




Municipality of Anchorage

P.O. Box 196650 • Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650 • Telephone: (907) 343-4311 • Fax: (907) 343-4313 <http://www.muni.org/assembly>

Office of the Municipal Clerk

TO: Lolly Reid, Election Observer

FROM: Barbara A. Jones, Municipal Clerk 

DATE: April 16, 2022

SUBJECT: Response to Your Complaint re Undeliverables and Mail Filed March 31, 2022

Thank you for your complaint filed on March 31, 2022. We appreciate your questions about undeliverable ballot packages and mail. With regard to the specifics of the complaint, we offer the following:

Paragraph 1, regarding undeliverables. As noted in the MOA Elections Team partial response by via email on April 11, 2022, the MOA Elections Team believes it has responded to the issues regarding undeliverables. The response to the complaint received on March 23 regarding undeliverables was developed over several days with the observers at the Election Center. The MOA Elections believes statements from that complaint are relevant to yours, including the following:

- “With regard to your request for a daily report of undeliverables, we have not previously run the undeliverable envelopes mid-election in this manner; we have not developed procedures for this process; and we have not tested running undeliverables during a current election and there are risks to doing this without testing. Thus, we cannot meet that request at this time because it could jeopardize the integrity of the ballot envelope processing for the current election.
- You may wish to request the daily voted ballot report; you may also wish to request the list of all registered voters who were mailed ballots....
- Consistent with our process for all prior elections, after this election the undeliverable ballot envelopes will be run through the mail sorting system when it is reconfigured for undeliverables. A report is produced for the State of Alaska and can be reproduced for the observers and public.”

We believe that the process and procedures that the MOA Elections Team developed in conjunction with the observers regarding the March 23 complaint about the undeliverables, and which has been executed almost daily from March 23 through today, demonstrated the MOA Election Team’s transparency and willingness to work with observers to develop the best procedures to keep Anchorage Municipal Elections safe and secure. The two Observer Liaisons spent hours for many days hand counting the undeliverables allowing a daily count, cellophaning them, and securing them into a locked cage. The observers were involved in developing the process and observing the process from beginning to end.

Paragraph 2, regarding prior year and current year statistics of undeliverables. Here are the statistics for the undeliverable ballot packages returned from the USPS in 2022 to 2021 and the method for counting those:

	2021	2022
Undeliverable Ballot Envelopes received from USPS.	18,219	17,500
	Counted by sorter	Counted by hand, 70 trays x 250 as of 4/11/22

I anticipate that there may have been a misunderstanding regarding the statements about the number of undeliverables discussed with the observers; that is, I originally recalled that undeliverables in 2021 were about 17,000, a staff member stated a different number of 13,000 – and I repeated that number, but the actual numbers are detailed above and are almost identical compared from 2021 to 2022.

Paragraph 3, regarding ballot envelopes and the USPS. As noted in a previous email response, the Elections Team does not know that any ballot packages were or are “stuck in Washington state.” On Monday, March 14, the MOA’s ballot printing and mailing vendor reported that the Anchorage ballot packages were delivered to USPS. During that week, the printing and mailing vendor reported to MOA Elections that it wasn’t seeing expected delivery information regarding the ballot packages. On March 18, the printing and mailing vendor reported that it made inquiries to USPS. On March 18, the MOA Election Team also escalated and reached out to the Anchorage USPS Officials requesting information and an update on MOA ballot packages. On March 21, Anchorage USPS Officials reported to the MOA Elections Team that the MOA ballot packages had been received were delivered on that day.

On April 6, the MOA ballot printing and mailing vendor further reported that the Business Alliances Manager for USPS in Portland, Oregon, stated in an email that the MOA ballots envelopes were found in the Anchorage Air Mail Facility on March 19, 2022. (2022-0407 Email from K&H re USPS is attached.) The USPS Business Alliances Manager informed the MOA printing and mailing vendor that USPS in Anchorage has put in a new practice to prevent this type of event in the future, and told MOA Election Officials and the printing and mailing vendor to contact him when mail dropping Anchorage ballot packages.

The USPS, through the printing and mailing vendor, has assured Anchorage Elections Officials that USPS has made changes in Anchorage mail processing; MOA Elections have added it to the checklist to confirm with USPS that their new process is in effect when MOA ballot packages are mailed.

Thank you for filing this complaint. This response has been developed in collaboration with the Deputy Clerk – Elections, and the Observer Liaisons.

C: Dee Ennis, Observer Liaison
 Ralph Duerre, Observer Liaison
 Dennis Wheeler, MOA Elections Project Manager
 Observer Contacts for other campaigns

Jones, Barbara A.

From: Debbie [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 7, 2022 11:39 AM
To: Heinz, Jamie L.
Cc: ANCHECTeam; Jones, Barbara A.; Dave [REDACTED] Brad [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ANCH April Mail Delivery Delay

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Glad we could help! ☺

Debbie [REDACTED]
K&H Election Services
Manager -- Election Coordination Services
[REDACTED] Cell
[REDACTED] Direct
[REDACTED] Fax

www.KHPrint.com

From: Heinz, Jamie L. [mailto:jamie.heinz@anchorageak.gov]
Sent: Thursday, April 7, 2022 12:26 PM
To: Debbie [REDACTED]
Cc: ANCHECTeam [REDACTED]; Jones, Barbara A. <barbara.jones@anchorageak.gov>; Dave [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; Brad [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ANCH April Mail Delivery Delay

A great big thank you to everyone for finding the answers to this issue!! We were heartened to see that there was concern all around and that new practices have been put in place. We'll take Mr. [REDACTED] up on his help when our ballots are dropped for our Special Election on 5/31!

Thanks,
Jamie Heinz, MMC
MOA Elections
907-343-4320

From: Debbie [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 8:49 AM
To: Heinz, Jamie L. <jamie.heinz@anchorageak.gov>
Cc: ANCHECTeam [REDACTED]; Jones, Barbara A. <barbara.jones@anchorageak.gov>; Dave [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; Brad [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: ANCH April Mail Delivery Delay

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Jamie...in response to your questions, please see communications from Dave [REDACTED] and Tory [REDACTED] (USPS) below. Let us know if you have further questions. Thanks.
Debbie

Hi Jamie,

We feel badly that your first attempt at tracking mail went so poorly, however as we have researched the causes we would not recommend dropping the mail any sooner. This was a simple human error that we believe can be prevented by improved oversight and communication.

The sequence of events were as follows:

- March 14 – Two trucks delivered your mail to the USPS facility in Seattle. One full truck and one partial.
- March 16 – Ballotrax contacted us concerned with limited number of scans. Decision was made to give it another day since USPS delivery standards for first class have changed from 1-3 to 1-5 days.
- March 17 – Debbie checked again and saw the same number of scans. She pulled in our ops manager, Brad, who contacted local USPS to express our concern. Debbie also suggested to Anchorage that they contact their BSN.
- March 18 – Still the same number of scans. At this point Debbie pulled me into the discussion. Through some data analysis we were able to determine that the scans we had were all from the partial truck, and we had no scans from truck #1. Brad then reached out to Tory at the USPS. (see email below).
- March 19 – Ballots were found in a USPS Air Facility in Anchorage
- March 20 – Ballots were processed
- March 21 – Ballots out for delivery

The solution to prevent something like this from re-occurring is going to be a heightened awareness by all parties, along with oversight from higher levels within the Post Office which we have commitment on.

- As part of normal delivery notification sent to the Seattle BMEU of upcoming election mail delivery, this notification will now include the Anchorage USPS Team so that Anchorage will be expecting from Seattle. Notification will also go to Tory.
- As we monitor Mail Delivery Performance through our MARS portal, we will raise the alert on day two if we do not see acceptable delivery data.

If we hear any more developments from the USPS we will keep you in the loop.

Thank you

Dave [REDACTED]
Senior VP – CTO
[REDACTED]

Email from Tory -

Hello Brad,

It is very unfortunate that Anchorage's election mailings had to deal with the stress of not knowing where their mail was for several days. I personally contacted our Operations executives in Anchorage that weekend and they quickly found the mail in question. The pallets were located in the Anchorage Air Mail Facility in a back corner. The Operations executive I spoke with was outraged himself and demanded some answers. They have put a practice in place where the facility ramp clerk is tasked with walking the entire facility and reporting anything of note on regular intervals.

I've shared your suggestions with Anchorage Operations and await their responses. I want to make sure that your suggestions make sense to the people actually engaged with the movement of the mail. I know that K & H has always provided top notch mail services and we appreciate how you have always assisted us in getting the job done.

At any rate, I will offer my services with the next batch of ballots destined for Alaska. As you know I am available to you at any time day or night or on weekends. Just let me know when the ballots are being submitted and I will notify my contacts to ensure they are on the lookout for this mail and act accordingly.

I also would suggest that you caution your client from preparing and mailing ballots too early. As a resident of Oregon, I've been voting by mail for over 20 years. Oregon has found that the only thing worse than a ballot being delivered to the voter too late, is one that is delivered too early. A ballot delivered to voters too early often ends up lost, forgotten, or neglected and the idea is to help voters be more engaged, not less.

I know that we will keep this line of communication open and touch base regularly to ensure that our mutual customer is well taken care of.

Thank you,

Tory

Tory [REDACTED]
Business Alliances Manager
U.S. Postal Service
[REDACTED]
Portland, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Debbie [REDACTED]
K&H Election Services
Manager -- Election Coordination Services
[REDACTED] Cell
[REDACTED] Direct
[REDACTED] Fax
www.KHPrint.com

From: Debbie [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022 3:59 PM
To: Heinz, Jamie L. <jamie.heinz@anchorageak.gov>
Cc: Jill [REDACTED]; ANCHETeam [REDACTED]; Jones, Barbara A. <barbara.jones@anchorageak.gov>
Subject: Re: ANCH 6.21.22 Planning Binder

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi Jamie

Sorry for the delay in response. We have reached out to USPS and have asked them to respond to your question. They should have something by Monday.

Hope you have a good weekend!

Debbie

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 30, 2022, at 10:44 PM, Heinz, Jamie L. <jamie.heinz@anchorageak.gov> wrote:

Hi Jill,

We will get to work on this.

Do you have any idea why the delay happened between the mail drop on Monday, March 14, followed by little to no information from BallotTrax or the USPS, and few people receiving their ballots until Monday, March 21, when everyone seems to have received their ballots?

I think we need to discuss this before we select Tuesday, May 31 for the mail drop. If we won't know the answer before we confirm the planning schedule, Barbara and I think we should shoot for Thursday for mail drop and Friday for the ballots to be in the mail.

If the pattern for mail drop-receiving mail for the Special election follows the pattern for this election, by mail dropping on Thursday for in the mail on Friday, most people should receive them by Friday, June 3 and we think we could manage that.

Thanks so much!

Jamie

From: Jill [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 1:13 PM
To: Heinz, Jamie L. <jamie.heinz@anchorageak.gov>
Cc: ANCHECTeam [REDACTED]
Subject: ANCH 6.21.22 Planning Binder

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi Jamie,

Please see the attached Planning Binder for the 6/21/22 election. It has the ballot plan in it as well. Can you please review everything and send all forms back to me no later than 4/8/22.

I've also attached the material requirements form for ordering inserts for the 6/21 election. Please fill out quantities and send back by 4/8 at latest.

Note: on the ballot plan it calculated drop date as May 30th. Since this is Memorial day I changed it to May 31st. Let me know if this needs to be changed to a different date.

Yank form is also attached for if you need to do any yanks. The date those are due is still TBD.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Thank you,
Jill

Jill [REDACTED]
K&H Election Services
Elections Coordinator
Cell [REDACTED]
Direct [REDACTED]



Municipality of Anchorage
April 5, 2022 Regular Municipal Election
Complaint Form

OBSERVER INFORMATION	March 31, 2022
	Date
	Kathy Henslee
	Printed Name Of Observer
	Henslee for Assembly
	Name Of Candidate Or Organization/Group Representing

COMPLAINT	SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING COMPLAINT, INCLUDING ELECTION OFFICIAL NAME, IF APPLICABLE:
	Please see the attached questions with responses requested.

SIGNATURES	<i>K. Henslee</i>	<i>04/11/22</i>
	Signature of Observer	Date Submitted
	<i>Barbara A. Jones</i>	<i>4/1/22</i> 1749
	Signature of Municipal Clerk or Designee	Date Received

March 31, 2022

Anchorage Election Center
ATTN: Ms. Barbara Jones and Ms. Jamie Heinz
619 Ship Creek Ave
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Henslee for Assembly
1407 W 31st Ave, Suite 100
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Ms. Barbara Jones and Ms. Jamie Heinz,

On behalf of the Henslee for Assembly District 4 campaign, we are formally requesting the answers to the following questions in relation to the challenge submitted by Dan Smith for Liz Vazquez's campaign on March 18, 2022 with a response from Ms. Barbara Jones on March 21, 2022.

1. The challenge mentions a large number of "undeliverable ballots" returned by USPS. Undeliverable is defined as ballots marked by USPS as not-deliverable, return to sender, or any other ballot returned by USPS to the Municipality marked as not delivered. The ballots that are returned under this status are not transparently reported to campaigns. We are requesting a list of all voters who's ballot was not delivered by USPS and instead returned to the election center. This list should have the same columns as found in the daily voter list, including the following information: first name, middle name, last name, address, city, state, zip code, and ascension number.
2. Observers have noted that Municipal Clerk Ms. Barbara Jones stated that the number of undeliverable ballots this year are more than last year. The rough numbers given noted that last year's election reported approximately 13,000 ballots undelivered while this year's election has accumulated approximately 16,250 ballots undelivered. How many undelivered ballots were there during last year's April 6, 2021 election? How many undeliverable ballots are there

as of March 31, 2022? If there are more ballots undelivered this year, why is that?

3. Observers have noted that ballots were "stuck in Washington state" at a Post Office. Is this true? If so, can election workers please explain this issue and how it occurred? Was there a resolution with the USPS? Were all ballots mailed to voters as expected? Are there any additional ballots that are still stuck with USPS?

Thank you for your prompt attention and responses to these questions.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Henslee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Henslee, Candidate, Henslee for
Assembly