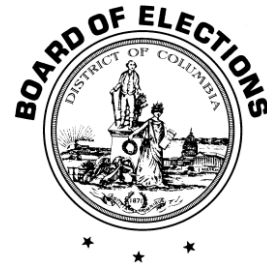


After Action Report

2015 Special Election – April 28, 2015



Introduction

This After-Action Report (“Report”) presents an analysis and summary of the April 28, 2015 Special Election (“the Special Election”) to fill the vacancies for the Ward 4 and Ward 8 Members of the Council of the District of Columbia. This Report follows the same statutory framework for after-action reports set forth under D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05 (k), and contains the following information:

- (1) The total number of votes cast, broken down by type of ballot, including the number of spoiled ballots and special ballots that were not counted, and the reasons these ballots were not counted;
- (2) The number of persons registered:
 - (A) more than 30 days preceding the election;
 - (B) between 30 days preceding the election and the date of the election; and
 - (C) on Election Day;
- (3) The number of polling place workers by precinct;
- (4) Copies of any unofficial summary reports generated by the Board on election night;
- (5) A synopsis of any issues identified in precinct captain or area representative logs;
- (6) Performance measurement data of polling place workers;
- (7) A description of any irregularities experienced on Election Day; and
- (8) Any other information considered relevant by the Board.

As part of the 2015 post-election assessment, the Board of Elections (“BOE”) followed its customary procedure of interviewing precinct captains, election workers, consultants, and senior staff to gain their perspective on what worked well and what may need improvement or correction in administering future elections.

This Report includes the following five (5) subject categories: (1) Early Voting; (2) Absentee Voting; (3) Election Day; (4) Vote Tabulation; and (5) Data Section.

I. Early Voting

A. Early Voting Center Locations and Hours

Preparation of Early Vote Centers

The BOE operated three (3) early voting centers during the April 28, 2015, Special Election: Takoma Recreation Center in Ward 4; Malcolm X Elementary School in Ward 8; and One Judiciary Square (election headquarters) in Ward 2.

Operation of Early Vote Centers

Early Voting is comprised of two parts: (1) In-person absentee voting, which began in the Board's Counting Center at One Judiciary Square on Monday, April 13, 2015, and; (2) Satellite Early Voting in Ward 4 at the Takoma Recreation Center and in Ward 8 at Malcolm X Elementary School, which began on Saturday, April 18, 2015. In-person absentee voting and satellite early voting ended on Saturday, April 25, 2015.

Lessons for Future Preparation

During the early voting period, the Board used its Counting Center for In-person absentee voting instead of the Old Council Chamber, which is normally used for early voting during primary and general elections. We found that access to One Judiciary Square was inhibited due to increased building security measures deployed by building security. Accordingly, the BOE will not use the Counting Center as an early voting center for future elections. BOE will attempt to once again secure the Old Council Chamber for in-person absentee voting in the future.

B. Early Voting Turnout

Total early voting turnout for the April 28, 2015 Special Election was 3,823. In total, 12,292 voters cast a paper or electronic ballot on Election Day, representing 68% of all persons voting in the 2015 Special Election. While the number of voters taking advantage of early voting is increasing, voter turnout on Election Day continues to outpace early and absentee voting.

As is typical with special elections, total voter turnout was low for early voting, In-person absentee, and Election Day voting; however, turnout for early voting for the April 28, 2015 Special Election was significantly higher than the comparable 2013 Special Election for At-large Member of the Council. Early Voting turnout increased from 4.9% to 21.2%.

Table 1: Early Voters by Recent Elections

Election	Total Voters	Early Voters	% of All Voters
2012 General	294,254	57,053	19.4%
2013 Special	57,238	2,792	4.9%
2014 Primary	99,394	14,755	14.9%
2014 Special	1,715	166	9.7%
2014 General	177,377	26,660	15%
2015 Special	18,063	3,823	21.2%

It is noteworthy that the 2013 Special Election, which was a city-wide race, had a lower turnout than the 2015 Special Election, which consisted of contests in two wards. It is clear that the contest on the ballot and the level of competition among the candidates is a significant factor driving turnout.

C. Early Voting Staffing

Voting Center Staff

The BOE deployed 84 election workers to staff early voting centers. The workers were deployed in morning and afternoon shifts from 8:00am-2:00pm and 1:30pm-7:30pm. The number of workers assigned to each location for each shift varied from 8 to 13, depending on the projected turnout for the busiest days of the week.

Early Voting Training

Workers completed a four-hour course featuring lectures and hands-on training on all early voting work assignments.

Voting Center Management

Each early voting site had two site coordinators, one for each shift. Site coordinators were trained on all early voting procedures and received additional training on opening and closing the early voting center each day, managing staff, and updating wait times on “The Queue.” (<http://bit.ly/1g2W5wo>).

Many voters commented that their early voting experience was positive, largely due to the knowledgeable and professional manner in which the staff operated the centers.

Lessons for Future Preparation

The BOE will continue to study early voting trends to ensure optimal and cost-effective staffing for early voting centers.

D. Early Voting Equipment Deployment

The BOE deployed ten (10) touchscreen voting units and six (6) ePollbooks to each early voting center. The BOE also conducted a test pilot to evaluate new ePollbook solutions, as well as a new touchscreen ballot marking device to provide disabled voters the opportunity to vote independently.

II. Absentee Voting

Absentee Ballots Transmitted

The BOE transmitted a total of 1,113 absentee ballots to voters for the April 28, 2015 Special Election. Of this total, 40 were sent to military and overseas (UOCAVA) voters. Of the 1,113 ballots transmitted, 746

Table 2: Absentee Ballots Transmitted and Returned

Election	Absentee ballots transmitted	UOCAVA ballots transmitted	Absentee ballots timely returned	Timely Return Rate
2015 Special Election	1,113	40	746	67%

were timely returned, reflecting a 67% timely return rate. This is a slightly lower percentage return than experienced during the November 2014 General Election, which was 74.5%.

III. Election Day

ELECTION DAY PREPARATION

A. Facilities

Polling Places and Relocations

The BOE opened and operated 36 polling places on Election Day. Precincts 134 and 115 were combined into one polling place at Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church due to ongoing renovations at Precinct 115 (Seventh District Police Station). Allen Chapel is located less than one block from the Seventh District Police Station. Voters assigned to each precinct cast ballots without incident.

Polling Place Issues

No major issues were encountered at polling places on Election Day. All Captains were able to access their respective facilities at 6:00am, and all were open for voting at 7:00am.

B. Equipment Allocation

Voting Equipment

For the April 28, 2015 Special Election, each polling place was assigned two (2) touchscreen and one (1) optical scan voting unit.

ePollbooks

The BOE deployed three (3) ePollbooks to smaller precincts and six (6) to larger precincts. The BOE also conducted an ePollbook pilot program at four polling places (two in each Ward) on Election Day.

C. Training Election Workers And Staffing

Scope of Training

Workers were required to complete a four-hour team training class. The team training offered election worker basics and trained each worker on four clerk positions (Check-In Clerk, Ballot Clerk, Special Ballot Clerk, and Voter Assistance Clerk) at the polling place. During the last hour of training, workers were divided into groups and taken through mock polling place scenarios wherein they gained hands-on experience for their Election Day work assignments.

Structure of Training

Training for Early Voting was held March 23rd through 28th. Training for the April 28, 2015, Special Election began one month prior to Election Day. Each day featured one (1) or two (2) training sessions for election workers. Special training sessions were also held for technicians and area representatives. Additionally, training labs were held to provide workers who needed or wanted additional learning opportunities.

Worker Evaluation Process

Workers were required to complete two (2) evaluation components to demonstrate their capacity to perform their assigned duties:

1. Complete a written quiz and achieve a score of 80% or more; and
2. Demonstrate the ability to perform their assignments in a timely and correct manner during the mock precinct portion of the training class.

Training Challenges

Unlike the time consuming and arduous schedule of general elections, single Ward special elections allow for “team training” classes. While workers appreciate the team training format, it is very labor intensive and difficult to conduct during a city-wide election.

Improvements for the Future

The BOE anticipates developing an online training application to improve the quality of training, reduce the time burden on election workers (and thus recruit different types of new workers), reduce administrative costs, and improve worker performance on Election Day. An online training application would allow workers to begin the training process at home and at their own pace. The worker would still be required to attend class and engage in hands-on training. This

type of training regimen would allow for small groups or one-on-one tutoring that caters to the educational styles and needs of each worker. This would also allow trainers to make a more comprehensive assessment of each worker’s skills. It should be noted that not all trainees would be able to participate in this type of training, and for most, it would be a first-time introduction to the election training material.

A total of 471 workers attended training classes. Of those, 454 passed their class and were eligible to work during the election. See Table 3.

Table 3: Training & Staffing Totals

Table 3

Total # of workers trained	471
# of workers that passed their class	454

ELECTION DAY ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

D. Election Day Support Network

As in previous elections, the BOE deployed a multi-tiered support network that provided assistance to election workers and responded to problems that arose on Election Day. This network consisted of three main components:

- **Election Help Desk** – The Help Desk is a communication hub for polling places on Election Day that handles procedural and legal matters, addresses staffing issues, provides technical assistance, and solves problems occurring at polling places. It also provides support on Setup Day, which is the Monday prior to Election Day. The Help Desk call center answered questions from election workers and the public, and dispatched supplies and technical assistance via roving support staff on Setup Day and Election Day. The Help Desk includes election staff, General Counsel staff, the Media Team, members of the election worker training staff, temporary election workers, and technical experts from the Board’s equipment vendors.
- **Technical Rovers** – For the Special Election, the BOE deployed 19 technical rovers and nine (9) lead technicians to support 37 polling locations. Each technical rover was assigned no more than two (2) polling locations.
- **Area Representatives** – The BOE deployed 13 area representatives to monitor polling places for supply issues or other concerns that did not require technical assistance, but could not be handled by election workers. As before, this system allowed the BOE to ensure that all polling place operations were running smoothly and issues were addressed in a timely manner.

Performance Measurement

The BOE continues to measure election worker performance to ensure they follow standard BOE election operating procedures and District laws in assisting and processing voters. The BOE reviews their work product after each election. This process helps BOE management and the training staff in two significant ways:

- Identifying workers who do not follow Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) so that the BOE can either work to improve that worker's shortcomings or find a replacement;
- It allows the training staff to identify gaps in training or procedures that need to be addressed in order to help workers best assist voters and ensure integrity, accuracy, and accountability in the voting process.

Precinct Captain Surveys

In addition to the BOE's worker performance evaluations, Precinct Captains are surveyed for the purpose of identifying strong workers, as well as workers who do not correctly follow procedures, provide poor customer service, or display poor work ethic. During this election, the majority of Precinct Captains indicated that they were happy with the performance of their election workers. Those workers who did not perform adequately were identified by Precinct Captains, allowing the BOE to reassess future employment opportunities for those individuals.

Polling Place Openings

All polling places opened their doors and began processing voters at 7:00am.

Only two (2) polling places opened their M100 machines after 7:00am. One opened the M100 machine at 7:01am, and another at 7:06am. All precincts had their DRE touchscreen voting machines open at 7:00am. Table 4 reflects the performance measurements for each polling place on Election Day.

Table 4 - Precinct Performance Measures

Pct. #	Precinct Doors Open at 7:00 AM	M100 Open at 7:00 AM	iVotronic Touchscreen Open at 7:00 AM	Delivery Conf. Form Returned	Ballot Acc't Form Returned	Captain Notebook Returned	M100 & iVo Machines closed by 9:00 PM*
45	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
46	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
47	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
48	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
49	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
51	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
52	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
53	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
54	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
55	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
56	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
57	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
58	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
59	On Time	Late, 7:01am	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
60	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
61	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
62	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
63	On Time	Late, 7:06am	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
64	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
65	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
112	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
114	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
116	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
117	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
118	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
119	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
120	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
121	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
122	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
123	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
124	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
125	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
126	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
133	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
134/115	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
140	On Time	On Time	On Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
TOTAL	36	34	36	36	36	34	36
%	100.0%	94.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	94.4%	100.0%

E. Special Ballots

Volume

Voters cast a total of 1,405 special ballots during the April 28, 2015 Special Election, with roughly half of the ballots cast during Early Voting. Special ballots were cast by same-day registration voters, voters who recently changed names and/or addresses, and voters voting out of precinct. The table below reflects the count and type of special ballots received on Election Day.

2015 SPECIAL ELECTION - SPECIAL BALLOTS

1,405 special ballots cast in total

Accepted Ballots (82.4% of all special ballots)	
Voted outside home precinct (correct ballot available)	616
Change of voter address	313
Same-day registration	120
Inactive voter confirmed address	20
Absentee ballot not mailed to Board	17
Change of voter name	4
Other	68
Total	1158

Rejected Ballots (17.6% of all special ballots)	
Voter did not complete voter affirmation	107
Voter did not provide proof of residence (same-day registrant)	71
Same-day registrant not eligible outside home precinct	21
Voted in wrong Ward (correct ballot not available)	16
Administrative challenge	9
Incomplete envelope	8
Voter does not meet age eligibility requirement	8
Address does not exist	5
Voter already voted absentee or early	2
Total	247

Logistical Challenges

Unlike the 2014 General Election, the demand for special ballots did not cause a significant logistical challenge in the April 28, 2015 Special Election, because overall turnout was low. However, the special ballot process requires voters to wait in a separate line at the polling place. Many voters are upset when told they have to vote a special ballot, often complaining about the additional time or expressing the mistaken belief that their ballot will not be counted.

The post-election tabulation of special ballots continues to cause financial and logistical challenges for the BOE. Nevertheless, the BOE was able to complete processing of special ballots within a reasonable amount of time for this election.

F. Equipment Performance

Election Day Problems Encountered

Only three equipment problems were encountered during Election Day. There were two nonresponsive touchscreens (DREs) and one M100 that had an error message prior to the opening process. The two touchscreens and the M100 were replaced with spare units by the assigned BOE Technician.

Requests for Assistance

The Technical Rovers and Lead Technicians made a total of 229 recorded visits to polling places throughout Election Day. Each rover and technician created an “Activity Log” to document actions taken. See Table 5.

Table 5 - Visits to Polling Places by Technical Rovers and Lead Technicians

Position	ePollBook	ePollBook Printer	iVotronic	M100	No Issues at this time	Precinct Operations	RTAL	(blank)	Grand Total
IT Rover	21	2	7	4	136	9	6		185
Lead Technician	6	1	7	2	23	2	1	2	44
Grand Total	27	3	14	6	159	11	7	2	229*

Examples of technical issues encountered were:

- Connectivity with the ePollbooks
- ePollbook frozen within the application
- ePollbook peripherals not synced to ePollbooks
- Screen calibration issues with the touchscreen voting machine
- RTAL roll change on the touchscreen voting machines

G. Supplies

All Precinct Captains reported having an adequate amount of supplies delivered on Setup Day.

H. Facilities

Size and Suitability Issues

The BOE operated 37 precincts at 36 locations on Election Day. All polling places used during the Special Election were evaluated for handicap accessibility and adequacy of space. Finding suitable and available facilities within or near precinct boundaries that meet both statutory and practical needs of size and accessibility has been, and continues to be, a challenge. While most of the facilities served as adequate polling places on Election Day, it is clear that increased voter registration and participation levels are having an adverse impact on the adequacy of some facilities. Unfortunately, some precincts have few relocation options due to either availability or accessibility.

I. Polls Closing Analysis

Generally, polling places experience two “rush hours” of voters on Election Day: 7:00am until approximately 10:00am, and 5:00pm until closing at 8:00pm. Given the low turnout for the April 28, 2015 Special Election, most polling places did not experience any significant rush, and very few polling places had a line for longer than a few minutes at any point during Election Day.

J. BOE Observations

The BOE has made improvements to the technician reporting process by redesigning the activity log used to capture information about technical issues experienced at polling locations. The BOE will continue to move towards completely digitizing this process and incorporating technology (*i.e.*, tablets, PDAs, or mobile apps) that will capture all occurrences at polling places.

IV. Tabulation

A. Preparation

Preparation for election night tabulation begins with preparation for Election Day. Once the ballot is properly designed and the voting equipment is prepared through logic and accuracy (“L & A”) testing, a mock tabulation is conducted to ensure that the election management system will properly calculate votes. Once the mock tabulation is completed and accuracy is certified, no changes are made to the ballot or the management system.

Absentee ballot tabulators, known as “650s”, are also tested to ensure that they are properly functioning. Each of the BOE’s 650s performed properly during the tabulation of absentee and special ballots.

Staff also revised the L&A process to ensure that the L&A process was thoroughly checked from beginning to end. All aspects of L&A were reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.

B. Delivery of Election Results

On election night, all election results were delivered to the BOE’s office for tabulation. The BOE completed tabulation and reported unofficial results from all precincts at 10:03pm.

C. Tabulating Special Ballots

The BOE tabulated all special ballots within ten (10) days after Election Day. At the conclusion of tabulation, the BOE rejected a total of 244 special ballots, accounting for 17% of all special ballots cast. Special ballots were rejected due to ineligibility, insufficient information provided, or failure to provide proof of residence.

Table 6: Special Ballot Details

Special Ballots Cast	Accepted Special Ballots	Rejected Special Ballots	Rejection Rate
1,405	1,161	244	17%

Conclusion

The Board experienced a successful outcome for the April 28, 2015 Special Election. Voter turnout was on par with staff projections and preparations. Most voters had an enjoyable experience on Election Day due to short lines, attentive election workers, and good customer service.

More voters continue to take advantage of early voting, absentee voting, and out-of-precinct voting with each election. This presents a challenge to the Board in preparing for and executing different methods for voters to cast their ballots.

The Board will now prepare for the 2016 presidential election, as well as continue evaluating voting equipment, and revising processes and procedures. Time will also be devoted to updating voter rolls, improving election processes, and assessing the needs and challenges of future elections.