

Special Meeting

June 7, 2002

The Board of County Commissioners, in and for the County of Otero, State of New Mexico, met in a Special Meeting at the Otero County Courthouse in Alamogordo, County and State aforesaid. Meeting called to order by the Chairman at 9:00 AM, June 7, 2002; and he announced that reasonable notice for this meeting was given to the Alamogordo Daily News, Holloman Sunburst, Mountain Monthly, and to Radio Stations KPSA, KINN, and KYEE.

Those being present:

Richard Zierlein	Chairman
Tim McGinn	Vice-Chairman
Ruth Hooser	County Manager
Ray Backstrom	Administrative Office Manager
LaDonna Adams	Department Assistant
Robyn Silva	Deputy Clerk

The Chairman called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. The Commission joined the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the flag of the State of New Mexico.

1. Commissioner Zierlein stated that the purpose of this Special Meeting is to conduct the canvas for the June 4, 2002, Primary Election.

Dianna Duran, Chief Deputy Clerk, approached the Board and presented them with all of the packets for each precinct in Otero County, including the absentee precincts. Mrs. Duran stated that there was a change made yesterday in a couple of the representative districts because of the hand tallies from the absentee that had not been previously added. She stated that those were the only changes made after election night.

Mrs. Duran stated that on the Wednesday following the election, the Clerk's Office came in and re-read the cartridges from the AVC machines, as is required by law. The staff in the Clerk's Office then went through each precinct, one by one, and listed it on the discrepancy sheet, which each one of the Commissioners has. Mrs. Duran stated that if there was anything that looked a little bit unusual at any of the polling places, we listed it on the discrepancy sheet. We did find that four ballots that were hand counted by the absentee precinct board had not been included in their totals; those were the changes that were made yesterday. Those are now included on the grid sheet. She stated that as far as the Grid Sheet is concerned, it is completely current except one ballot that is the Fail Safe Procedure and the County Commission is required to open and count that.

Mrs. Duran stated that it is now at the pleasure of the Commission, if there are any questions or what procedure they would like to follow.

Commissioner Zierlein questioned on the four votes that were just recently tallied, if they impacted the two close races that we have? Mrs. Duran stated that they did. She stated that two of the votes were in Representative District 51 and the other two were in Representative District 57. The two in District 57 impacted County Commission District 2, which gave one more vote to Floyd Hornback and one to Susan Flores. The other two were in Representative District 51, County Commission District 1 and it did give Mr. Jeffrey Fields 2 more votes, which makes that a 2 vote difference between himself and Mr. Doug Moore. Mrs. Duran stated that the Fail Safe Ballot is also in County Commission District 1, which will further impact that race.

Commissioner Zierlein stated that he and Commissioner McGinn will open the Fail Safe Ballot so that they can see where they are at. Mrs. Duran stated that this ballot is in Precinct 35, and as they call off the votes, Denise Guerra-Reliford will tally the votes to the Grid.

Mrs. Duran stated that the voter that voted with the Fail Safe Method, did not vote absentee, nor did she vote at her polling place that she is registered at.

Commissioner Zierlein then read the votes from the ballot. Mr. Doug Moore did received the vote which put him 3 votes ahead of Mr. Jeffrey Fields for the position of County Commission District 2.

Commissioner Zierlein then asked Mrs. Duran if all of the votes have been tallied a minimum of two times. She stated that they had.

Commissioner McGinn then verified that the Clerk's Office has run the cartridges and gone through the signature rosters. He then asked what else is done to insure an accurate return.

Mrs. Duran stated that the Clerk's Office goes through each one of the precinct packets, and we verify that the number of signatures on the signature rosters, balance with the number of permit cards from the voting machines. The permit card should balance with the public counter that is on the voting machine. If those three things do not balance, then we have to go through and figure out why. Mrs. Duran stated that there is very little room for human error because the information off of the machines is read on to the cartridge, and the cartridge in turn is read on to the computer. We do very little hand tallying.

Commissioner McGinn then asked if the only place for possible error is with the mail in ballots? Mrs. Duran agreed. She stated that the only questionable place at all would be with the mail-in paper ballots that sometimes have to be hand tallied.

Mrs. Duran then explained how a mail ballot works. She stated that the voter must fill out an application for an absentee ballot first. We then process that and make sure that person is an eligible voter. If you are accepted as a legitimate voter, we will then mail your ballot,

along with an inner envelope and an outer envelope to you. You have instructions, that after you vote your ballot, you fold the ballot up and you place it in the inner envelope, which is basically the secrecy envelope. Then you place the inner secrecy envelope in the outer official envelope. The information on the outer envelope must be filled out and signed. When the ballots come back to our office, either by mail or are carried in, we have someone who goes in the computer, under your absentee number, and processes your ballot. This basically states that we have received your ballot back, and on what date and at what time. The ballots are then placed in a locked ballot box by representative district. On election morning, the absentee board members are delivered, from our office, the ballots which they will take through a procedure to verify that, in fact each ballot is from an eligible voter. They will then open the outer envelope and take out the inner secrecy envelope and separate them. All of the ballots that are in the inner secrecy envelope are then mixed together, as not to know whose envelope is whose. Those are then opened, one at a time and placed in a pile. They then run them through the Opscan, which is our system that tabulates the votes. It is the optical scan system that counts the ballots. Then, for what ever reason, if the optical scanner cannot read a ballot, then it will have to be hand tallied.

Mrs. Duran stated that not all ballots are accepted. There are certain criteria that have to be met before the ballot is accepted. If it doesn't meet that, the absentee board will reject the ballot and not tally it.

Commissioner McGinn questioned what the last day is to receive a ballot. Mrs. Duran stated that the ballot must be received in the County Clerk's Office no later than 7:00 PM on Election Day in order to be counted.

In order to have a re-count, it is up to the candidate to initiate that within 6 days of the canvas.

Commissioner McGinn made a motion to approve the canvas of the June 4, 2002 Primary Election and we certify it to be correct and complete. Commissioner Zierlein seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. SEE BOOK 108 PAGES

The time being 9:40 am, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

DRAFT

Chairman

ATTEST:

COPY

Otero County Clerk

Special Meeting (Canvas for the June 4, 2002 Primary Election) of June 7, 2002.