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BOARD OF ELECTIONS
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2008 ANNUAL REPORT

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ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Jefferson County Board of Elections

COMMISSIONERS

SEAN M. HENNESSEY

DEMOCRAT

JERRY O. EATON

REPUBLICAN

DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS

BABETTE M. HALL

DEMOCRAT

KRISTY A. PICKETT

REPUBLICAN

REGISTRATION CLERKS

MICHELLE COULLIER

DEMOCRAT

HELEN FIKES

REPUBLICAN

PART TIME & ELECTION WORKERS

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE

to provide for the registration of voters within Jefferson County, and the conduct of elections as required by federal and state law.



Types of Services and Assistance

- To provide registration forms and assistance to those persons wishing to register
- To appoint, and compensate all election day workers.
- To provide training of election inspectors in procedures used in elections.
- To appoint and compensate all machine custodians and party representatives.
- To provide training of machine custodians in procedures of the set-up and repair of voting machines.
- To purchase, service and provide voting machines for public use.
- To provide assistance to Town and Village Clerks, school districts and fire districts relative to their elections.
- To provide a directory of Elected Officials in Jefferson County.
- To provide educational background on the procedures of registering to vote and voting to the schools and organizations.
- To provide lists of registered voters and statistical data on registrations, enrollment and voting.
- To assist other county and state departments.
- To provide assistance to candidates and potential candidates.
- To aid political parties with procedures of the Election Law.
- To conduct Federal, State, County, Town and Village Elections.

The Jefferson County Board of Elections is a County office that is managed in a bi-partisan fashion by the two major political parties in New York; the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. The board is run in accordance with the provisions of the New York State Election Law.

The office consists of six full time employees, two part time employees, Voting Machine Custodians, Election Inspectors, and any other necessary Election support staff. Those positions by seniority and duties are:

- 2 full time Commissioners
- 2 full time Deputy Commissioners
- 2 full time Registration Clerks
- 2 part time Registration Clerks
- Voting Machine Custodians
- Election Inspectors
- Election Day temporary staff

COMMISSIONERS:

- 1). HAVA related contracts, grants, and implementation
- 2). Office budget development, negotiations, and implementation
- 3). Campaign finance questions and advice to candidates and general public
- 4). Setting up ballots and overseeing the printing off these ballots
- 5). BMD machine maintenance and oversight responsibilities
- 6). Coordination of machine delivery, access equipment implementation, and custodial staff direction
- 7). Redistricting issues
- 8). Poll site oversight; including, consolidation, movement of, and general operating conditions
- 9). Payroll process
- 10). Oversight of designated Deputy Commissioner and Registration Clerks of either party
- 11). Appointment of new staff
- 12). Appointment or removal of poll workers
- 13). Advice to public officials and candidates for public office on election related issues
- 14). Certify Election Results
- 15). End of year reports to state BOE
- 16). Pay office bills

DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS:

- 1). Oversight of poll workers, their yearly training, and maintenance of list of inspectors for records purposes
- 2). Absentee ballot process for all elections (all types)
- 3). Coordination of Election Day inspector staffing
- 4). Ensuring that office supplies are adequate for office and Election Day needs
- 5). Ordering of envelopes for election purposes
- 6). Contact with Town Clerks to coordinate inspector needs and access needs on Election Day
- 7). Oversee Registration Clerks and their office duties
- 8). Keep Commissioners up to date on office related personnel issues and workload issues
- 9). Assist Commissioners when needed on HAVA related projects and coordination efforts
- 10). Inter office organization and working environment
- 11). Election workers payroll process
- 12). Street maintenance updates in Conjunction w/ Reg Clerks.
- 13). Lead Re-canvass Teams

REGISTRATION CLERKS:

- 1). Process registration forms
- 2). Maintain registration forms (cancellations, verifications, and maintenance of active/inactive)
- 3). Answer office telephones
- 4). Maintain and mail registration forms to all US Postal sites, Town offices, and Village offices
- 5). Interact with general public for assistance on registration related issues
- 6). Collate Election Day supplies, Bag Preparations and returns.
- 7). Overall file maintenance
- 8). NTS list's as requested by Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner
- 9). Report directly to Deputy Commissioner's for work responsibilities and office concerns
- 10). Ultimately report to Commissioner's
- 11). Voter outreach efforts at public schools, nursing homes, etc. in conjunction with Commissioner and/or Dep. Commissioners.
- 12) Process Duplicates, Moves, Death Maintenance, Out of States and Cancellations.
- 13) Assist Deputy Commissioners in recanvass

2009 Preview

The Board anticipates historic changes to the Election process for calendar year 2009. In general terms, the 2009 Election season is what is considered a "local year". The major contests that will be on this year's ballot will be, County Judge, County Clerk, all 15 slots on the Board of Legislators, and most Town and Village positions.

While the workload in terms of new voter registrations, absentee ballots, and other office tasks will be reduced, the workload for designating petitions, campaign finance filings, ballot layout, and voting machine setup will increase from 2008. The sheer number of positions open to be filled for public office and the coinciding increase in candidacies for those positions will keep the Board busy for 2009.

As of the date of this report, the New York State Board of Elections has yet to advise this Board on which voting machine equipment will be in place for the September Primary and November General Elections. We anticipate the strong possibility that we will again be using the old lever voting machines in addition to the new Ballot Marking Devices (BMD) for persons with disabilities.

The biggest issue heading into 2009 besides the flux in which voting machines will be used is staff. The Jefferson County Board of Elections is currently understaffed for the workload which it finds itself managing. With the Board staff stretched too thin now, the complete overhauls in Election management in 2009 will place even greater pressure upon the Board.

Election Year in Review

The 2008 Election Year was undoubtedly the busiest and most challenging Election Year in the history of Jefferson County. The Board oversaw the management of 4 separate Election dates with 2 of those Elections being within weeks of one another. The other 2 Elections saw the introduction of the new Ballot Marking Devices (BMD) for the first time. The Elections held this year were:

February 5, 2008 (Presidential Primary)
February 26, 2008 (Special Senate)
September 9, 2008 (Primary)
November 4, 2008 (General)

The strain on personnel and resources this year were unprecedented. However, the staff at the Board was able to successfully manage all four Elections.

Presidential Primary

The 2008 Presidential Primary was historic given its competitiveness, number of candidates, and its importance in American History. This Election drew 11,651 total voters. Of those, 782 voted by Absentee Ballot with the remaining voters casting ballots on the lever machine, Emergency Ballots, or Affidavit Ballots.

The following is the certified results of this Election:

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

DEMOCRAT	1A	HILLARY CLINTON Three Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Eight votes	3828	VOTES
DEMOCRAT	1B	BILL RICHARDSON Thirty Five votes	35	VOTES
DEMOCRAT	1C	JOE BIDEN Eleven votes	11	VOTES
DEMOCRAT	1D	JOHN EDWARDS Ninety Nine votes	99	VOTES
DEMOCRAT	1E	BARACK OBAMA One Thousand Seventy Two votes	1172	VOTES
DEMOCRAT	1F	DENNIS KUCINICH Twenty votes	20	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15A	RON PAUL Three Hundred Forty Four votes	344	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15B	ALAN KEYES Two votes	2	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15C	DUNCAN HUNTER Three votes	3	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15D	RUDY GULIANI Two Hundred Twenty votes	220	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15E	MITT ROMNEY One Thousand Five Hundred Seventeen votes	1517	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15F	MIKE HUCKABEE One Thousand Forty Two votes	1042	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15G	JOHN MCCAIN Three Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Nine votes	3429	VOTES
REPUBLICAN	15H	FRED THOMPSON Twenty Seven votes	27	VOTES

Special State Senate Election for 48th Senate District

The resignation of James W. Wright as State Senator in January 2008 prompted the Governor of New York to call for a Special Election to be held on February 26, 2008 to fill this vacancy. The Senate District includes Oswego, and St. Lawrence counties as well.

Given that the Presidential Primary was held on February 5, the preparation time to hold this Election was very short. The maintenance turnaround on voting machines, the ordering of paper ballots, the notification of Inspectors, and the overall mechanics of putting together an Election in this time frame stretched the Board's staff to the maximum. Again, the staff performed tremendously and the Election was a success despite a snowstorm on that day.

Litigation which was filed during the lead up to this Election ended on the night before the Election. However, the Judge's ruling was that a candidate was to be added to the ballot in time for the next day's Election. This required Board staff and Voting Machine Custodians to work through the night of February 25 and into the early morning of February 26 to change lever voting machines to reflect the ballot change. Again, while staff performed superbly, the staff was stretched thin.

The following is the certified results of this Election as sent to the NYS Board of Elections:

48th SENATE DISTRICT

DEMOCRAT	1A	DARRELL J. AUBERTINE Thirteen Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Nine votes	13,559 VOTES
REPUBLICAN	1B	WILL BARCLAY Six Thousand Nine Hundred and Nine votes	6,909 VOTES
INDEPENDENCE	1C	WILL BARCLAY Six Hundred Seventy Three votes	673 VOTES
CONSERVATIVE	1D	WILL BARCLAY Five Hundred Twenty Five votes	525 VOTES
WORKING FAMILIES	1E	DARREL J. AUBERTINE Nine Hundred Twenty Five votes	925 VOTES
		BLANK/VOID One Hundred and Thirty Seven	137 VOTES
		TOTAL VOTES Twenty Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Eight	22,728 VOTES
TOTAL		DARREL AUBERTINE Fourteen Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Four votes	14,484 VOTES
TOTAL		WILL BARCLAY Eight Thousand One Hundred Seven votes	8,107 VOTES

September Primary

The September Primary saw the introduction of the new BMD machines to assist persons with disabilities cast paper ballots at polling sites. Thirteen BMD's were deployed successfully by staff in the run up to the September 9 Election. In addition, lever machines in the Towns of Brownville, Rutland, and Watertown were also deployed. In another first, the Board staff deployed handicap accessibility items to be used in Jefferson County.

This Election provided a trial run on BMD ballot and deployment preparation. In 10 towns, an Election for Delegate to the Conservative Party for the Judicial Nominating Convention in the 122nd State Assembly District was held on paper ballots. Turnout was minimal given that only 278 registered Conservative Party voters were eligible to cast paper ballots. The Election was successful and experience was gained for the General Election.

The following is the certified results of this Election:

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Town of Watertown – Justice	
John W Graham	33 Votes
Andrew Capone	41 Votes

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Town of Brownville – Justice	
Kathy Quencer	139 Votes
Melba Jean Ellingsworth	87 Votes

Town of Rutland - Town Council	
Kenneth Gleason, Jr.	217 Votes
Collen J. Woolley	100 Votes

Town of Watertown – Town Justice	
John W. Graham	56 Votes
Andrew Capone	131 Votes

INDEPENDENCE PARTY

Town of Watertown – Town Justice	
Andrew Capone	2 Votes
John Graham	2 Votes

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Town of Watertown – Town Justice	
Andrew Capone	2 Votes
John Graham	0 Votes

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Delegates to the 5th Judicial District convention, 122nd Assembly District

Don Pastor	1 Votes
D Renzi	1
Gene Heaglen	1
Clarence T. Presley	1
Burr Stoker	1
Troy	1
C. Wooley	1
Kenneth A. Parks	2

General Election

To say that the 2008 General Election was a huge undertaking for this Board given its limited staff resources and expanded responsibilities under the new HAVA provisions would be an understatement. Like the September Primary, two machines were used at each of the County's 59 poll sites. The traditional lever voting machines were used in conjunction with 59 new BMD's for persons with disabilities. In addition, new handicap accessibility equipment was delivered to all 59 poll sites to make them accessible per HAVA provisions.

The lever machines were set up by our Voting Machine Custodians like every other election. The Building and Grounds Department provided personnel to deploy the 18 lever machines from the County Airport to the City of Watertown poll sites.

The new BMD machines were prepared in our new machine room in the basement of the County Building. The Deputy Commissioner's handled the ballot setup of all 59 voting machines and the required testing prior to their deployment. This was a huge task for 2 people given that the test procedures to ensure ballot accuracy had never been done. The Deputies performed very well and all 59 machines were prepared in advance of November 3.

On November 3, the 59 BMD's were delivered to 59 poll sites by an outside contractor. The machines were delivered back to the County Building on November 5 in good shape.

The handicap access equipment was delivered over a three day period to all 59 poll sites by Board staff despite a late October snowstorm.

Between August 1, 2008 and December 15, 2008, the Board processed 3,240 new voter registrations alone. In addition, 3,959 voters requested an Absentee Ballot for the General Election.

The following are the certified results of the major contents from the General Election:

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

DEMOCRAT	BARACK OBAMA*	
	Seventeen Thousand Five Hundred and Forty Seven Votes	17,547 Votes
REPUBLICAN	JOHN MCCAIN	
	Eighteen Thousand and Forty Six Votes	18,046 Votes
INDEPENDENCE	JOHN MCCAIN	
	One Thousand Three Hundred and Fifteen Votes	1,315 Votes
CONSERVATIVE	JOHN MCCAIN	
	Eight Hundred and Fifty Nine Votes	859 Votes
WORKING FAMILIES	BARACK OBAMA	
	Six Hundred and Nineteen Votes	619 Votes
SOCIALIST WORKERS	Roger Calero	
	Twenty Six Votes	26 Votes
SOCIALISM & LIBERATION	Gloria La Riva	
	Nine Votes	9 Votes
GREEN	CYNTHIA MCKINNEY	
	Forty Nine Votes	49 Votes
LIBERTARIAN	BOB BARR	
	One Hundred and Twenty One Votes	121 Votes
POPULIST	RALPH NADER	
	Two Hundred and Fifty Seven Votes	257 Votes
WRITE IN	Thirty Eight Votes	38 Votes
BLANK/VOID	Seven Hundred and Forty Votes	740 Votes
TOTAL VOTES	Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred and Twenty Six Votes	39,626 Votes

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS 23RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

DEMOCRAT	MICHAEL P OOT	
	Seven Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Nine Votes	7,349 Votes
REPUBLICAN	JOHN M McHUGH*	
	Twenty Two Thousand Five Hundred and Two Votes	22,502 Votes
INDEPENDENCE	JOHN M McHUGH	
	Two Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty Three Votes	2,483 Votes
CONSERVATIVE	JOHN M McHUGH	
	One Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty Nine Votes	1,369 Votes
WORKING FAMILIES	MICHAEL P OOT	
	Five Hundred and Thirty Three Votes	533 Votes
WRITE IN	Two Votes	2 Votes
BLANK/VOID	Five Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty Eight Votes	5,388 Votes
TOTAL VOTES	Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred and Twenty Six Vote	39,626 Votes

NEW YORK STATE SENATE 48TH DISTRICT

DEMOCRAT	DARREL J. AUBERTINE*	
	Nineteen Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty Three Votes	19,483 Votes
REPUBLICAN	DAVID A. RENZI	
	Fourteen Thousand and Two Votes	14,002 Votes
INDEPENDENCE	DAVID A. RENZI	
	Twelve Hundred and Thirteen Votes	1,213 Votes
CONSERVATIVE	DAVID A. RENZI	
	Nine Hundred and Thirteen Votes	913 Votes
WORKING FAMILIES	DARREL J. AUBERTINE	
	Fourteen Hundred and Ninety Three Votes	1,493 Votes
WRITE IN	One Vote	1 Vote
BLANK/VOID	Two Thousand Four Hundred and Sixty One Votes	2,461 Votes
TOTAL VOTES	Thirty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Sixty Six Votes	39,566 Votes

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY 122ND DISTRICT

REPUBLICAN	DEDE SCOZZAFAVA*	
	Seven Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Three Votes	7,993 Votes
INDEPENDENCE	DEDE SCOZZAFAVA	
	One Thousand and Eighty Three Votes	1,083 Votes
WORKING FAMILIES	DEDE SCOZZAFAVA	
	Six Hundred and Seventy Six Votes	676 Votes
WRITE IN	Two Votes	2 Votes
BLANK/VOID	Six Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Five Votes	6,755 Votes
TOTAL VOTES	Sixteen Thousand Five Hundred and Seven Votes	16,509 Votes

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY 118TH DISTRICT

DEMOCRAT	ADDIE JENNE RUSSELL*	
	Ten Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Seven Votes	10,587 Votes
REPUBLICAN	ROBERT W CANTWELL II	
	Eight Thousand and Ninety One Votes	8,091 Votes
INDEPENDENCE	ROBERT W CANTWELL II	
	Seven Hundred and Forty Votes	740 Votes
CONSERVATIVE	ROBERT W CANTWELL II	
	five Hundred and Twenty Nine Votes	529 Votes
WORKING FAMILIES	ADDIE JENNE RUSSELL	
	Eight Hundred and Thirty One Votes	830 Votes
WRITE IN	Fifteen Votes	15 Votes
BLANK/VOID	Two Thousand Two Hundred and Sixty Five Votes	2,265 Votes
TOTAL VOTES	Twenty Three Thousand Fifty and Eight Votes	23,057 Votes

Office Operations and Changes

With the burden of putting on four Elections in one year came the issue of staff turnover. On January 1, 2008, the Board was comprised of two Part Time Commissioners, two full time Deputy Commissioners and four Registration Clerks. At that time, Democratic Deputy Commissioner Cindy Corbett had recently passed away and Republican Deputy Commissioner Sandy Corey had just retired.

Sean Hennessey replaced Cindy in October 2007 as Deputy Commissioner and Kristy Pickett became Republican Deputy Commissioner effective January 1. Then, in April of this year, the County Legislature decided to go to full time Commissioners. Democratic Commissioner Keith Crimmins and Republican Commissioner Jim Fitzpatrick retired and were replaced by Sean Hennessey as Democratic Commissioner and Jerry O. Eaton as Republican Commissioner. Babette Hall moved from Senior Clerk to Democratic Deputy and Kristy Pickett remained as Republican Deputy Commissioner.

Given the complexities of four Elections being conducted, major staff turnover and a loss of experience was hard to overcome. However, hard work and long hours helped to ensure the Elections came off.

New Voting Machines

In May, 7 of the Board's 65 new BMD's were delivered. The first 7 machines were inspected at that time and awaited movement to the new Voting Machine room being built in the basement of the County Building. In early July, the remaining 58 BMD's were shipped from Albany and awaited testing once in the new room. When the new room was completed in late July, the machines were moved to the basement and full acceptance testing was begun on the last 58 machines. Once the machines were tested, they awaited the arrival of memory cards with the ballot layouts. The machines were programmed for both the Primary (13 machines) and for the General Election (59 machines). The other machines were used for spares on Election Day and trainers for Inspectors.

Inspector Training

Instead of the usual August training, Election Inspector training was moved up to July to give Board staff all of August to work on the BMD machines. From July 22-24, Inspector training was held at the Northside Improvement League in Watertown. Six classes of about 120 Inspectors per class were held with Inspectors learning about new Laws, the new machines, and standard Election information. The training was successful.

In August, Election Inspectors who volunteered to learn how to run the new BMD for the Primary were trained. This Training went well as did Primary Day with the new machines in operation. The General Election training for the BMD's was held from October 20-22 in the Old Courthouse. Training again went well and Inspectors were prepared for machine operations and voting assistance.

Statistics

2008 Statistics

New Voters Registered	5,826
Total Votes Cast	74,925 (4 Elections)
Absentee Ballots Issued	6,250 (4 Elections)
Affidavit Votes Cast	800 (4 Elections)

Presidential Year Comparison, 2004 & 2008

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2008</u>
Registered Voters	55,096	64,283
Votes Cast in General Election	39,165	39,625
Absentee Votes (General only)	2,318	3,055
New Registrations	3,530	5,826
Affidavit Votes at polls	75	685
Year long data input records	30,646	51,296

2007 v. 2008 workload comparison

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
New Registrations	2,922	5,828
Duplicate Record Changes	358	840
Incompletes	36	109
Name Changes	433	641
Other	22,755	39,363
Party Changes	645	1,074
Residence Changes	3,169	3,441
Yearly Total	30,318	51,296

Summary

As can be seen by the raw numbers, the Jefferson County Board of Elections has seen a drastic increase in overall workload since the 2004 Presidential Election and a greatly enhanced role in the overall conduct of Election operations in Jefferson County. In 2004, the Board was staffed by 6 full time staffers and 2 part time Commissioners. In 2008, the Board is staffed by 6 full time staffers and two part time Clerks. Since 2004, Jefferson County's base voting population has increased due to Fort Drum and new civilian enrollments.

Fort Drum Impact

The impact of Fort Drum and the military enrollment in Jefferson County separates our voter base from most other counties around us due to the fact that military voters tend to move often compared to the civilian population and make up a good portion of the requested Absentee ballots in elections. The JCBOE's workload has increased since 2003 due to major personnel deployments in the War on Terror, the continuing growth of housing on post, and the overall population growth of the county. It is very common in our Board to register a new military voter on Fort Drum today and have their registration mail returned to the office by the U.S. Postal Service within days saying that their address is wrong, does not exist or, the voter does not reside there. This increases the workload on the Registration Clerks who are already having trouble keeping up with the day to day tasks they are assigned.

HAVA Impact

The implementation of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) has transformed how elections are managed. While the impact had been debated for a couple years in advance of 2008, the actual realization of the complexities and management of new provisions has created a whole new demand on this Board. While the Commissioners became full time in 2008, the overall staffing did not increase to handle the new demands. Given that there were two voting machines at every poll site in addition to new handicap access equipment, the Commissioners were tasked with managing the logistics of machine storage, machine deployment, Inspector training on the machine, and supply orders for the machines.

The Deputy Commissioners acted as BMD machine custodians in 2008. This created a vacuum in the Board office during the critical lead up to Election Days. The Deputies are the most experienced staffers in the Board and were pulled away for long periods of time to handle the new BMD machine requirements. HAVA's demand on the Board will only continue to grow for 2009 and beyond. The movement of Elections in New York continues to be one of centralization at the county level. This will require greater county funding and staffing.

Voting Machines

For the past half century at least, Jefferson County voters have voted on lever voting machines. It is anticipated that 2009 will see the end of the lever voting machine in favor of a paper system based around the new BMD's. At this time however, the NYS Board of Elections has not certified the BMD's to be used as voting machines for 2009 and our lever machines must be on standby in case they are utilized in 2009 along with the BMD's.

Once the lever voting machines are phased out, they will not be able to be used in School Elections, off cycle Village Elections, Fire Commissioner Elections, and water and sewer Elections. This will require these government entities to either vote on paper ballots or contract with the Board to utilize the BMD machines. There is the possibility of additional Election management by this Board if contracts are entered into to provide services for these Elections.

The new BMD's require routine maintenance and testing even when they are not being used in an Election. The new state regulations note that machines must be tested at least once every quarter in the Calendar Year. While not difficult to do, this task will only increase the time staff is out of the main office. Part time staff may be used to do some tasks with the Deputy Commissioners handling the actual ballot layout preparations.