

**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**SANTA FE COUNTY**  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD**

**November 13, 2020**

Henry Roybal, Chair - District 1  
Anna Hansen, Vice Chair - District 2  
Anna T. Hamilton - District 4  
Hank Hughes - District 5  
  
Rudy Garcia - District 3 [Absent]

**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**SANTA FE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**CANVASSING BOARD**

**November 13, 2020**

1. The Special Meeting of the Santa Fe County Commissioners Canvassing Board was called to order virtually via Webex by Vice Chair Anna Hansen at approximately 2:06 p.m. on the above cited date.

In accordance with the Public Health Emergency Order issued by the State of New Mexico, this meeting was conducted on a platform for video and audio meetings.

[For clarity purposes, repetitive identification and confirmations of those on the phone have been eliminated and/or condensed in this transcript.]

**2. Roll Call**

Roll was called by County Clerk Geraldine Salazar and indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

**Members Present:**

Commissioner Henry Roybal, Chair [late arrival]  
Commissioner Anna Hansen, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Anna Hamilton  
Commissioner Hank Hughes

**Members Excused:**

Commissioner Rudy Garcia

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Hamilton moved to approve the agenda as published.  
Commissioner Hughes seconded and the motion passed by unanimous [3-0] roll call vote.  
[Chair Roybal was not present for this action.]

**4. Request Approval of the November 3, 2020, General Election Report of the Canvass, Pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 1-13-13(A)**

CLERK SALAZAR: Steve Fresquez will present this  
COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Welcome, Steve, thank you for your hard  
work.

STEVE FRESQUEZ (Elections Bureau Chief): Thank you. Good

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afternoon, Commissioner Hansen and members of the Commission. We're here to present the results from the 2020 general election canvass for your review and approval.

We had 82,556 Santa Fe County residents who came out and voted compared to 71,925 in 2016. Did you all get the handout that I sent?

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Yes, we did.

MR. FRESQUEZ: The voter turnout this time was 76.5 percent compared to 73.12 percent in the 2016 general election. The biggest changes between the two elections was the absentee ballot turnout. We processed and approved 39,223 mail-in ballots compared to 4,862 in 2016. With that, I stand for questions.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I want to first thank our Clerk Geraldine Salazar and Steve Fresquez and your entire staff for running a really smooth election. I personally didn't hear of any issues or complaints or problems. Everything seemed to be running really smoothly and when people did have an issue they got taken care of right away. I want to thank you and your entire staff for the great job that you did.

CLERK SALAZAR: Thank you and you are welcome.

MR. FRESQUEZ: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

CLERK SALAZAR: And I really want to commend Steve Fresquez, Theresa Atencio and especially Christina Martinez [Ortiz] – they were finalizing the canvassing of this whole process and so all of the poll workers and the absentee board, all of our temp workers, election workers – it was an incredible feat of what we accomplished. So thank you for the compliments, we appreciate that.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I appreciate all of your staff and all of the hard work. Do you want to go on with the report or are there any other comments or questions from the Commissioners? Commissioner Hamilton.

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: I think this is one of my usual questions. Steve or Madam Clerk, were there any items that appear on these results or in the process of counting, is there anything that you feel you can comment on that seemed noteworthy or unusual or presented any problems?

MR. FRESQUEZ: Commissioner and members of the Commission, no, there were problems in various stages of the election. Minor problems mainly with the mail and with the timeliness of applications and forms that were getting to the voters. The voters seemed like they were extremely emotional this election. They had a really big sense of urgency so that ended up giving us maybe 20,000 or 30,000 phone calls to our office. That was probably the hardest thing to deal with.

As far as tallying the results or anything that happened during the election, we had a few issues but they were minor. Basically, it was a pretty smooth election otherwise.

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: That's basically very good to hear. Did you feel like resolution, especially the bigger problem which was the first one you mentioned, was to your satisfaction or did you feel that there were any substantial problems that remained unresolved or were un-resolvable?

MR. FRESQUEZ: Well, there's always a few individual instances. There weren't very many. We tried to resolve everyone as we received them. Like I say, the biggest problem was with the mail itself and there wasn't very many instances of that. There was some households where the husband got the ballot and the wife didn't. So that became kind of contentious the longer that that took. Other than that, I feel because the

staff worked so hard here and worked so many hours it seemed like everybody was at their desk seven days a week – because of the hard work of the staff, I feel that everything was taken care of satisfactorily.

CLERK SALAZAR: Yes, Commissioner Hansen, Commissioner Hamilton, this was a very unusual, unreal election in many ways but I think the expertise that exists in this office and the people who are involved in this whole process are very committed to elections and to the whole process. So we have citizens who stepped up to the plate in spite of everything that has occurred nationally and also with Covid-19. So we have individuals who participated and helped us deliver democracy. Our challenges were the increased amount of absentee ballots, the application process but we just kept going and doing what we had to do. Steve was all over the place. Theresa – well, as Steve mentioned the call volume was incredible with the concerns of voters and the urgency and there was also paranoia. There was so much involved but I am very proud of everyone that participated and helped us deliver this election process for the 2020 primary and the general.

I'd like to mention that when we managed the Edgewood election which was a very small election we were able to see some of the things that we would have concerns later and then with the primary election which was more difficult but yet not as extensive as the general. So I think lessons learned with the Edgewood municipal election and also the primary election we were prepared but you are never fully prepared when you roll out a presidential election such as this. So kudos to Steve and Theresa and all others.

Also what really helped us tremendously is that one of our election vendors did create a standing system which helped us tremendously during the absentee process. We didn't have to go to the court to obtain a court order to extend the process. So I think that that new scanning process that the absentee board utilized helped us tremendously. We were able to finally – we had a lot of calls from the media on election night – but we were finally able to because we did have a posting before midnight but then our second posting when we finalized everything in the office and everywhere else that we needed to finalize, we were able to post our unofficial results at 12:04 a.m. the next day which was just hours away because we were wondering if we were going to have to be in the office until 2 or 4 in the morning and that didn't happen. We were able to complete and load up our election day 12:04 a.m. so it was a tremendous feat. I think everyone even the community that came out to vote. And also I think that there are lessons learned here and we will continue and I think we are improving. Each time you run an election you improve. Technology is great but many times it does create problems so we have to be very close and also express concerns that we have with the United States Postal Service with also our vendors. When we have problems we have to remedy them because many times things are just unpredictable. We don't know what's going to hit us and we have to be prepared no matter what. There are times you can't even think about it, you just have to do it so that we can continue to complete the process of running an election.

Oh, I want to correct something. Christina Ortiz not Christina Martinez. I guess I have Martinez on my mind. Christina Ortiz has been cross-training with Steve and Theresa Atencio and she's been learning the canvassing process and she's done an excellent job. I want to thank Steve and Theresa Atencio for cross-training Christina Ortiz again regarding the canvassing process which is a detailed process. Thank you

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Thank you.

MR. FRESQUEZ: Commissioners, there is one item that we did have a little bit of an issue with. We did have to bring in the absentee board to tally some of the votes from the federal write-in. And that was accomplished and that was being reported along with the rest of the results on the sheets that you have. I forgot to tell you that that was a small issue that we had.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Thank you. I have one question. On page 3 of 5, it says judicial retention but it doesn't have any name; am I missing something?

MR. FRESQUEZ: That might have got cut off. Yes, I'm sorry this report didn't name all the retention judges. I didn't realize that when I did it. This is a summary report. These were all the district judges that were up for retention. I could go ahead and generate a different report and I can make sure that I send it to all of you.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Okay, I think that would be important because I don't think just judicial retention is enough. I think we need the names of the judges that were retained in those positions.

MR. FRESQUEZ: Yes. I will generate that for you and make sure that all of you get a copy of that.

[Internet connectivity issues occurred]

COMMISSIONER HUGES: This is a sign that we really need to work on broadband.

CLERK SALAZAR: You're absolutely correct, Commissioner Hughes. This is something that I have dreamed about especially for elections and the connectivity. So broadband is very important throughout the county especially the County facilities, they should be hardwired.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Right. I agree with that. Hi, Mr. Shaffer I see you have your hand up and I want to make sure that we're not getting off track.

GREG SHAFFER (County Attorney): Thank you, Madam Chair and Commissioners, I was going to suggest that since the purpose of today's meeting is to actually approve the canvass, perhaps you may want to take a short recess or simply go on mute for awhile so Steve can prepare the report that actually list the outcome of the various judicial retention questions by judge so that we can wrap things up today and you can formally approve the canvass. I would agree with you, Madam Chair that you do need to see those numbers so you know what you're approving. That would be a suggestion so that we can move forward while we're not wasting folks' time waiting for the information to come forward.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Steve, can you do that and email it to all of us?

MR. FRESQUEZ: I am working on that right now, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Commissioner Hamilton.

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can we get an estimate of how much time just so we don't have to just sit here on mute. Is it 5 minutes or 10 minutes?

MR. FRESQUEZ: I think it would be 10 minute maximum. I'll just go

ahead and revise the report that I have to include the names for each one of the races.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: That sounds good. I would entertain a motion to go into recess until 2:35.

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: So move.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second.

**The motion to recess passed by unanimous [3-0] roll call vote.**

[The Canvassing Board recessed at 2:25 to 2:45]

During the recess the revised report was sent to the Commissioners and shared on the Webex screen. Chair Roybal also joined the meeting.

Commissioner Hughes moved to reconvene the meeting and Commissioner Hamilton seconded. The motion passed by unanimous [4-0] roll call vote.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: I have a quick question. I saw that the turnout was better in 2020 than in 2016 and I wondered if this set a record for Santa Fe or was particularly good for Santa Fe County, the 76 percent turnout.

CLERK SALAZAR: Yes, this is a significant number. We look at 2020 total voters, 82,556. I think we broke our record; would you agree, Steve?

MR. FRESQUEZ: I agree. I've seen very few instances of any counties reaching this high of a turnout in the past in my election experience. And I believe this might be one of the highest if not the highest for Santa Fe County.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Thank you and I wanted to add my thanks to all of the Clerk's staff for doing such a great job. I didn't hear any problems with the election. I think it went very smoothly under very trying circumstances and that's really great.

CLERK SALAZAR: I think what is also very notable is if you look at absentee out did on election day and early voting, they were almost close with 34,000 plus for early voting and 39,000 plus for absentee. On election day, less people went out and that was positive considering Covid-19. What we wanted to do and it was difficult for us but we did go full-blown for all 30 voting convenience centers so people would have them since there was so much stress about the election. We wanted to make sure that there was every which way that a voter could vote in Santa Fe County. We did push early voting and absentee. You can see that in the statistics, the numbers, and there were was an option for others who did not or could not participate but chose to vote on election day.

I think our numbers are very good and telling for the 2020 Covid pandemic experience.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Thank you. I think it's great and I hope we can keep it up. That's all my questions, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR ROYBAL: Thank you for your question and comment. I just want to extend my gratitude to the Clerk's Office and Bureau of Election. You guys are awesome. You guys did a great job. It's something that the Commissioners and all of

Santa Fe County can be proud. Thank you for the great job for this election cycle. It was definitely trying and you guys did an awesome job. Thank you.

Any other questions or comments from Commissioners? What's the pleasure of the Board?

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: Mr. Chair.

CHAIR ROYBAL: Commissioner Hamilton.

COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: I move to approve the General Election Canvass Report as presented in this revised document.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I second it.

CHAIR ROYBAL: We have a motion from Commissioner Hamilton and second from Commissioner Hansen. Anything else under discussion before we move on to a vote? Hearing none, I will move on to a roll call vote.

**The motion passed by unanimous [4-0] roll call vote.**

CHAIR ROYBAL: I want to thank all of the Commissioners for being here. We have a lot of issues with Covid right now and the numbers are increasing. Just a reminder for everybody to rethink everything that we're doing and make sure that we're following all of the guidelines and keeping ourselves and our families safe. Thank you all for being here.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I just want to thank everybody and once again. Geraldine, I know this is your last election for Santa Fe County and I just want to say thank you for your service to the County and we will miss you. I just wanted to put it on the record.

CLERK SALAZAR: You are welcome, Commissioner Hansen. It has been a pleasure, a lot of work but I'm not one to shy away from challenges. I want to thank the Board for your support and gathering today so that we can have our unofficial results submitted to the Secretary of State's Office today.

We will need your signatures so Estrella is working with the your constituent services liaison so we can get your signatures and submit to the Secretary of State. The next step after this is the State will conduct their own canvass and then we may have an audit from the auditor, I don't know, and also too, then finally this will be finalized. But this has been an incredible election. Some of my family members say, "you will be going out with a bang on this one," and I have to agree. It's been an incredible experience and a pleasure working for Santa Fe County voters and I think we did a very good job. I want to thank Steve for his leadership in the Bureau of Elections and he has been working tirelessly. I'd say for the last two years we have been preparing for this election so it's been nonstop but it was well worth it. As I mentioned before, it takes a unique breed of a public service individual to do this type of work. So to Steve, you are much appreciated and all of you are appreciated also. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Thank you, Madam Clerk. And that you for recognizing that, Commissioner Hansen, it has been a pleasure to work with you all these years. I think for the last six years you have always been very professional and just done a great job. Your leadership will be missed in this position. Thank you for all your hard work. Other Commissioners, any comments?

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CLERK SALAZAR: You are welcome.

5. Adjournment

Upon motion by Commissioner Hamilton and second by Commissioner Hughes, Chair Roybal declared this meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.


Approved by:

  
Board of County Commissioners  
Henry Roybal, Chair

ATTEST TO:

  
GERALDINE SALAZAR  
SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK

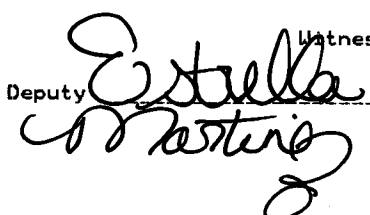
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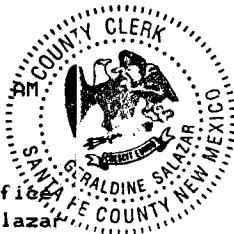
  
Karen Farrell, Wordswork  
453 Cerrillos Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

COUNTY OF SANTA FE )  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss

CANVASS BOARD MINUTES  
PAGES: 8

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 10TH Day Of December, 2020 at 09:07:28 AM.  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1937019  
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Deputy  County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM  
Geraldine Salazar



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