



COUNTY OF ELBERT

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Press Release – For Immediate Release – July 19, 2018

Re: 2018 Primary Election Results

Twenty-Two days after the Primary Election, the results are final and certified in the Republican Primary for Commissioner, District 2.. The certified results show Commissioner Candidate Pettitt with 2995 votes and Commissioner Candidate Hartsook with 2993. The path and timeline to these results were governed by Election Statute and Election Rule, and are standard throughout the State of Colorado.

When ballots were finished being tabulated on June 26, 2018 (Primary Night), Candidate Pettitt held the lead with an 8 vote margin. After waiting the prescribed time for signature discrepancy cures, overseas and military votes to be returned due to their extended return times, those ballots along with ballots that had been dropped off in other counties were tabulated on July 5, 2018. When all those ballots had been tabulated, Commissioner Pettitt maintained the smallest lead possible at 1 vote. The total number of ballots received and counted at this point was 7953. There would be no more ballots accepted after this deadline.

The following day, July 6, 2018, the County conducted its Risk Limiting Audit. This is a standard audit conducted after each election to verify the outcomes of the Election. The Secretary of State's Office notified the Clerk and Recorder's Office that the County had successfully passed the Audit in the first round.

The County was then able to move on the Canvass process on Monday, July 9, 2018. This year the Canvass Board, made up of Jim Duvall, Chair of the Elbert County Democratic Party and Carol Hinds, Secretary for the Elbert County Republicans as well as the Clerk and Recorder. The responsibility of the Canvass Board is to verify that various reports balance and ensure each ballot received during the Election is accounted for. This year the reports showed that every single ballot returned was accounted for: a 100% balanced election.

Until the results were certified the Clerk and Recorder could not officially call for a recount. A one vote margin is well within the margin to require a mandatory recount. After receiving notification from the Secretary of State's Office that Elbert County was the only county with a mandatory recount, the Clerk's office determined that July 18, 2018, would be the date for the recount.

The recount was conducted on July 18, 2018. The procedure for this recount was to rescan every single ballot. Election judges and the Canvass board scanned these ballots. At the end of the scanning, the number once again showed that 7953 ballots were scanned, a perfect duplication.

From there ballots that were under voted (no votes for this contest), over voted (both candidates voted for) or had ambiguous marks were looked at by everyone in the room to verify voter intent on each ballot in a process called adjudication. This is the same process done during the Election, with the exception adding under voted ballots on this specific race. At the completion of the adjudication process Candidate Pettitt increased his lead to 2 votes. All ballots that were adjudicated were observed by multiple people with a consensus reached on voter intent on all the ballots.

Also present was Dwight Shellman, County Support Manager for the Secretary of State, as an observer. At the conclusion of the day, Mr. Shellman praised staff, Canvass Board and Election Judges and relayed to the Secretary of State, Wayne Williams and Director of Elections for the State of Colorado, Judd Choate of the excellent job that the Elbert County team did in conducting this recount. He concurred that every judgment call made by the group was correct.

Immediately following the recount, the Canvass Board, being confident that the results were correct, certified the recount.

Clerk and Recorder, Dallas Schroeder, had nothing but praise for Elections Manager, Rhonda Braun and Elections Assistant Rachel Buchanan, the Canvass board and the Election Judges who participated in the 2018 Primary Election. He stated, "Our goal from the first day of Election Judge Training is to stress the importance of having a common goal, regardless of party, to count every vote and count it correctly. We did that. We also stress that politics do not belong in the processing room and the judges respect that. The atmosphere created is one of cooperation and dedication to common goal of getting the job done right. We did that. I couldn't be more proud of the effort put forth by all those involved."

As a result of the recount Candidate Pettitt will be placed on the ballot in the November general election, where he will be unopposed.

Please contact the Clerk and Recorder with the contact information at the top of this page or the Elections Department at 303-621-3127 for further information about the recount.