



Municipality of Anchorage

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Office of the Municipal Clerk

PRESS RELEASE

04/04/2013

Barbara A. Jones, Municipal Clerk

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Anchorage Municipal Clerk's Office is grateful for the interest in the 2013 Regular Municipal Election. The Clerk's Office has complied many of the questions we have received and we have the following responses:

- **What happens next?** The Election Commission has been tallying the questioned ballot envelopes and will begin reviewing the questioned ballots.

As provided in the Municipal Code, the Commission has been reviewing the absentee ballots since the week before the election, and will be continue work on reviewing those ballots from now until Thursday, April 11.

Part of the review process will be to separate the questioned and absentee ballots into groups that may be counted and groups that may be rejected for the reasons specified in the code – such as the voter not being a registered voter - at the Public Session of Canvass on Thursday, April 11, 2013 from 6-7 p.m. or until completed.

Voters whose questioned or absentee ballots may be rejected at the Public Canvas will receive a letter from the Municipal Clerk's Office. Voters receiving such letters and who believe the decision is incorrect must come to the Public Canvas and present their objection if they want to challenge the decision.

Community, Security, Prosperity

Observers may watch the process, but the observers must first sign a confidentiality agreement and follow other rules, such as having no cell phones or recording devices near the ballot envelopes, as well as not disrupting the Commissioners' work. For routine questions about the process, the observers may ask the Clerk's Office staff in the room. If the observers have less routine questions, the observers are asked to write the questions down, including who is raising the issue, the date, and the specifics. The question must be provided to the Clerk's Office so the questions can be collated and tracked for the Commission's consideration. If the questions have not been addressed before the Public Canvass, the Commission will address those issues if the observer is present at the Public Session of Canvass and still maintains the objection.

It is anticipated that the Election Commission will be done with the review of the questioned and absentee ballots on or before Thursday, April 11, 2013 by 5:00 p.m.

- **What exactly does the canvass board do?** At the Public Session of Canvass, the Commission is prepared to hear from the public about potentially rejected absentee and questioned ballots that should be counted and about potentially counted absentee and questioned ballots that should not be counted. The Public Session of Canvass is open to the public and people can object to either the rejection or acceptance of certain absentee or questioned ballots.

Is that all that happens at the Public Session of Canvass? Yes.

Does the Public Session of Canvass hold up counting uncontested ballots?

The Code specifies that counting of absentee or questioned ballots can only occur AFTER the Public Canvass.

- **Do we know how many early and/or questioned ballots are out in District 3?**
No. Because the information does not necessarily come in by Assembly District.
- **Can you say how many ballots have been received but not counted in District 3?** Same as previous answer. No, because the information does not necessarily come in by Assembly District.
- **How many absentee ballots were issued so far?** (Note, issued, not received.)
4837
 - **Does that absentee number include early voting?** Yes.
- **Can you tell us how many absentee ballots, questioned ballots, and early voting ballots have been issued or received but not counted? (Please note there is a difference between issued and received.)**
Absentee issued (includes early voting): 4837 (this number may include some questioned ballots, but we don't know how many at this time).
Questioned received from the precincts case on Election Day: 1017.
- **When are absentees and early votes counted?** On Friday, April 12, 2013 after the Public Canvass on Thursday, April 11, 2013. In addition, any "unscanned" ballots, questioned but not rejected ballots, and the by fax ballots will also be run on Friday, April 12, 2013. ("Unscanned" ballots are ballots received from the precincts that would not go through the Accu-Vote machine for various reasons, such as torn ballot or other issues.)
- **The unofficial results page indicates that there were 2 uncounted precincts.** What are the 2 uncounted precincts? The two uncounted precincts are (1) questioned ballots and (2) absentee ballots.

- **When will we get new numbers?** The Clerk's Office anticipates new numbers may be available sometime in the afternoon of April 12, 2013 after all of the absentee and questioned ballots are processed.
- **What happens if someone wrote in Nick Moe but didn't fill in the circle?** Like state law, our municipal code requires the oval to be marked in order to count a write-in vote. In *Miller v. Treadwell*, the Alaska Supreme court ruled these improperly marked write-ins are not counted.
- **How many write-in votes do there need to be in District 3 for those to be counted?** The total write in votes in District 3 actually were tallied if the oval was colored in and the ballot was scanned at one of the precincts in District 3 on Election Day. If, after the Public Canvass, the total number of write-in votes cast on Election Day at the precincts in District 3, plus the absentee and questioned ballots, is equal to or greater than the number of votes for the leading candidate on the ballot in that race, there will be a hand-count of all of the ballots in the race. There may be other circumstances where those votes will be hand-counted and we will update the public as we proceed.
- **If a voter who lives in Assembly District 3, voted in another Assembly District precinct, for example Assembly District 5, what happens if the voter correctly colored in the oval and wrote in Nick Moe?** The voter voted a questioned ballot in Assembly District 5 because the voter did not reside in that Assembly District. The voter also voted on the wrong ballot because the precinct in Assembly District 5 did not have the ballot issues that a voter in Assembly District 3 should have voted on.

When the voter's questioned ballot is reviewed by the Election Commission, it will be noted that the voter voted out of precinct and the voter was not qualified to vote in the Assembly District 5 race. As a result, the ballot will be facsimiled and

only the races and propositions that the voter was qualified to vote on will be transcribed on to a ballot to be counted.

The Clerk's Office understands there may be more questions that we haven't answered and as things progress this week the Clerk's Office will be preparing answers for other issues as well as issues related to handling write-in votes.

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