

ELECTION INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Pima County, Arizona

TO: Honorable Sharon Bronson, Chair
Pima County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Tom Ryan, Chair
Election Integrity Commission



DATE: September 28, 2015

RE: Recommendation for Hand Count Audit Following November County Bond
and City Election

The upcoming November 3 election, to be conducted by Pima County Elections, combines county bond issues with City of Tucson Mayor and council races and city propositions. Currently there is no plan to do a post-election hand count for any of these issues and races since the state law on hand count audits for elections does not apply to non-partisan and local elections.

The Pima County Election Integrity Commission recommends, by a unanimous vote, that a post-election hand count be performed for this election. The Commission recommends this hand count audit for three reasons:

1. Pima County has recently purchased new election equipment and this is the first election that will employ that equipment. Since we have no track record with this equipment, we need to establish the integrity of the tabulation process. This will also provide a better opportunity to become familiar with the new system and its peculiarities.
2. The proposed hand count is consistent with the City of Tucson's standard practice of doing a limited hand count for their elections. The City conducted a hand count for the primary election.
3. We wish to avoid or at least reduce the likelihood of expensive legal proceedings that might arise from distrust of the election system. We recall the cases arising from the 2006 RTA bond election and do not wish a recurrence.

There is nothing in state law to preclude the County from doing a voluntary hand count.

The hand count we recommend would follow the prescription provided in state law and the Secretary of State's Election Procedures Manual, modified as needed for this election's unique circumstances. In this case we would hand count one bond issue, one city council race, and one city proposition, selected randomly. The selected races would be hand counted for ballots cast in 4% of the precincts (about 8) and 1% of the early ballots selected randomly in the manner used in previous elections. As with regular audited elections, the hand count will occur only if a sufficient number of volunteers are available. These hand counters will be paid the usual stipend of \$75. The total cost has been estimated at \$4,500.

Please add this topic to the agenda for the October 6, 2015 Board meeting for discussion and action.

cc: Chuck Huckelberry, Pima County Administrator
Robin Brigode, Clerk of the Board
Roger Randolph, City Clerk

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