

MINUTES
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, YUMA CITY HALL
ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA
AUGUST 13, 2024
5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nicholls called the City Council meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Morales, McClendon, Morris, Shoop, Shelton, and Mayor Nicholls
Councilmembers Absent: Smith
Staffmembers Present: Acting City Administrator, John D. Simonton
Various Department Heads or their representative
City Attorney, Richard W. Files
City Clerk, Lynda L. Bushong

I. 2024 PRIMARY ELECTION CANVASS

Mayor Nicholls introduced Kika Guzman, Yuma County Election Services Director and Richard Colwell, Yuma County Recorder, to present an update on the 2024 Primary Election. **Colwell** stated that when unofficial election results were released to the City of Yuma and other jurisdictions the precincts were not separated by jurisdictional splits but rather by the precincts as a whole, which led to some confusion and inaccurate initial voting results affecting some jurisdictions. The error was caused by inaccurate software settings and was not discovered until Monday, August 5th when it was brought to the County's attention by the Yuma City Clerk's Office. **Colwell** used the following example to better illustrate what happened:

- Yuma County consists of 47 different precincts
- Many of those precincts are split, meaning multiple jurisdictions can be included in one specified precinct. For example:
 - Precinct 1 has 1,133 registered voters with two split jurisdictions - 96 voters from the City of Yuma and 1,037 voters from outside the City of Yuma.
 - 214 voters in Precinct 1 cast votes, of which only 10 were from the City of Yuma due to the split jurisdictions.
 - This led to a misrepresentation of total votes for ballots cast and voter turnout.

Colwell emphasized that the actual number of votes cast for any particular candidate was not affected or changed, and reported that Guzman and her staff have been working with the vendor to get this reporting correct for the upcoming General Election.

Discussion

- Yuma County is not looking to change the contracted vendor they currently use.
(**Shoop/Guzman/Colwell**)

Speaker:

Cynthia Tovar, City resident, in addition to questioning the drop in the number of ballots cast, questioned the quality control, identification of the deficiency before the software was deployed and how to ensure this will not happen in the future to which **Mayor Nicholls** explained that those are questions for Yuma County and more appropriate at a County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mayor Nicholls stated that the explanation for the drop in the ballots cast number was just explained by Mr. Colwell. **Mayor Nicholls** further explained that part of the quality control process is what the Clerk's Office does to make sure things are moving forward correctly. There was a bit of a hiccup; the correct data ended up coming forward; and tonight, City Council is making things official.

Tovar concluded that the voters of Yuma deserve transparency and confidence that their votes have been accurately counted and that the true will of the people is reflected in the final result. **Mayor Nicholls** agreed and stated that is why the County was asked to be here to explain what happened.

Motion (Morales/McClendon): to adopt Resolution R2024-043.

Bushong displayed the following title:

Resolution R2024-043

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, declaring and adopting the Official Canvass of the results of the Primary Election held on July 30, 2024 (for the purpose of nominating and/or seating candidates for the offices of City Councilmembers (3 seats) and Municipal Judge (one seat)) (Admn/Clk)

Roll call vote: **adopted** 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no need for Executive Session and no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor

Approved at the City Council Meeting of: _____ City Clerk: _____
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