

Gallup: Referendum canvassing went ‘well’

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 19 August 2016 03:49



Voters said yes to three measures

A tired Al Abeita, Gallup city clerk, who monitored the election and oversaw a regular city council meeting on the same date, said the Aug. 9 canvassing process went well.

“Thanks to our experienced poll officials, the McKinley County Bureau of Elections, Automated Elections Services, and my staff, the election process went very well,” Abeita said.

AES is a vendor based in Rio Rancho that’s authorized by the state to provide election services and supplies. They provided the systems that were used to generate ballots for each voter.

Abeita, Municipal Judge Grant Foutz, City Attorney George Kozeliski, and Deputy City Clerk Alicia Palacios participated in the canvassing.

Records indicate that 579 votes were cast for a referendum that calls for the city to invest \$5.3 million in street and road repair or replacement projects. Those projects include a \$1.6-million

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replacement of Ciniza Drive in Indian Hills, and \$2-million storm drainage improvements to Hassler Valley Road.

The Hassler Valley location is the future site of a state veterans cemetery.

Gallup Public Works Director Stan Henderson said as soon as the bond paperwork is finalized, full attention will be turned to the early stages of the actual repair and replacement projects.

"Everything must go through its proper course," Henderson said after the election. "I anticipate a smooth process for everything."

Voters also said yes to an advisory referendum question on limiting the sale of package liquor before 11 am. In that matter, there was a favorable outcome of 562 to 210. With respect to the recycling matter, the closest of the three election components, there were 389 yes votes to 383 no's.

The recycling matter asked taxpayers if they'd favor instituting single-stream curbside recycling, the result of which is an added cost to utility bills.

Abeita said street improvements are anticipated to begin late 2016 or early 2017.

"The city still needs to go through the process of issuing the general obligation bonds," he said.

As of press time, the city had not received an invoice for the services and materials provided by AES for the special election.

A total of 6.8 percent of registered voters participated in the Aug. 9 election. The total number of eligible voters was 11,450, while the total public voting turnout was 781, according to Abeita.

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