

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
CITY ELECTION, NOVEMBER 7, 2017
ELECTION REPORT

Submitted to the City Council, March 2018

TAKOMA PARK BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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CITY INTERN

Finian Brecher, City Election Intern

The Board of Elections dedicates this report to member Beatriz York, who served on the board from 2015-2017 and passed away soon after the 2017 elections. We are thankful for her dedication and service.

ELECTION JUDGES

Kimberly Allen

Mary Beth Hatem

Gene Herman

Satchel Kornfeld

Arsene Mutagoma

Jeffrey Noel Nosbaum

Lael Parish

Jeremy Pevner

Kathleen Pomroy

Susan Rogers

Carina Ryder

Sue Vedemany

SUMMARY

The Board of Elections (BOE or the Board) is pleased to transmit its 2017 General Election Report.

On Tuesday, November 7, 2017, the Board conducted the city election for the six members of the city council and mayor for the 2017-2020 term in office. The board of elections also conducted five days of early voting from Wednesday, November 1 to Sunday, November 5. Due to the change in election date to synchronize the election date with state and federal elections, this election was for three-year terms instead of two-year terms. The next election in 2020 will return council members and the mayor to two-year terms.

In the 2017 election, voters cast paper ballots during the early voting period, on election day, or through the absentee ballot process. A manual count of the ballots was conducted by election judges on election night and provisional results announced. On November 8, the board completed reconciliation of any outstanding ballots. Certified results were transmitted to the city council on November 9, 2017.

The seven members of the Board of Elections, the City Clerk, the Assistant City Clerk, and 12 election judges facilitated the conduct of the election. The Takoma Park Recreation Department provided much appreciated assistance as did the Montgomery County Board of Elections. The Board developed an election manual, voter intent guide, and other materials which were used to train the election judges and also serve as a reference manual.

KEY INFORMATION

- A total of **2,581** residents voted in the election, representing **22%** of registered voters in the city. This is an increase from 2015, which had 21% turnout and more than double the turnout in the 2013 election.
- **66 16- and 17-year olds voted** in this election from a total of 138 registered with the city.
- **72 non-citizens** voted in the 2017 election, representing 20% of the registered non-citizen voters.
- Takoma Park has same day registration for voters. A total of **143 voters** registered the same day in order to vote.
- On November 8, 2017, the board of elections met to review ballot counts, provisional ballots, and ballots in which voter intent was unclear. Additional votes from this review added to candidate totals. The changes did not affect the provisional results announced election night.

ELECTION RESULTS

In order to be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of valid votes. Takoma Park's ranked choice voting offers voters the opportunity to rank candidates by order of choice, including write-ins. In all contests except Ward 2, one candidate received a majority of first choices in the first round. In Ward 2, no candidate received a majority of first choices in the first round, requiring a second round. Candidates (including write-ins) with no mathematical chance of winning were eliminated and those ballots' lower

choices were counted. After the second round, one candidate received sufficient votes to have a majority of the vote and was elected.

During the early voting period, 841 residents cast ballots. Early voting on November 3 was conducted at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center in Ward 6. Early voting on November 5 was conducted at Wilkinson Hall at Washington Adventist University. The other three days of early voting were conducted at the Community Center (outside in front on Thursday).

One thousand seven hundred sixty-eight (1,768) ballots (both in person and absentee) were cast on election day. All voting election day was at the Community Center.

The final voting distribution is as follows:

Ward 1						
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>		<i>Status</i>		
Kovar	467	96%		Elected		
<i>Write-in</i>	20	4%				
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	487	100%				
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	6					

Ward 2						
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>First Round</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Instant Runoff</i>	<i>Final Round</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Status</i>
Dyballa	410	46.8%	+49	459	54.5%	Elected
<i>Edgell</i>	123	14.0%	-123			
<i>Nugent</i>	342	39.0%	+41	383	45.5%	
<i>Write-in</i>	2	0.2%	-2			
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	877	100%		842	100%	
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	6		+35	41		
<i>Total Votes</i>	883			883		

Ward 3				
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>		<i>Status</i>
Kostiuk	425	93%		Elected
<i>Write-in</i>	30	7%		
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	455	100%		
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	6			

Ward 4

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Status</i>
Seamens	195	95.6%	Elected
<i>Write-in</i>	9	4.4%	
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	204	100%	
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	8		

Ward 5

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Status</i>
<i>Bearne</i>	84	38.2%	
Smith	136	61.8%	Elected
<i>Write-in</i>	0	0%	
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	220	100%	
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	1		

Ward 6

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Status</i>
Searcy	216	70.8%	Elected
<i>Small</i>	88	28.9%	
<i>Write-in</i>	0	0%	
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	305	100%	
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	2		

Mayor

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Ward 1</i>	<i>Ward 2</i>	<i>Ward 3</i>	<i>Ward 4</i>	<i>Ward 5</i>	<i>Ward 6</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent of Votes</i>	<i>Status</i>
Stewart	460	835	418	199	203	293	2408	96%	Elected
<i>Write-in</i>	23	32	35	2	8	12	112	4%	
<i>Total Valid Votes</i>	483	867	453	201	211	305	2520	100%	
<i>Blank/Invalid/Exhausted</i>	10	18	9	11	10	2	60		

VOTER TURNOUT

All voter turnout data is based on registered voters. In 2017, the board continued with five days of early voting in addition to voting on election day, similar to previous years. This election continued early voting outreach to Ward 5 and 6, with voting at the New Hampshire Recreation Center and at Washington Adventist University. Unlike in 2015, the board decided to not hold voting at Sligo Creek Park due to concerns over inclement weather.

Overall Turnout, 16-17 year olds

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Year	Registered, 16-17yrs old	Voted, 16-17yrs old	Percent Voted 16-17yrs old
2013	134	59	44.03%
2015	105	47	44.76%
2017	138	66	47.83%

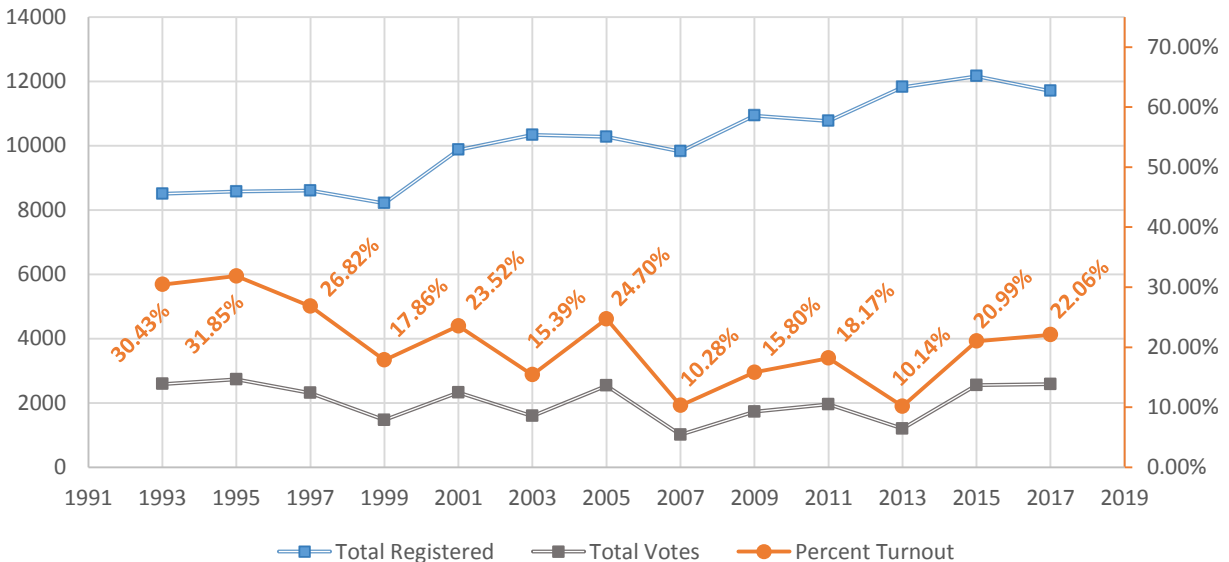
The board continued with public messaging and outreach to encourage residents to vote in the election. Initiatives included the printing and distribution of election bookmarks, asking people to sign vote commitment cards that are then mailed prior to election day to remind them, and attending Takoma Park festivals to provide election information.

This election also had several contested races, which also helped to increase turnout. Those races with more than one candidate generally experienced higher turnout as compared to previous years in which candidates ran unopposed. One thousand six hundred fifty four (1,654) ballots (in person) and 67 absentee ballots were cast on election day. All voting election day was at the Community Center.

The board reviewed data on historical turnout in elections to compare this election with previous years. Among its findings, the board found that this election had the highest turnout in number of voters (2,581) since 1995, in which there were 2,731 total votes. However, in terms of percent of registered voters, the 22.06% turnout in 2017 was the highest since 2005, which had 24.70% turnout.

Voter Turnout, 1993-2017

Takoma Park City Elections

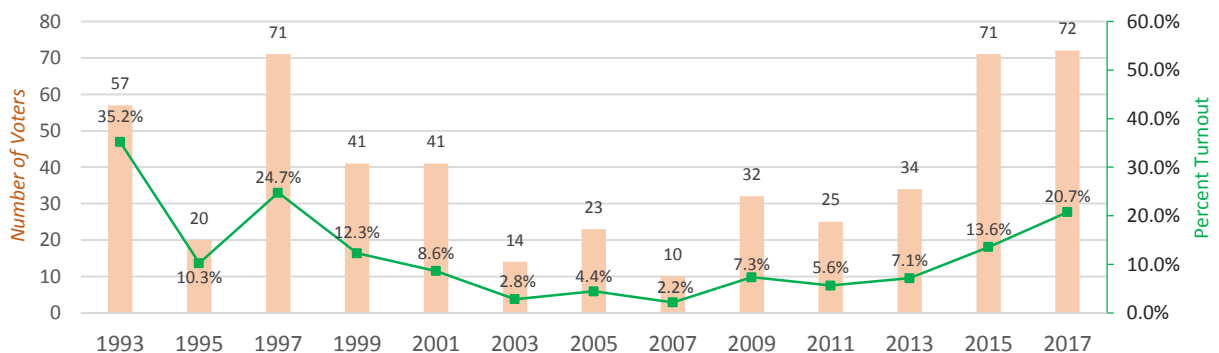


Early Voting, 2015 - 2017

	Early 1	Early 2	Early 3	Early 4	Early 5	Total Early
<i>Location 2017</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Rec Cent</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Adventist U.</i>	<i>Voting</i>
<i>Location 2015</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Rec Cent</i>	<i>Sligo Park</i>	<i>Comm. Cent</i>	<i>Per Ward</i>
Ward 1 2017	25	25	2	54	7	113
Ward 1 2015	19	29	4	26	131	209
Difference	+6	-4	-2	+28	-124	-96
Ward 2 2017	43	19	37	110	116	325
Ward 2 2015	12	15	5	60	39	131
Difference	+31	+4	+32	+50	+77	+194
Ward 3 2017	28	25	7	52	21	133
Ward 3 2015	27	20	4	64	91	206
Difference	+1	+5	+3	-12	-70	-73
Ward 4 2017	11	8	1	36	4	60
Ward 4 2015	8	7	2	7	24	48
Difference	+3	+1	-1	+29	-20	12
Ward 5 2017	19	5	0	16	54	94
Ward 5 2015	3	1	0	59	12	75
Difference	+16	+4	0	-43	+42	19
Ward 6 2017	5	6	71	19	15	116
Ward 6 2015	7	3	74	11	20	115
Difference	-2	+3	-3	+8	-5	1
2017 Daily Total	131	88	118	287	217	
2015 Daily Total	76	75	89	226	318	
Difference (daily)	+55	+13	+29	+61	-101	
2017 Cumulative	131	219	337	624	841	
2015 Cumulative	76	151	240	466	784	
Difference (cumulative)	+55	+68	+97	+158	+57	

Noncitizen Turnout, 1993-2017

Takoma Park City Elections



ELECTION OPERATIONS

The board received support from volunteer judges, the Montgomery County Board of Elections, city staff and recreation center staff. This year, as it did in 2015, the Board used the front lobby for check-in and both the Azalea Room and Lilac Room for voting on election day. Voters were directed to the front hallway and then the appropriate room depending on which ward they were registered in. Same day registration, voter assistance, and accessible voting were set up in the Rose Room. This arrangement allowed for one-directional flow through the polling place, sufficient space for check-in, and large, private voting areas. Due to the change in the date of the nominating caucus this year, there was additional time available for the city clerk to process required candidate paperwork, finalize ballot designs, and issue absentee ballots.

In anticipation of 2020, the board increased election judge recruitment for this election in order to expand its list of judges who have worked for the city. As a result, the city received 28 election worker applications this year and had 6 more workers on the roster than in 2015.

Early voting and election day proceeded smoothly. Among minor logistical problems, the board will also be reviewing other policies due to questions that arose on election day as part of its regular post-election updates. The board will provide further updates on these issues, specifically, regulations around election watchers, the use of provisional ballots, and electioneering by non-city election candidates.