

Statement from the Moderator on the November 3rd General Election

The Town of Stratham reported 5545 ballots cast by the 7185 registered voters, representing a 77% voter turn-out for the general election conducted at the Stratham Memorial School on Tuesday November 3, 2020. The election results were promptly posted on the Town's website at: <https://www.strathamnh.gov/>. Of the total ballots cast, over 50% were cast as absentee.

On election night, the Town of Stratham's election staff identified a discrepancy where absentee ballots logged in the State's Election-Net electronic voter checklist system were 44 ballots greater than the number of physical paper ballots cast and counted on Election Day. Town Clerk Joyce Charbonneau and I worked with the NH Secretary of State's office to exhaust all foreseeable options and to investigate potential sources of error before closing the election and announcing the results.

Stratham election officials worked until the early hours of Wednesday morning recounting ballots cast several times as well as comparing the Town's voter checklist and State's electronic voter system entries for absentee voters. The election results reported by the Town are consistent with the ballots processed and counted at the polling place.

In the coming weeks, I will be working with our election officials to learn as much as possible about the disagreement between the ballot accounting and the number of absentee ballots processed as well as to refine procedures and processes accordingly for the future.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to all the election officials, volunteers, and staff who stayed well beyond the operating hours of the polls to count, recount, compare, and seek understanding of the discrepancy between ballot records and physical ballots. I also applaud the efforts made by the candidates, challengers, and observers who witnessed the election process throughout the day and into Wednesday morning.

We have an excellent and dedicated election team who worked tirelessly to establish a new voting venue for the Town that accommodated the challenges of 2020 and ensured that the election process was upheld with the utmost integrity.