those from precincts L003, R009, and R005 were flagged for further investigation, with potential escalation to the state attorney's office if evidence of wrongdoing emerged. The board granted a motion to share flagged ballots with the State Attorney's Office and the Election Crime and Security Department.

Two VBM ballots with cure affidavits from precincts A008 and C002 were presented for review, and the board approved a motion to process and tabulate them.

Out of 24 VBM ballots from voters who moved out of the county, 8 were accepted, while 16 were rejected. A motion on the 8 accepted ballots stipulated that any voter who already voted in person would have their mail ballot voided.

Herman Schnell asked about the timeline of voters' moves and the receipt dates of their ballots, expressing concerns about potential duplicate voting across counties. Larry Davis inquired whether voters would be informed if their ballot was rejected so they could vote in their current county and requested clarification on the date used to determine the voting date, which is the one next to the voter's signature. Mr. Schnell also questioned when credit would be given for accepted ballots and how potential duplicate voting would be verified. Supervisor Joe Scott confirmed this information will be discovered when giving credit to voters. Mr. Davis further asked about the process that flags ballots for Canvassing Board review, to which Supervisor Scott explained that ballots marked as moved by records are automatically sorted by the machine.

Finally, the board reviewed 92 VBM ballots from voters in the same household that SOE staff had already confirmed. It is a standard Florida policy to accept them. The board approved a motion to accept, process, and tabulate these ballots. No objections from the audience.

At the last Canvassing Board meeting, Ms. Coolidge had three objections from the ballot cards with voter intent reviewed and one objection from the blank ballot cards reviewed. She asked for those ballots to be preserved and for duplicated numbers to be added to the minutes. The numbers of duplicated ballot cards are DUP025392, DUP025393, DUP025394, DUP025395.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Canvassing Board meeting will be held on Thursday, October 29, 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 3:25 p.m.