



WHITE EARTH RESERVATION Election Board

2024 REPORT AND ACTIVITIES OF THE WHITE EARTH GENERAL ELECTION BOARD

- 1) Procedures for Primary Election 2024
 - A) Prepared office setting
 - B) Set employee work schedule for entire election
 - C) Developed forms and letterhead to be used throughout election
 - D) Developed a binder with election documents for use during the 2024 election as well as a reference for future elections. Binder has been updated throughout the election process. Also included in the election documents binder are the processing procedures for daily mail received in the office as well as directions to process absentee ballots and what to send back to voters if request for ballot or the return envelope with voter signature is incomplete.

- 2) Set up precincts
 - A) Contacted precinct workers. Created a list of workers to be sent to Tribal Council.
 - B) Contacted precinct sites and arranged to use facilities for the primary and general elections.
 - C) Worked with WEPD to obtain a trailer for the Pine Bend precinct and established a place in Pine Bend that would have internet services for election day.
 - E) Worked with Merlin Deegan and staff to cover off-reservation precincts to deliver and return ballots on election day.
 - F) Automated Election Services (AES) provided training for precinct workers.

- 3) Issuing ballots
 - A) AES provided ballots for the primary election on February 29, 2024. Immediately, we started sending out ballots from the requests that we had already received. We started in-person voting on the same day.
 - B) We continued to process ballot requests on a daily basis and had the poll open for early voting from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday thru Friday from February 29, 2024 to election day, April 2, 2024 as well as Saturday, March 30, 2024.

- 4) Primary Election Day, April 2, 2024
 - A) On election night the polls were open until 8:00 PM. When they closed, the precinct workers began to run their close out tapes as instructed by AES. When we ran our vote totals we realized there was an error with the programming of the machines. The order of the names in the machines was different than the order of the names on the ballots (which was the correct order). We immediately called all of the precincts on the reservation and instructed them to secure their ballots in the bins and bring them to the SSC Event Center where we



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were going to conduct a hand count of the ballots. We also instructed the off-reservation precincts to conduct a hand count of their ballots and send the correct count to us when they finished. After all the precincts totals were received we began the hand count of the absentee ballots that we received at the election office. The need to conduct a hand count of the ballots took 1 ½ hours and resulted in a correct total which did not affect the final outcome of the election. When the error was first discovered, Mickey Divine from AES was on site to assist the General Election Board and the precinct boards with the hand count. She immediately contacted Terry Rainey from AES and discovered what had happened. It would have taken a couple days to get the machines reprogrammed and run the ballots back through each machine to get a revised printout. This led to a hand count of the ballots on the night of the election. The vote totals were verified the next day prior to the certification of the election.

- B) After the Primary Election and prior to receiving the ballots for the General Election, the Election Board began to clean up the files that held the ballot request cards from previous years. We retained the two most recent requests from voters and packaged the remaining older cards together and gave them to White Earth Enrollment Office. They will use the records when researching the historical pattern for voters, updating address changes and tying families to voting districts.

The Election Board also provided a list of the address changes that were received from the voters that were different on their ballot requests compared to the address that the MCT had on file for the voter. There were 149 address changes as well as 3 name changes. The White Earth Enrollment Office received these and will correct their records which in turn will correct the records with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. The Election Board also updated the ballot request files with the MCT records. We had received a death record of all White Earth enrollees dating back to 1790. With this we were able to remove 170 names from our ballot request files as the voters were found on the deceased records.

5) General Election 2024

- A) We received the ballots for the General Election on April 29, 2024. We immediately sent out ballots to all voters that requested a ballot for the Primary Election. We also began the early voting process the same day. We started the day to day work of processing ballot requests as well as responding to e-mails and phone calls from voters. In the month of May, the Election Board began contacting the precinct workers again to confirm their ability to work the General Election. There were a few changes that were noted and sent to WERTC for their information. The precinct sites were also confirmed. One change was made with the Bejou precinct. Notices were sent out and posted at the old site and new site prior to election day.
- B) The General Election was held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024. It was approximately 30% busier than the Primary Election with voter activity extremely busy at the District III precincts as well



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as the Election Board office. After the polls closed on election night all records were brought to the SSC Event Center for the unofficial tally with no discrepancies. The next day the results were certified and posted throughout the reservation.

6) Notice of Recount and Notice of Contest

- A) Within the timeframe required by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Election Ordinance, two requests for recount were filed with the General Election Board. The Board decided to grant the request for a hand count of the ballots. The recount of ballots was held Monday afternoon and concluded on Tuesday morning. The hand count matched the machine count and a letter was sent out to all candidates informing them the original certification would stand as there were no changes.
- B) According to the MCT Election Calendar and the Election Ordinance, any candidate that wanted to file a notice of contest of the election had to file their contest with the MCT and Judge by 4:30 PM on June 18, 2024. The Election Board was notified after 4:30 PM, June 18, 2024, that no contests were filed. At this point, the Election Board began the process of closing down the office. All records for the 2024 General Election were brought to the MCT for safe keeping for 90 days as required by the MCT Election Ordinance.

6) 2024 Summary

- A) Overall, we feel the 2024 Election went smooth with a few small issues that were immediately corrected.

The General Election Board would like to thank the White Earth Tribal Council for the opportunity to assist with the 2024 election. We will be preparing a few recommendations for the WERTC to consider prior to the 2026 Election under separate cover.

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