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2009 Municipal Election Experience Report

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Overview

Of the 901,822 registered voters in Allegheny County, 216,569 – or 24.02%, cast their vote at the past November 3, 2009 Municipal Election. This low level of voter participation is unfortunately consistent with similar turnout levels in recent past elections of this type.

A total of 5,089 absentee ballots were issued and 125 provisional ballots were cast. Of the provisional ballots, 26 were fully counted, 54 partially counted and 45 were not counted. The majority of those not counted were due to the fact that the provisional voter was not a registered voter.

Over 185,000 “emergency” paper ballots were supplied to this County’s 1,321 polling places in the event that at least one-half of the voting machines in a precinct were non-functional. 50 emergency ballots were used in 11 voting districts, primarily due to the fact that the local district election boards had difficulty in printing a “zero tape” prior to the opening of the polls. All of the affected precincts successfully printed their zero tapes by 8:00 a.m. that day.

As it was in the 2009 Primary, the past election is the most complicated election in terms of ballot layout and contains the highest number of contests and candidates in the four year election cycle. There were 3,963 individual elections possible for local precinct election officials and over 1,160 elections possible for State, County, City, Magisterial and School District offices as well as local municipal offices such as Mayor, Tax Collector, Council, Commissioner, Constable, Judge of Election and Majority and Minority Inspectors of Election. There were over 300 distinct ballot configurations produced in order to accommodate all of the various by-district, municipal and school district combinations. Upon certification of the results by the Allegheny County Board of Elections, this Division issued over 2,900 certificates of election to successful candidates. Of these, over 425 candidates were elected by write-in.

Accessibility

Only 3 of the 1,321 polling places in this County remain as “inaccessible” and they are listed below:

Haysville, District 1
Pittsburgh, Ward 24, District 1
Pittsburgh, Ward 26, District 17

For some of these polling places, extensive structural modifications would be required in order to classify them as accessible. We will continue to explore alternative sites for these 3 precincts.

Firmware Verification

Allegheny County employed the services of “GRP Consulting Group, LLC” to verify that the software resident on the iVotronic voting devices contain the “trusted build” version certified by the Pennsylvania Department of State. As has been the case for the previous three times that this process has been employed, no instance of uncertified software has been detected. Copies of the reports prepared for the November 3, 2009 Municipal Election are attached below.



Logic and Accuracy Testing

Extensive automated and manual Logic and Accuracy Testing (L&A) was performed. Automated L&A was performed on all 4,226 iVotronic voting machines deployed on Election Day. Manual L&A was also performed for each of the approximately 300 different ballot configurations. Those parties and organizations permitted by Pennsylvania law to be present during this process were duly notified.

A “test deck” comprised of over 22,540 ballots, containing ballots for every candidate and question, was used to verify that the 5 ES&S Model 650 high-speed ballot counters would accurately count the absentee, provisional and emergency optical scan paper ballots to be used at the election. This test was conducted prior to Election day as well as before final certification of the election results. In both tests, the ballot scanners produced an accurate count. Public notice of the pre-election test was given, as required by law.

Network Security

Also following past practice, an independent third-party review was conducted both prior to and after the past Election to assure that our election network was isolated and not connected to any external network. Copies of the reports produced by “Solutionary” are attached below.



Parallel Testing

Since the November 2006 Election, Allegheny County has employed a Certified Public Accounting firm to ensure that the functionality of the iVotronic voting machine devices have not been compromised. Once again, the parallel testing performed at the November 3, 2009 Municipal Election indicated that the randomly-selected voting devices recorded and counted all votes completely and correctly. A copy of the report issued by Parente Beard is attached below.

