



Hall County Government

ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION

BOARD OF ELECTIONS & REGISTRATION

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Hall County Board of Elections Responds to Inquiries

On July 9 and 10, 2018, the Hall County Board of Elections received inquiries from two candidates regarding certain Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting equipment results tapes posted at a polling site following the May 22, 2018 primary election. State election law requires that the results tapes for each polling place be posted on the door of the polling place at the conclusion of an election. These tapes are created in triplicate at the close of the election. One set of tapes is for the door, one set goes to the Clerk of Court when the election records' custody is turned over to that office, and the other tapes remain with the Elections Board. The tapes posted on the door of the polling places can be, and are, generally discarded within 24 hours.

The inquiries state that direct observation and/or pictures taken by outside parties of the DRE voting equipment tapes posted at the Candler voting precinct appear to indicate that there are inconsistencies in the voting data reported from at least one machine. The precinct polling place is located at Hopewell Baptist Church, 5086 Poplar Springs Road, Gainesville, Ga.

The Elections Board launched an internal investigation into the matter following their July 10, 2018 Board meeting. The internal investigation conducted by Elections' staff has concluded that there are no errors with the election results from the Candler precinct. The Elections Board's tapes were reviewed, and no errors were found. Staff has consulted by phone with the Secretary of State's Office. It was determined that the erroneous tapes posted on the door of the Candler precinct were a result of an error that occurred with the printing of the tapes. The election data was gathered and transmitted properly. Elections Director, Lori Wurtz, said, "It appears that most likely the printing function was disengaged on the machine during the production of the tape reports, and then reengaged. When this happens, the machine continues the counting process even if printing is suspended. When printing resumes, the tape reflects the data from where the counting is at that moment rather than where the printing stopped. The outcome of the printing stop and restart is what we are seeing on the tapes in question."

When presented with the results of the internal investigation, Chairman of the Elections Board, Dr. Tom Smiley, stated, "I am glad that staff's examination of the data shows that the results of the May 22, 2018 primary election are accurate. I understand that the Secretary of State's Office has confirmed that they have seen this type of issue when the print function is disengaged during production of a tape report. I will be asking the Board of Elections to request that the Secretary of State's Office conduct their own independent investigation to verify our internal findings."

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