



Lucas Dahling
Finance Director
Lucas.Dahling@goodhuecountymn.gov
509 W. 5th St.
Red Wing, MN 55066

TO: Goodhue County Board
FROM: Lucas Dahling, Finance Director
SUBJECT: 2024 Elections Update
DATE: December 17, 2024

Background:

As you're all aware, Goodhue County played a key role in administering four elections during 2024. This was the Presidential Nomination Primary on March 5th, the March Township Elections on March 12th, the State Primary on August 13th, and the State General Election on November 5th. The purpose of this memo is to enhance your understanding of the effort that goes into running these elections.

Discussion:

I want to recognize the hard work and dedication of our Elections Department Staff during this past year. On a combined basis, including both non-exempt and exempt employees, these staff members have worked 759 hours of overtime specifically related to performing their elections duties. I also want to recognize the non-Elections Department individuals that volunteered and directly participated by taking on election tasks. We had 19 County employees from various departments that stepped up to help throughout the course of 2024. These individuals worked 52 hours of overtime.

We also had 20 individuals from the public that were temporarily hired to help with the elections. These individuals included members of the Ballot Board, the two Elections temporary employees, and students that helped with election supply pickup as well as election night equipment drop off. I also want to recognize those individuals that indirectly participated by helping with the influx of additional members of the public within the building. Additionally, I want to acknowledge the fact that the Sheriff's Office, Facilities Maintenance, as well as the IT Department all remained on standby as needed to ensure the elections were both safe and are successful.

Elections Staff lead several in person training sessions throughout the year. We also utilized online training for certain sessions for returning judges. Goodhue County Elections Staff trained a total of 377 Election Judges to serve during the 2024 elections. Further details regarding the in-person training sessions can be found in the table below:

Session Type	Number of Sessions	Session Length	Individuals Trained
Election Judge	3	2 Hours	175
Head Election Judge	3	1 Hour	32
Presidential Nomination Primary	6	2 Hours	257
Ballot Board	2	1 Hour	19
Health Care Facility	2	1 Hour	2
Election Refresher	1	2 Hours	49
Election Clerk	1	2 Hours	40
Poll Pad Introduction	3	1.5 Hours	50
Poll Pad Open Houses	15	As Needed	54

Staff also experienced heightened levels of interactions with the public via phone calls and emails. Included with these interactions were generic questions related to the election process, data requests for specific information, and regular communication with the League of Women Voters, who mounted a campaign to provide additional factual information to the voters of Goodhue County.

During the 2024 elections, staff completed over 10,000 voter roll transactions. These transactions included but were not limited to registering new voters, updating for name changes, updating for change addresses, removing deceased voters, as well as removing voters who moved away from Goodhue County.

Staff also processed over 8,800 Absentee Ballot Applications during 2024, with over three quarters of this work occurring during September, October, and the first week of November. The absentee voting period begins 46 days prior to each election, and we saw a strong absentee turnout during the General Election with a total of 6,660 absentee votes. The 2024 General Election had the second highest absentee voting turnout on record at 23% of votes cast. The highest absentee turnout year was in 2020 at 39% and the next highest was in 2018 at 17%.

The Direct Balloting voting period now begins 18 days prior to election day. During the General Election we experienced a strong direct balloting voter turnout with a total count of 2,753 ballots. 292 of these votes occurred during the enhanced voting hours to include the second Saturday before the election, as well as the Saturday and Sunday immediately before the election as now mandated by statute. The highest single day direct balloting turnout was on Friday, November 1st with 304 votes and the daily average was 172. Overall, the General Election voter turnout was high at 90%, which was up from 2022 at 73%, but also down from 2020 at 94%.

I would like to personally thank all Elections staff for their hard work and dedication over the last year. This thank you also extends to our Ballot Board members, the other County staff who helped, and other community members who stepped up to deliver safe and successful Presidential Nomination Primary, State Primary, and State General Elections during 2024.