



Summary:

Immediately after a Texas election, a little known process occurs: the Partial Manual Count (PMC).

Each county that uses electronic voting systems must conduct a PMC after each election, as required by [Texas Election Code \(TEC\) Section 127.201](#), “to ensure the accuracy of the electronic voting system results.” [Representatives](#) appointed by candidates in the election may observe it.

This process is the quintessential “fox guarding the henhouse” exercise, as the fox will never publicly conclude that he stole a few hens while conducting the election.

No detailed procedures of Dallas County’s PMC are published, and the Custodian of Election Records (CER) (which is the county’s Elections Administrator [EA] Heider Garcia) refused to provide to observers the detailed [directives](#) he was given by the Secretary of State Elections Division (SoS). Hence, the PMC process was as opaque as the voting systems themselves.

As we detailed in our [last press release](#), the November 5, 2024 election may go down in history as the worst election ever delivered to voters by Dallas County. The PMC process adds insult to this profound injury.

In our opinion, the PMC is a waste of taxpayer money because it does nothing to ensure the accuracy of the electronic voting system or the overall goal of transparent and accurate elections. A system should never be trusted to audit itself.

The Process:

1. SELECTION

The PMC requires a manual count of paper ballots for three races in specific precincts and vote centers, and the results are then compared to the electronic results. The precinct and vote center selections were made days ahead of the PMC without visibility or input from our party ([despite the SoS’ recommendations](#) that party chairs be present in the interest of transparency).

- For Election Day voting, nine vote centers were selected. Six were selected by the SoS (by an unknown methodology), and three were selected arbitrarily by the CER.
- For Early Voting and Mail-in voting, eight precincts were selected by the SoS.
- The three races were President, Senator, and County Commissioner District 1.
- The SoS gave the CER discretion to include any vote center with discrepancies but the CER declined to use this opportunity to investigate the gross discrepancies of the Early Voting

vote centers that experienced the majority of problems (as described in our [previous press release](#)).

- None of the precincts selected included the County Commissioner race, and one of the precincts was a precinct with ZERO registered voters.
- When we raised these issues to the CER, he deflected to the SoS, and the SoS ignored our calls and emails.

Punchline: The selection process was opaque and performed without our party's input, defeating the spirit of the PMC to build confidence in the opaque and proprietary election system equipment. The SoS continues to not respond to our concerns.

2. SORTING

For Election Day vote centers, no sorting of ballots by precinct was necessary since all of these ballots from the vote center were to be counted.

For early voting in-person and mail-in ballots, the ballots for the selected precincts had to be found in each vote center's ballot boxes. To perform this process, the CER used reports from the main tabulation computer (the Central Accumulator) to "know" how many ballots for each precinct would be found in vote centers' and mail-in ballot boxes.

The staff sorted these ballots manually and stopped when they found the requisite number of ballots at a given early vote center. Occasionally, and arbitrarily, the staff used the ES&S fast scanners which have a sorting functionality and can output a specific precinct's ballots from a stack of ballots. They are basically finding a "needle in a haystack" since some precincts may only have a few ballots in a vote center with tens of thousands of ballots. We observed some precinct number of ballots to be different from the expected number. Later a few "stray" ballots were found.

Punchline: The Dallas County Elections Department uses the electronic election system to find the ballots to be counted for the PMC. Depending on the machines to determine the accuracy of the machines is clearly not independent validation.

3. MANUAL COUNTING

The counting was done with one caller and two counters with tally sheets. The team took the ballots that had been sorted as described above and then re-sorted the ballots by race and candidate and then tallied. They moved on to the subsequent races and performed the same process.

The counting was done with multiple teams in a large warehouse room, and unbeknownst to the representatives until much later, some of the counting was done in another room without any observation.

Punchline: Having counting done in multiple places at multiple times without notice to the observers is not a transparent, trustworthy process.

4. AGGREGATION AND COMPARISON

The CER promised the representatives that they could observe the aggregation of all of the tally sheets, the investigation of any discrepancies per vote center, and the comparison to the electronic result records. He and his staff reneged on these promises and stated that representatives would not be able to observe or know the total tallied results nor the electronic results comparison in real-time. A report to the SoS was to be prepared and transmitted to the SoS, but not provided to representatives.

Punchline: At the end of the PMC, the CER refused to show, in real time, if or whether the manually counted results matched the results on the central accumulator, let alone provide those results to representatives in advance of the PMC. This is an unacceptable lack of transparency and defeats the purpose of the PMC process.

Conclusion:

The PMC took greater than eight hours per day for more than nine days and required approximately twenty Dallas Election Department staff members and temporary workers. Our scheduling and training of the candidate representatives (Dallas citizen volunteers) was a challenging task given the scope of work and the lack of notice and published procedures. For these reasons, it was impossible for observers to gather complete and meaningful data, despite having representatives present for most of the PMC.

We were shocked and disappointed by the CER's lack of transparency which defeats the purpose of the PMC to build confidence in the voting system equipment or the election's declared results.

In Dallas County, the fox is truly guarding the henhouse, aided and abetted by the non-responsive, unhelpful SoS Elections Division.

The Partial Manual Count is simply another government-based attempt at a sham of a solution to provide cover for passivity and complicity.

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