

News Release

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Greene County Finalizes Vote Count

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WAYNESBURG – Greene County officials have published the results of Tuesday’s Primary Election to their Election website; <https://www.co.greene.pa.us/Elections>. A total of 7,773 ballots have been cast and counted. The number of mail-in and absentee ballots, influenced by the changes of ACT 77, increased by approximately 3,000 compared to previous years. Total votes cast was about average for a primary election.

ACT 77 of 2019 made several changes to the Pennsylvania Election Code. Most noteworthy, at least to individuals assigned to the Greene County Ballot Counting Board, was the new write-in ballot process authorized by ACT 77. Typically, Greene County receives 200-300 traditional absentee ballots per election. With the opportunity to participate in the new mail-in ballot process, an unprecedented 3,242 voters chose to mail-in their ballots rather than vote at the polls.

The record number of mail-in ballots along with the traditional absentee ballots required the appointment of a Ballot Counting Board consisting of six members chosen by the Commissioners and sworn in by the Board of Elections. These individuals, along with the Greene County Election Office staff were charged with obtaining 100 percent accuracy in votes cast at the polls, as well as mail-in, absentee and provisional ballots. The Ballot Counting Board collectively invested 176 hours over three days in confirming the accuracy of the vote, that there were no duplicate votes and each vote cast, no matter the manner, was counted.

When Commissioner Mike Belding charged the Counting Board with accuracy and accountability of the vote, he said, “There have been many stories, nationwide, of fraudulent voting or other issues with write-in ballots. I want to be able to look every voter in Greene County in the eye, and tell them their individual vote was counted and there were no possible way inaccuracies occurred in the system – no matter which process was used for an individual to vote.”

Wednesday morning, following the 2 June election, the Ballot Counting Board quickly developed procedures to ensure accountability of every ballot against the computer-generated inventory. Then, a comparison of that inventory against the 110 provisional ballots that were authorized at the polling centers on Tuesday was conducted.

It was determined that one individual, in fact, had been sent a mail-in ballot and it had been received at the election office on May 31st, after the poll books had been printed. The polling center workers failed to call the Election Office to verify the status of this mail-in ballot and that same individual voted at the polling center using a provisional ballot on Tuesday. But, through the procedures developed and verification, the duplicate vote was identified and the provisional ballot will not counted.

Throughout the process, verification of votes were double checked and the Ballot Counting Board confirmed, without question, the accuracy of the vote totals. Monday, the provisional ballots will be canvassed by the Election Board closing out the 2020 Primary Election results. Many Ballot Counting Board members believed this was a good preamble to the 2020 General Election in November that will likely see a larger turnout and mail-in voter participation.

The Greene County Commissioners express sincere appreciation for the efforts of the Ballot Counting Board, poll working volunteers and Greene County staff members that contributed to a successful election process with new procedures and the continued threat of COVID-19 being ever present.

Additional information can be obtained on the Greene County Commissioner's Facebook page or by calling (724) 852-5210.