

AGENDA MATERIAL

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AGENDA MATERIAL

DATE 12-6-22 ITEM NO. RA 12



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 2, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lester 
County Administrator

Re: **November 8, 2022 General Election After Action Report**

Please see the attached memorandum from Elections Director Constance Hargrove regarding the November 8, 2022 General Election After Action Report. Ms. Hargrove's report summarizes the events and preparation around this year's election cycle as requested by the Board of Supervisors.

If you have any questions, please contact my office.

JKL/anc

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator
Constance Hargrove, Director, Elections Department

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ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENT
6550 SOUTH COUNTRY CLUB RD., TUCSON, AZ 85756
(520) 724-6830 FAX (520) 724-6870

Date: December 2, 2022

TO: Jan Leshner
County Administrator

FROM: Constance Hargrove
Elections Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CH", is written over the name "Constance Hargrove" in the "FROM:" field.

RE: November 8, 2022 - AfterAction Report

Ms. Leshner,

Attached is the after-action report for the November 8, 2022, General Election. The report provides a summary of what occurred during the general election cycle. It also addresses identified problems and the steps taken to prevent them from occurring again.

I credit the election's success to the elections department staff, the county departments, the political parties, and the pollworkers who all worked together to conduct a safe, fair, and secure election.

I believe Pima County should become a leader in voter education by creating a Voter Academy. The Voter Academy will give voters an inside look at how we run elections in Pima County. We can provide educational material to help them make confident decisions on when and how to cast their ballot.

I look forward to presenting a plan to you and the Board in the near future.



PIMA COUNTY
ELECTIONS OFFICE

November 8, 2022

General Election

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Constance Hargrove

12-1-2022

The Pima County Board of Supervisors requested an after-action report relating to the implementation of vote centers, e-pollbooks, and the conduct of the 2022 General Election. This report is the elections department's response to that request.

Pima County conducted its second election with vote centers and new voting technology. While the August Primary Election was safe and secure, we did have some issues on election day. The August Primary Election after-action report presented to the Election Integrity Commission (EIC) addressed those issues and proposed solutions. The EIC also made some recommendations. The elections department began addressing many of the issues immediately after the election. For that reason, the November General saw fewer issues, and most of the issues from the previous election did not occur in November. One critical element to the success on election day was better training and a more comprehensive pollworker manual. After the general election, I read the feedback submitted by pollworkers, and they overwhelmingly praised the improvements in the training and procedures. The pollworkers also overwhelmingly expressed how well the voting technology worked. We understand that much work is still remaining to improve the training, procedures, and other items addressed in this report.

The elections department listened to the feedback and concerns and worked to address them in November. The changes made and the successes realized are not the end but the beginning of our process improvement. Ensuring fair, safe, and secure elections is a constant process and not something you accomplish once, and it is done. Elections change, laws change, and technology evolves. It is our job to provide guidance, insight, and transparency to give the voters in Pima County confidence in their elections.

The elections department and the recorder's office worked with the communications department to conduct a robust media and education campaign. The charts below provide details about the outreach efforts:

Pima County General Election Voter Education Outreach Summary						
Media Type	English & Spanish	Start Date	End Date	Aggregate Total (spots, ads, posts)	Reach	Impressions
Digital & social media*	Y	9/26/22	11/8/22	27	-	627,403
Organic Facebook	N	9/27/22	11/10/22	49	401,706	-
Organic Twitter	N	9/20/22	11/14/22	25	-	36,713
Radio*	Y	9/25/22	11/8/22	2,462	-	-
Print*	Y	9/1/22	11/8/22	24	-	-
Outdoor*	Y	10/1/22	11/8/22	238	-	-
Television*	Y	10/1/22	11/8/22	822	-	-
News Releases	N	11/1/22	11/17/22	6	-	-
Interviews	Y	9/2/22	11/3/22	28	-	-
* Paid media						

Event	In-Person (I) or Virtual (V)	Date	Participant(s)	Topic
National Federation of the Blind Annual Conference	I	9/2/22	Elections Director and Recorder	Panel Discussion about Accessibility
League of Women Voters of Greater Tucson	V	9/17/22	Elections Director	Election Administration (Voting Security)
League of Women Voters of Arizona	V	9/24/22	Elections Director	Why Working the Polls Matter
Arizona Senior Academy	I	10/3/22	Elections Director	Election Administration (Voting Security)
KGTV Radio – Cracker Barrel Show	I	10/7/22	Elections Director and Recorder	Election Ballots and Election Information
KVOI – Law Matters Radio	I	10/8/22	Elections Director	Election Information and Poll Workers

After Action Report

Expectations and Outcomes

Precinct-based voting versus Vote Centers

Expectation

The vote center model will result in fewer provisional ballots, cost savings, faster election results, voting security, and voter convenience.

Fewer Provisional Ballots

Outcome

There was a significant decrease in provisional ballots during the general election. The decrease resulted from the vote center model, the e-pollbooks, and the legislation passed during the 2022 session. The new law allows voters to spoil an early ballot or otherwise vote on election day if they have not returned a ballot to the recorder's office. Many voters opted to surrender their early ballot, and over 44,000 voters dropped off an early ballot on election day.

The following charts provide a comparison of provisional ballots issued and counted during the past three election cycles:

PRIMARY ELECTIONS PROVISIONAL BALLOT COMPARISON			
Election Date	August 2018	August 2020	August 2022
Issued	4,206	3,076	4,368
Counted	3,794	2,767	4,138

GENERAL ELECTIONS PROVISIONAL BALLOT COMPARISON			
Election Date	November 2018	November 2020	November 2022
Issued	18,156	18,491	2,561
Counted	16,111	16,135	1,850

Substantial Cost Savings

Expectation

Based on the January/February 2022 feasibility presentation, the estimated cost savings for the elections department is \$289,454.

Outcome

Elections did see a cost savings of \$160,000 in pollworker pay during the Primary. However, there was an increase of \$9,300 during the General election due to a one-time pay adjustment for pollworkers.

The charts below compare the cost of primary and general elections. The 2022 election cycle did experience some cost increases due to the residual effects of the pandemic as well as the cost associated with transitioning to vote centers.

The cost for each election is below:

Primary Election Expenses

Category	8/28/2018	8/4/2020	8/2/2022
Overtime	30,394	64,147	145,363
Temporary Regular	105,395	112,877	294,326
Election Day Personnel/Mileage	372,151	464,583	304,158
Hotel Rentals Pollworker			
Classes	14,818	8,182	25,025
Daniels Moving - Trucks	17,569	18,787	22,684
Ballots	564,957	563,401	654,798
Polling Place Rent	40,901	41,058	47,925
	1,146,185	1,273,035	1,494,279

General Election Expenses

Category	11/16/2018	11/3/2020	11/8/2022
Overtime	138,713	77,608	81,321
Temporary Regular	173,765	216,308	194,512
Election Day Personnel/Mileage	415,991	395,534	404,800
Hotel Rentals Pollworker Classes	14,566	8,682	12,519
Daniels Moving - Trucks	18,340	17,014	30,000
Ballots	386,484	395,534	812,219
Polling Place Rent	40,685	41,793	45,086
*Professional Services – Tenex	0	0	19,400
E-Pollbook Rental	0	0	59,600
	1,188,544	1,152,473	1,659,457

* One-time cost associated with implementation.

Improvement and Action Plan

The elections department now has a better idea of how to staff vote centers. The August and November elections provide a baseline for staffing as well as the allocation of supplies. There is a significant increase in ballot costs for both the primary and general elections. The County uses Daniels Moving to deliver voting equipment and supplies to vote centers. The company increased its rate before the August Primary.

The elections department ordered printed ballots for both elections as a contingency for printer failures. We did experience printer problems during both elections, and pollworkers opened and used printed ballots. However, continuing to order backup ballots is not sustainable or cost-efficient. I recommend sending additional ExpressVotes to each vote center to print ballots. We

sent two ExpressVotes to each vote center during the general election. Some vote centers will need more machines based on turnout. We will need to purchase more machines before the 2024 elections to serve as backups and to ensure we are not disenfranchising any voters with disabilities that receive priority. Purchasing ExpressVotes is a one-time cost with an annual license fee instead of purchasing ballots for each election.

The County will see savings by not printing ballots for each election and saving staff time sorting and prepping for vote centers. Printing sample ballots in the vote center also eliminates the need to pay a vendor to print them.

Faster Final Election Results

Expectation

Processing time after the election will be significantly shorter due to an 83% decrease in provisional ballots. In most years, processing provisional ballots take close to or at the deadline of 10 days after each general election. Due to the time it takes to process provisional ballots, Pima County is almost always the last county to finalize results and one of the only counties to go right to the deadline.

Outcome

Pima County canvassed the general election within fourteen days. A.R.S. 16-642 states, “the governing body...shall meet, and canvass the election not less than six days nor more than twenty days following the election (Secretary of State, 2022).

It is important to note that faster final results depend on the recorder’s office and the election department. Different factors affect each office. The time it takes to process ballots depends on a couple of factors.

The first factor is when the elections department receives ballots from the recorder’s office during the early voting period and after election day. Once ballots are received, they go through statutory processing. The process takes time, but the early board can normally process 5,000 ballots in eight hours. Those ballots are then sent to the counting board for tabulation. Any ballots that the tabulator cannot read must be sent back to the early board for duplication. The counting board can tabulate ballots quickly once they receive them from the early board.

The second factor is the statutory deadline for voters to cure early ballots or provide valid identification for conditional ballots.

Therefore, reducing provisional ballots will allow quicker verification by the recorder, but it will not change the time it takes the elections department to process ballots.

The charts below provide a comparison of the early ballots received and processed for the last three general elections. The Board of Supervisors conducted each canvass within 14 days.

Early Ballots Received from the Recorder				
Election Date	Total Early Ballots Received by Election Day	Total Early Ballots Received Week of Election	Total Early Ballots Received Week After Election	Total Early Ballots Received from Recorder
2018	270,168	41,949	314	312,431
2020	419,847	42,859	389	463,095
2022	236,026	94,312	968	331,306

Early Ballots Processed by Elections							
Election Date	Early Ballots Processed before Election Day	Early Ballots Processed Week of Election	Early Ballots Process Week After Election	Total Early Ballots Processed	Election Day Ballots Processed	Total Number of Ballots Duplicated	Total Ballots Cast
2018	224,175	63,602	24,623	312,400	64,731	15,850	393,352
2020	413,064	41,569	5,144	459,777	50,323	14,266	526,319
2022	191,863	90,890	48,551	331,304	70,421	13,308	403,556

Improvement and Action Plan

The elections department cannot anticipate how many ballots the recorder will turn over the week of the election. Because of this uncertainty, the elections office must be able to increase staffing the week of the election to accommodate a large volume of ballots from the recorder’s office. Two shifts may be necessary to work the week before and the week of the election to ensure all ballots are processed quickly. We can also explore increasing the size of the boards. However, we have space restrictions that may pose a problem.

Voting Security

Expectation

The use of e-pollbooks will eliminate the possibility that someone could vote twice. Pollworkers will print ballots for individual voters eliminating the stacks of preprinted ballots. Pollworkers will also know if a voter returned an early ballot.

Outcome

The staff is more comfortable with the technology and better understands how the file transfers work. One key factor was paying attention to delta files before deploying e-pollbooks to vote centers. Better communication between the recorder’s office about file creation allowed the elections department staff to monitor those files and create a baseline for election day. That means all registrations, early and emergency ballots processed after the voter registration

deadline, were loaded onto the e-pollbooks by election day. The up-to-date database allowed transmissions of check-in to reach other vote centers on election day. The office also monitored any intermittent connection issues and notified the vote center. Any vote centers that encountered a problem implemented one of the contingency plans.

Improvement Action Plan

The elections department will continue to work with ITD and the vendors to determine the location and the cause of any intermittent outages.

Purchase, Receipt, and Testing of Equipment

Expectation

Elections and the Recorder were promised deliverables from Tenex Software Solutions, Inc. of equipment and training in sufficient time to prepare for and conduct the August 2 election.

Outcome

Both offices received all equipment before the primary election except the thermal receipt printers. However, we did receive the thermal receipt printers prior to the general election. In addition, the vendor shipped paper tray adapters to accommodate the nineteen-inch ballot.

The thermal printers increased the efficiency and accuracy of the check-in process on election day. The pollworkers had to write the information on a ballot receipt during the primary election, which slowed down the process and created the opportunity for errors.

The elections department tested each printer in a controlled environment before deploying them to the vote centers. However, some vote centers encountered problems with the paper trays on election day. The adapters caused the printers to jam in addition to pulling more than one sheet of stock at a time. In addition, many vote centers ran low on printer toner. The troubleshooters and rovers delivered the toner to the vote centers. Vote centers did not experience any major delays because of toner outages.

Two vote centers had major printer problems that required them to function with only one printer for at least three hours. Vote center 39 – Nanini Branch Public Library notified the office during Monday night set up of the printer problem. No elections technician was dispatched before the polls opened, as promised. The vote center reports redirected 80 voters during the outage. The vote center still had one functioning printer during the day. Vote center 16 – Canoa Ranch Recreation Center also reported printer problems on Monday night. The printer was continuously jamming and had to be replaced—no report of any voter leaving the vote center.

The technicians had to replace one cradlepoint with a broken antenna and one cradlepoint with intermittent outages. The office discovered the outage, and they contacted the vote center immediately.

Improvement and Action Plan

The elections department will work with the vendor to find a better solution for the paper trays before the next election. We will also send additional toner to each voter center and instruct pollworkers to clean the sensors when changing the cartridges.

Ballot Stock, Equipment, and Pollworker Allocation

Expectations

Vote Centers will have enough ballot stock, equipment, and pollworkers to function efficiently, without interruption, and following Arizona law.

Outcomes

All vote centers had adequate supplies, equipment, and pollworkers on election day. Troubleshooters were also available to deliver additional supplies as necessary.

The elections department increased the e-pollbooks and printer allocations during the general election. The additional equipment allowed pollworkers to check in voters and print ballots quickly. The new technology decreases check-in time, increasing the need for additional voting booths. Some vote centers experienced long lines, but the average wait time was less than 30 minutes unless they were experiencing equipment problems.

Most vote centers requested additional black pens because voters walked away with them.

The elections department staffed all vote centers with equal political party representation of inspectors, judges, and marshals. However, some pollworkers did not work on election day, creating an imbalance in some vote centers. The inspector made adjustments where necessary, and the elections office assigned backup workers where possible.

Supervisor Christy directed the elections director to send a letter to vote centers stating that all vote centers had equal representation. The troubleshooters delivered the letter on election day to vote centers. Some vote centers posted the letter, and some did not post it. However, Pima County achieved a level of equity in polling places that did not exist before the August Primary.

Improvement and Action Plan

I recommend the County purchase additional e-pollbooks, printers, and cradlepoints before the next election to ensure the proper allocation in each vote center and to have some spares on hand. We rented 80 e-pollbooks and thermal printers from the vendor to use in the general election for \$59,600.

We will also work on vote center staffing earlier and create a reserve list of officers that can step in on election day. Staff will begin the process by notifying anyone that applied to work this

year but did not get assigned. The office now has Tenex technology to manage pollworkers that they did not have before. In addition, we will update our online form and information to help us identify individuals willing to travel long distances. Staffing vote centers in outlying areas remains challenging, but we are working on a solution.

Training

Expectation

Pollworkers receive adequate training before each election, equipping them to conduct safe, secure, and fair elections. The training must cover voting procedures and voting equipment.

Outcome

The elections department conducted 52 training classes before the general election, 30 more classes than before the primary election. Classes began in September, a change from the usual two-week training window. The classes included seven for voting equipment specialists and ten for new pollworkers. The additional classes allowed elections to reduce the class size and allow more pollworkers to have hands-on training. The classes targeted job titles to provide more effective training.

In addition, the pollworker manual received a complete revision. The manual went from two separate documents to one comprehensive manual covering all jobs in the vote center. Sarah Ramsey and Cindy Coleman helped the department with revisions. The elections department also received feedback and input from pollworkers. A special thank you to John Decker, a vote center inspector, for taking the time to address training and the manuals after the primary election. Mr. Decker and many others have already provided valuable feedback for the next election.

The classes were significantly improved, but there was not enough time to cover the required material in detail. The amount of material to cover made it necessary to move quickly to allow time for hands-on training. In some instances, pollworkers were asked to stay behind if they wanted to receive hands-on training. While this did not pose a problem for most pollworkers, it was not ideal for those needing special attention.

The overwhelming response was that training and the manual were greatly improved from previous years and the primary election.

Improvements and Action Plan

The elections department was able to reduce the size of the training classes significantly, but it was impossible to extend the length of the classes for the general election. Staff will adjust the length of the classes before the next election. In addition, it is necessary to provide more detailed content to the pollworker manual, which could not be accomplished before the election. We will also continue to review all comments and accept suggestions about training and the pollworker manual.

The statutes require pollworker training to occur within 45 days of an election. This statutory requirement creates a compressed schedule where training must occur five to six days each week during the 45 days to accommodate all pollworkers. Because of the compressed schedule, elections will incorporate online training modules allowing pollworkers to take training when convenient. The online training modules will also allow pollworkers to review the information before each election.

Provisional and conditional ballots are confusing to both pollworkers and voters. We will create a special document that explains the process in detail and work with the vendor to make the workflow easier.

Furthermore, elections will also offer premium training to pollworkers. Premium training is an 8-hour course requiring an exam as defined by A.R.S 16-532(D). Premium board workers are not required to take training for at least thirty months from the certification date. Still, the Board of Supervisors or officer in charge of elections can require additional training. Having premium board workers and the online training will also help decrease class sizes.

I recommend creating a Voter Academy that will provide voters detailed information about the process, including types of ballots and how they are processed. The academy will allow voters to see a mock process of how we process early ballots and the tracking process. Each participant receives a certificate and documents that will empower them to explain the voting process to others. The academy can take place throughout the year in odd years and before each primary and general election in even years.

Supplies and Equipment Delivery

Expectation

Vote centers have the appropriate supplies and equipment to conduct the election. Deliver all supplies and voting equipment before the polls open on Election Day, except in emergencies.

Outcome

Vote centers received all the necessary supplies and equipment to conduct the election. Troubleshooters and rovers delivered any additional supplies requested on election day. Some of the most requested supplies were toner cartridges, I voted stickers, and black ink pens. Voters kept the black ink pens instead of leaving them in the privacy booths for the next voter. In addition, many vote centers needed an extra blue ballot box to accommodate the increased number of early ballot drop-offs.

Improvements and Action Plan

The elections department will deploy extra cartridges with printers to the vote centers and determine the best way to secure the black pens on election day. We will also send extra ballot boxes to vote centers that experience a higher volume of early ballot drop-offs.

Election Day

Expectation

Pollworkers expect support from the elections office and the recorder's office on Election Day to assist them in conducting safe, secure, and fair elections that provide every eligible voter the right to cast a ballot. Pollworkers and voters expect a prompt response to questions and problems on election day. Pollworkers will provide an accurate accounting of what occurs on election day, including any discrepancies in the count at the end of the night.

Outcome

The call centers were adequately staffed and enjoyed a relatively quiet day. The staff categorized fifteen of the 271 calls logged on election day as critical. Critical means that a printer failure, network connection, or supplies such as ink pens or toner cartridges may disrupt voting. Labeling an incident as critical means that staff responds to the call as the highest priority. All vote centers followed the contingency plan if a critical incident disrupted voting. I called a couple of vote centers to remind them to allow voters to use the ExpressVote, vote using a printed paper ballot, or go to a nearby vote center.

The call center experienced a significant decrease in calls for equipment problems during the general election. In addition, there were very few calls about closing procedures.

Improvements and Action Plan

The goal is not to have any critical calls on election day, and staff will work towards that goal before the next election.

We had three call centers for the first time during the general elections. The separation of duties proved to be beneficial to the callers. We also changed how we dispatch troubleshooters, rovers, and equipment technicians. We will continue to build on the changes to ensure vote centers feel confident about calling the office.

Additional Recommendations

- Election Integrity Commission Recommendation:
 - Hire a project manager/lead:
 - The office does need a program manager to manage all voting equipment and processes. The program manager will oversee asset management, programming, testing, and changes to workflow.
- Elections Director Recommendations:
 - Hire a compliance officer:
 - A compliance officer will ensure that all laws regarding campaign finance, candidate filing, ADA requirements, boards, and other legal requirements are met.

- Hire a part-time training assistant
 - The assistant will help with content creation, and ensure all manuals and materials stay current. We currently hire a temporary employee to assist with training. Previously training was held two weeks before the election. We plan to offer training opportunities throughout the year, including off years.



PIMA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

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Pima County Administrator

Jan Leshner

Elections Director

Constance Hargrove