M Gmail

Mike Kieffer <mkieff@gmail.com>

Re: Media Request - Vote By Mail
1 message

Bryan Thompson <BryanT@utahcounty.gov>   Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 2:32 PM
To: Mike Kieffer <mkieff@gmail.com>

Mike,

I apologize that I have not responded to you sooner. I had a family emergency that has distracted me the past week and a half. In response to your inquiry, the Feb 8th memo you referenced was also given to the Eagle Mountain City Recorder. In fact we distributed the memo to all of the Cities and Towns in Utah County. We are still waiting to here back from some of the cities and towns regarding vote by mail, but we have commitments from a number of the municipalities.

Those committed to Vote by Mail (VBM) include Provo, Orem, Lehi, American Fork, Saratoga Springs, Eagle Mountain, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Pleasant Grove, Lindon, Vineyard, Springville, Spanish Fork & Payson.

So far only Mapleton, Highland, and Elk Ridge have mentioned that they decided not to have the County administer their Election this year. I'm still have not heard officially from Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Goshen, Genola, Santaquin, Salem, and Woodland Hills.

We hold the privacy of the votes cast as a high priority. That has been one of my personal concerns also when it comes to voting by mail. I have taken time to look into the various VBM process and tabulation systems available for use. My staff and I have also visited jurisdiction in Washington State, and Colorado that have used VBM for their elections. Additionally I have consulted with Salt Lake, Davis & Weber Counties here in Utah that used VBM for this past Presidential Election. In addition to Privacy issues we have also asked about voter authentication how to best handle both of these important issues.

Your are correct in that part of the voter authentication process involves checking voter signatures with the signatures on file from the Driver's License Division, and Voter registration applications. We will be using the Dominion system for this election that have an enhanced signature authentication process. In terms of privacy preservation, the returned ballots come in a double sealed envelope. I have attached a PDF of a scanned front and back copy of the envelope (the pictures appear to have run together, but the back of the envelope starts where it says Voter Affidavit). Upon receipt of the returned ballot envelope, we open the first seal which reveals the voter signature. After the signature is verified as being valid, then another process opens the second seal on the envelope and the ballot is extracted. The ballot goes one direction, and the envelope with the identifying marks and signature go a different direction. The separation process is to preserve the privacy of the ballot. It is at this point that the ballots are then scanned and tabulated.

By Utah State law all election material and ballots are placed in secure storage (at the County's record archive) for a period of 22 months. After that retention period, those items are destroyed.

I hope I have answered the questions you asked. If you have any follow-up questions, please let me know.

Bryan Thompson
Utah County Clerk/ Auditor
801-851-8229 (office)

>>> Mike Kieffer <mkieff@gmail.com> 3/22/2017 4:08 PM >>>
Last night the City Council for Eagle Mountain voted and approved the use of the counties Vote By Mail service. I have a couple of questions about it. I am a blogger for a site called i84005.com that is a new news outlet for Eagle

Mountain. I also write for a local newspaper. I have a copy of a memo that was sent from you (I believe) that was dated Feb 8, 2017. It was sent to the Saratoga Springs City Recorder. The memo re: 2017 Municipal Election Options & Cost. Can you verify that this memo was also sent to the Eagle Mountain City Recorder. And if possible, can I get a list of all of the cities that received the memo. And those that are currently doing VBM.

I would also like to get a statement from you on the concern of privacy with the new system. My understanding, and correct me if I am wrong, is that you will need to sign each ballot and that those signatures will be validated against your drivers license signature on file. If that is the case, how can voting by secret in nature. What happens to those ballots, and how are they stored, and for how long?

Thanks,
Mike Kieffer
i84005.com iNSIDER

5121 Lake Mountain Road
Eagle Mountain, UT 84005

Scanned copy of the absentee ballot envelope.pdf
373K