



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS AGENDA

Greenbelt Board of Elections

Virtual

COUNCIL MEETINGS WILL BE ONLINE

Due to the COVID-19 precautions, the Council Meetings will be held online and is planned to be cablecast on Verizon 21, Comcast 71 and 996 and streamed to www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipaltv.

Resident participation:

Join By Phone: (301) 715-8592

Meeting ID: 812 8625 3794

Password: 20325

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov.

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

8:00 PM

Work Session Packet

Agenda

- *Introductions*
- *Council Discussion*
- *Questions and Answers*
- *Other Items*

Board of Elections

[Memo, Board of Elections, 03/24/2020.pdf](#)

[BOE Summary.pdf](#)

City Council Work Sessions Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: June 10, 2020

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Board of Elections

Suggested Action:

Attachments:

[Memo, Board of Elections, 03/24/2020.pdf](#)

[BOE Summary.pdf](#)

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 24, 2020

FROM: Board of Elections

TO: Bonita Anderson, Clerk, City of Greenbelt

RE: Post-Election Report to City Council

Ms. Anderson, please transmit this memorandum, with attachments, to the City Council in lieu of the March 30 work session which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board has met and discussed the Greenbelt Municipal election held November 5, 2019. Our findings are attached:

The Board determined that the last election generally proceeded well, even with some counting delays after the polls closed. The chief delay in reporting results was in the count of the 467 early and absentee votes. The sorting and categorizing of votes by precinct occurred late in the day and caused a delayed start. The main issue was that the scanner lacked an automatic feeder resulting in each ballot having to be hand-fed into the machine.

Another difficulty with early and absentee counting occurred when voters failed to mark the designated circles in a manner that allowed automated machine reading. Our procedures require Board of Elections clerks to open voting envelopes which are sorted by precinct and pass them on to the scanner if clearly marked. If the ballot was not clearly marked or rejected by the scanning machine, Board members were called upon to mark the circles only if the voter intent was clear. The ballot was then re-scanned and tabulated by the machine.

One of the candidates (Orleans) made an inquiry about these procedures, specifically asking about early and absentee ballots. We advised him, at our meeting of February 6, that each of the corrections made to the paper ballots, to ensure a vote is counted, was witnessed and approved by at least two Board members. We are confident that in each case where a correction was made – fewer than twenty, from a total of 2,180 ballots – the actual intent of the voter was clearly recognized.

After extensive meetings and spirited discussion, the Board of Elections concluded that a machine would be necessary for early voting. Early voting by machine would be a more secure option for voters, more securely preserve voter intent, ensure that no individual would vote twice, and avoid counting delays on the night of the election.

The Greenbelt City Council has also asked about the possibility of posting photos of candidates in the election process. To our knowledge, this has not been done elsewhere in Maryland. But if Council members believe it would help voters, the Board has no objection. Each candidate would be required to provide their own pre-determined standard sized picture.

The Board and Clerk's office are reviewing whether e-polling books, rather than printed registration lists, would be more efficient and cost-effective, in future elections.

We are aware that the City of Rockville instituted a new procedure, where all voting is done by mail. As a result of the new process voter participation increased. The mail-only voting process was initially met with skepticism about the validity of ballots and the overall cost to implement the new format. The Board determined that Mail-only voting would require substantial amendments to Greenbelt's Code and Charter. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, careful deliberation and consideration of mail-only voting is currently occurring in many States.

The Board of Elections stands ready to discuss election practices and procedures with the Council, when the work session is re-scheduled.

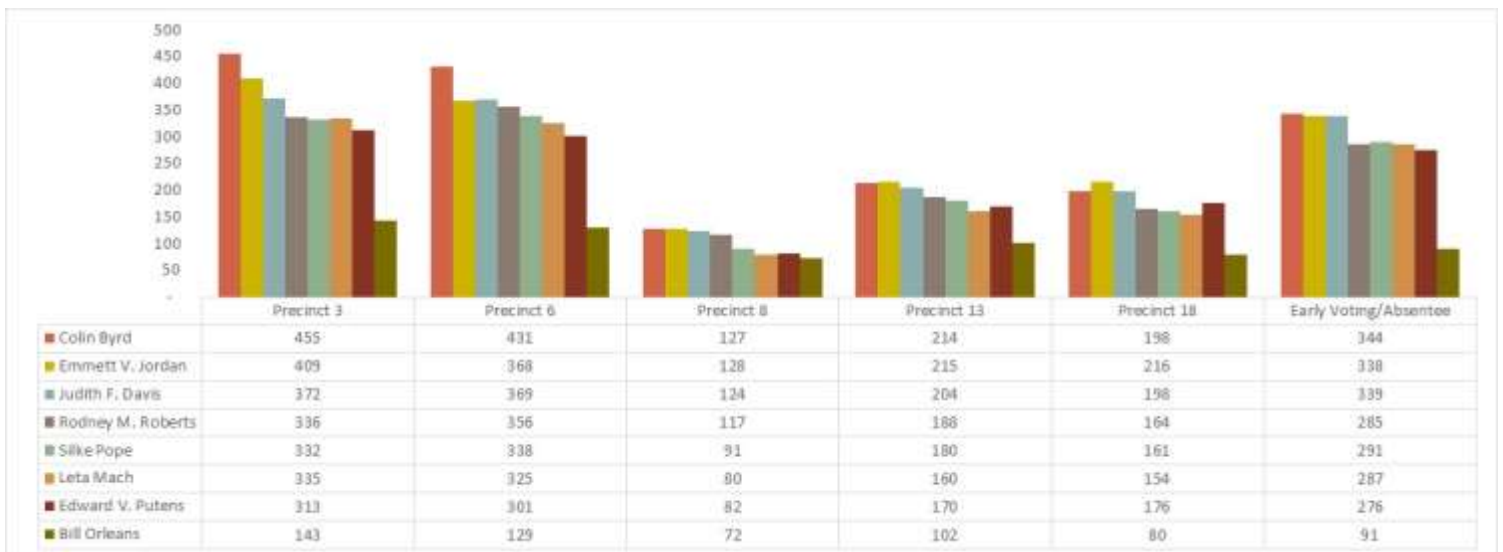
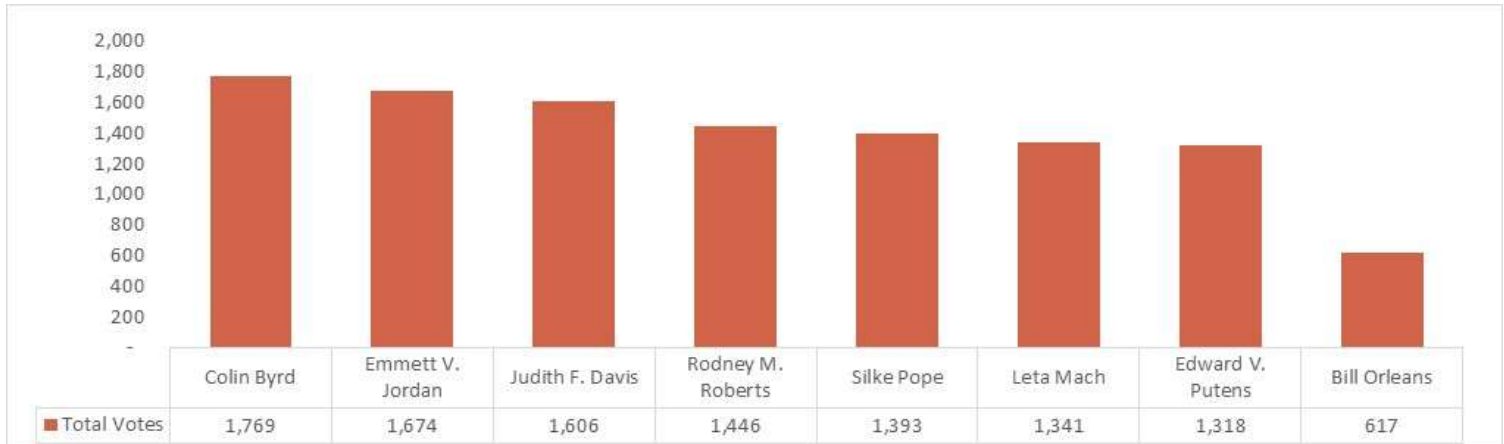
Attachments
2019 Election Summary

2019 ELECTION – BOE REVIEW

SUMMARY

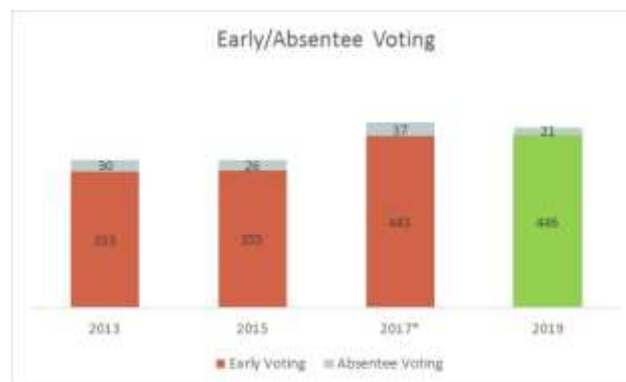
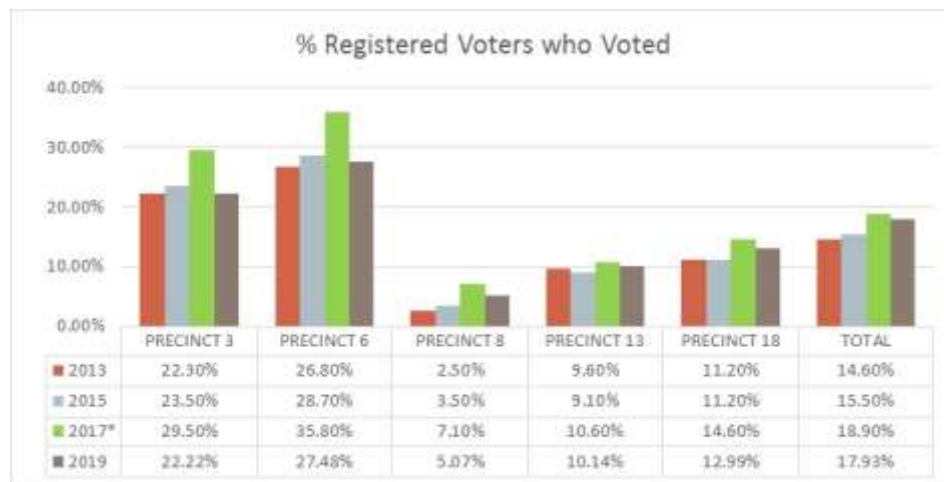
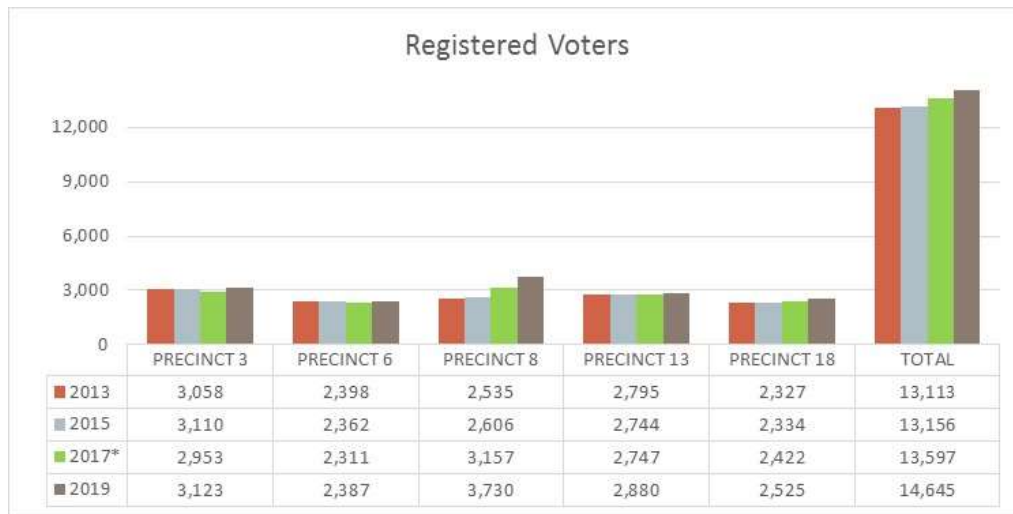
1. 2019 Election Results

Total Ballots Counted 2,180



Precinct	Precinct 3	Precinct 6	Precinct 8	Precinct 13	Precinct 18	Early voting
Location	Community Ctr	Police Station	Spring Hill Lake	Greenbriar	Schrom Hills	All
<18 Yr Voted	3	2	0	7	3	1
<18 Registered	21	19	32	39	31	142
%<18 Yrs. Voting	14%	11%	0%	18%	10%	11%

2. Voter Statistics



**Note: 2017 election - 1 vacant council seat.*

3. Early Voting Election Day Counting Procedures

Early Voting procedures

- Procedures this year remain consistent with prior years.
- Ballots separated by precinct and counted to reconcile against voter registration numbers
- Early voting clerks open envelopes and review ballot with at least one member of the board present
- Early voting clerks review ballots and verify if voting circles are darkened in so they can be read by scanner. If the circles are not correctly filled in, then the clerks provide to board members for review and recommendation. Two members of the board confirm and darken circles if needed to ensure successful scan.
- As done in prior years a scanner was used to count the votes. This year's scanner required hand feeding and was slower.

As a result, the BOE is recommending a voting machine for quicker count.

4. Changes this Year

Change Implemented	
BOE size increase	BOE went from 5 to 7 members. 3 new members joined the board.
Fee for late report filing \$50/day	Resulted in a candidate dropping out due to unpaid fees; fees were not waived for any candidate.
BOE review of financial reports	BOE reviewed reports
Longer Early Voting window	An additional 7 days added (week and weekend)

Voting Recommendations	
Machine for Early voting	Result in quicker processing – real-time feedback
E-poll books	Ease check-in process
Vote Count Witnessing	Document specific procedures for vote count witnessing
Survey for judges/clerks	Get feedback from judges/clerks

Candidate Suggestions	Concerns/Recommendations
Display photos of candidates	photos displayed at each precinct (suggested by J Davis)
Posting of Signs	Signs within No-Post Zone (update candidate package

5. Budget Planning

Currently Voting machine budget is \$9K –strongly recommend research for additional voting equipment in advance of the FY21 budget.

6. Election Environment

Things to Watch/Consider implication
Same day Registration
Continue to encourage voting turnout including 16/17
Rank Choice Voting
Voting by mail - Rockville