



DOROTHY KENNEDY
ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR
P O Box 10536
Lubbock, TX 79408-3536

December 1, 2009

Hon. Esperanza "Hope" Andrade
Secretary of State
State of Texas
Post Office Box 12060
Austin, TX 78711-2060

Re: Report on the Centralized Countywide Polling Place Program
Pursuant to Section 43.007 of the Texas Election Code

Dear Secretary Andrade:

I am very pleased to report favorably on Lubbock County's most recent implementation on November 3, 2009 of the Centralized Countywide Polling Place Program, conducted pursuant to Section 43.007 of the Texas Election Code. Based on input from the County's media relations consultant, we refer to these polling places as "Vote Centers."

Lubbock County conducted this election jointly with the City of Lubbock. The City of Lubbock had four bond propositions on the ballot.

Because this was the third implementation of the Vote Center concept, educational publicity was not as extensive as in prior elections. Voter feedback indicates that Lubbock County's voters are becoming accustomed to the Vote Centers, reducing the need for intensive voter education on the concept. The locations of the Vote Centers were nevertheless publicized for several weeks leading up to the election. Examples of the education and publicity efforts included:

- Radio, TV and newspaper outlets publicized the plan and locations and interviewed members of the Elections Office staff.

- The County staffed a booth at the South Plains Fair to register voters and give information regarding Vote Center locations. Visitors to the Fair could also cast sample ballots on demonstration machines.
- Locations were listed in the League of Women's Voter Guide.
- Locations were listed on the County website.
- A letter was mailed to each non-suspense voter in Lubbock County with a list of locations.
- Voters could send a text message with the ZIP code of the area of the County in which they wanted to vote and receive a list of Vote Centers within that area. We had 771 people use this texting service.
- Vote Centers were identified by 12 foot tall banners, establishing a common icon visible from the street.
- County staff manned a telephone bank, giving voters the locations of the Vote Centers.

Voters cast 8,823 ballots on election day at 40 Centralized Countywide Polling Places. While this is fewer than the 69 polling locations normally used on election day, voters had greater choice because they could vote at any of these locations instead of being required to travel to a single precinct-based location. These Vote Centers were distributed evenly across the county. While a few of the polling places were located in public buildings, most were located in privately-owned buildings open to the public, including churches, community centers, and retail establishments. Lubbock County encompasses eight communities, in addition to the City of Lubbock.¹ At least one polling place was located in each of these communities. Of the 40 Vote Centers polling places, 19 were on city bus routes and 4 were actual bus stops.

A key component of the Vote Center Program was Lubbock County's real-time wireless voter registration look-up system.² This system allows election workers to make sure that a voter is eligible to vote and then ensures that the voter cannot cast multiple ballots. Lubbock County used a new product in this election. We used Votec's VoteSafe voter lookup system. No problems were reported with the real-time voter lookup system.

¹ Shallowater, Idalou, New Deal, Wolfforth, Slaton, Ransom Canyon, The Village of Buffalo Springs Lake and a portion of Abernathy.

² The voter registration look-up system uses a dedicated *AT&T Wireless* connection to the County database. Voter information is heavily encrypted. Ballot information is never transmitted over the system.

Likewise, no complaints or problems were reported from any of the polling places other than the normal and expected complaints inherent in any election. With regard to the Vote Centers themselves, there were no complaints of long lines, excessive wait times, voter confusion, or equipment malfunctions. In short, everything worked and the voters seemed happy with their voting experience.

Lubbock County is proud to have continued the Centralized Countywide Polling Place Program. My staff and I stand ready to provide you with any additional information which you might need. We look forward to working with you to make Centralized Polling Places an option for every county in Texas for every election.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dorothy Kennedy".

Dorothy Kennedy, CERA
Lubbock County Elections Administrator

cc: Hon. Thomas V. Head, County Judge
Hon. Bill McCay, County Commissioner
Hon. Mark Heinrich, County Commissioner
Hon. Gilbert Flores, County Commissioner
Hon. Patti Jones, County Commissioner
Mr. Chris Winn, Republican Party Chairman
Ms. Pamela K. Brink, Democratic Party Chairperson