

COUNTY OF JEFFERSON

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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To: Members of the Jefferson County Legislature and Mr. Robert Hagemann, County Administrator

From: Commissioners Hall and Eaton

Date: December 31, 2014

Re: 2014 Annual Report to the County Legislature in compliance with NYS Election Law 3-212.4

2014 Annual Report

2014 was a busy election year for us with three elections to plan. The first election was on June 24, the Federal Primary Election. The Federal Primary was a Republican primary for the Congressional District 21, there were two major candidates for Representative in Congress. There were 70 voting machines throughout the county with no issues.

Between the two Primary Elections we scheduled inspector training classes. The Inspectors that check voters in (table inspectors) were held at JCC in July and August. The machine inspector's classes were held in the Jefferson County Bldg., conference room for three days in August.

Our traditional Primary Election was held on September 9, 2014. This primary consisted of a State wide Democratic primary for Governor and Lieutenant Governor and a county wide Democratic primary for Jefferson County Sheriff. Primaries for Jefferson Family Court Judge consisted of Republican, Conservative, Independence and Green Party races. Primary elections for Member of Assembly in the 116th Assembly District that had Republican and Conservative races and three towns that held Republican races. Glad to say as busy as this primary was it all went very well.

The General Election ballot had three state wide proposals along with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller, Attorney General, State Supreme Court Justice, 5th Judicial District, State Representative in Congress 21st District, State Senator 48th District, State Member of Assembly 116th District, State Member of Assembly 117th District, State Member of Assembly 120th District, Jefferson County Family Court Judge, Jefferson County Sheriff and there were a number of town and village races throughout the county. With the General Election always being the largest and final election for the year, it was as always an extreme amount of work. Election day had its normal issues with voters and machine questions, a few times during the day there were problems with the ballots running through the scanners. This was ratified by our Machine Technicians and has become a detail that we are looking to resolve.

The day after the election we began collecting the voting machines and materials from each poll site. The next few days were cleaning up and gathering all items needed to re-canvass the election.

The Board's legal challenge came after the General election which took both commissioners and the deputies counting the 116th Assembly Districts absentee and affidavit ballots in court. We follow a precise procedure for counting absentee and affidavit ballots to canvass the votes and certify the results on time. Separating the Assembly Districts and counting what we could first was very confusing. Having experienced staff was the key to our getting through a very stressful time. We certified with the State Board of Elections with the races from the 117th and 120th Assembly Districts and amended the election certification once the litigation was over.

Our annual operating budget for the year was set at \$824,367. Much of this amount goes to office salaries, election inspector pay, computer software, printing, and mailing costs. With the 2013 redistricting continues to save in costs, especially on election days, inspectors needed to work at the poll sites and transportation of the voting machine and materials.

Our staff was comprised of Commissioners Jerry O. Eaton and Babette M. Hall. The Deputy Commissioners were Trina Kampnich and Michelle LaFave. Our Machine Technicians were Matthew Shaw and Helen Fikes. In March, we found we were losing both Registration Clerks within a week of each other. Lori Mehaffy moved out of state and Frances Sourvine moved onto another position. The departure of our two clerks was troubling for all of us in the office, we value the knowledge that our clerks held and both were very organized and excellent in their positions. There has been a large turnover since 2012 due to people leaving, it is difficult keeping our staff and this puts a great hardship on all of us. We found replacements for our clerks, Tara Hess and Sandra Converse have worked well with us since April, although there is still much for them to learn they are quickly adapting to all aspects of their responsibilities.

Jerry Eaton resigned his position as of December 31, 2014, as we know he is not far from us being the new Commissioner of Jurors, he was very knowledgeable with the election process and will be greatly missed.

In closing, 2014 was a year which posed many challenges that were not anticipated and required our staff to be flexible in time management to get all our duties accomplished so that Election Day's was successful. As to learning Munis and not having too many of these yearend invoices rejected will be next challenge.

Respectfully Submitted,

Babette M. Hall, Commissioner

Jerry O. Eaton, Commissioner