

November Brunswick Board of Elections – 2017

Where Elections and Early Voting are held for Municipalities: Since elections for municipalities are funded by the municipalities and conducted by the counties, early voting is held at the offices of the Boards of Elections to save money. Therefore, all early voting was held at the Bolivia office. If we want to see early voting applied in other localities, the municipalities would need to help with funding to do this.

Election Statistics: Nearly 2/3 of all ballots cast were at Bolivia, even though the access was somewhat inconvenient for many. The turnout of eligible voters was only a little over 23%, or poor at best. And then there are the voters who weren't counted at all. Races in Southport, H2GO, Sunset Beach and others were decided by slim margins. The county conducted a recount for those races. In addition, the vote count is not complete until canvass, which took place on 11/17/17. No outcomes changed during canvass. At canvass, the County Board of Elections provided a wealth of material outlining how the provisional ballots were handled and the observers could see how closely these are studied for partial counts or full counts or rejection in total. It is this meeting that Beth Kirschner and Gail Bromley attended. The room was full of interested observers and I do believe that they were pleased with the information they received and the openness of the process. There are still two days where another recount could be demanded or a protest presented. The broadcast and print media were present.

What's next? There is still no action by the courts on how the makeup of the Board of Elections will be going forward and until that is decided, it is extremely hard for county boards to do meaningful work to plan for the future. The county boards are to test new State approved equipment for 2018 voting, but until the State Board is finalized and can act to approve voting machines for this, they cannot make any decisions. It is unclear why this process is so slow. This frustrates everyone who is involved in the process.

Submitted by: Gail F. Bromley