

County of Santa Clara

Registrar of Voters

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REGISTRAR OF VOTERS' OFFICE COMPLETES MANUAL RECOUNTS

Outcome Changes for Orchard School District

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF. – The Registrar of Voters has completed five manual recounts following the November 6, 2018 General Election. The manual recount results showed a change in outcome in one race; the third- and fourth-place finishers for Orchard School District Board Member switched.

The other manual recount contests - in which the outcomes were confirmed - were: Council Member - City of Cupertino; Governing Board Member - Oak Grove School District TA 2; Governing Board Member - Luther Burbank School District; and Measure HH - Luther Burbank School District, School Bond.

The four-candidate, vote-for-three Orchard School District race initially had the third- and fourth-place candidates separated by six votes out of 3,554 ballots cast or .17 percent. A manual recount was therefore triggered by Santa Clara County policy because the margin of victory was less than .25 percent of the ballots cast or 25 votes.

In conducting the manual recount, the ROV discovered that a batch of 36 ballots was scanned into the counting system but the results were not saved due to human error. This resulted in those ballots not being counted in the official canvass.

Additionally, during a manual recount, staff make careful evaluations of voter intent and can count votes that cannot be recognized by the machine – for example, where a voter does not follow directions in voting. This can result in votes being counted during a manual recount that cannot be counted by a machine.

Ultimately, in the Orchard School District contest, these factors resulted in a change in outcome, with Nida Moragas Spetter winning in the manual recount by 2 votes, or .06 percent of ballots cast.

The Registrar of Voters has notified all candidates as well as the Orchard School District of the results of the manual recount. The ROV has initiated the process for a County-funded Elections Official-Initiated recount specified in Elections Code 15610. The results of the Elections Official-Initiated recount under this section will ultimately be certified and presented to the Orchard School District.



The manual recount policy was adopted by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors prior to the 2016 elections as a pilot program and made permanent earlier this year. Ten manual recounts occurred after the 2016 elections, none of which resulted in a changed outcome.

Of the over 1.8 million ballot cards cast in the November 6 General Election, the ROV retrieved approximately 33,000 ballot cards across all districts involved in the manual recounts. A hand tally was conducted of the nearly 100,000 votes cast in the contests involved, and individual tally sheets were created and compared with the machine-counted results. Then any differences between the counts were reconciled, followed by an extensive final audit before today's release of the results. More than 130 ROV staff and extra help worked on the manual recounts with extended hours starting the week of December 10.

The results for the November 6, 2018 General Election were certified by the Registrar of Voters on December 6, 2018. The machine certified and manual recount results are posted online at www.sccvote.org.

For more information, contact the Registrar of Voters' Office at 1-408-299-VOTE (8683) or toll-free at 1-866-430-VOTE (8683), or visit www.sccvote.org.

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