

## HSVPOA Board Election Integrity

### Description

#### **HSVPOA Board Election Procedure must be revised for the sake of integrity**

Dear Board Directors,

There is so much distrust directed toward HSVPOA management, in general, and one specific problem is the lack of a secure Board candidate election procedure. Our Board election procedure is full of problematic issues that leave the perception that the process has no integrity and is possibly open to ballot tampering.

The Board is responsible for defining the voting process and how the ballots are handled. We are asking the Board to address the following issues and any other issue that may come to light concerning the Board candidate election process. Only with serious reform of our voting process can trust be regained in our HSVPOA election process and the Board of Directors.

#### **This is what happened in 2019**

We were told there are a total of 36,497 lots in the village.

There were 23,191 owners who received ballots for the 2019 election. The ballot distribution was as follows:

- 13,801 non-meter owners in the village. These folks received gray ballots,
- 27 International owners who also received gray ballots,
- Cooper had 62 votes. We do not know what color these ballots were, and
- there were 9,301 metered lots and these folks received pink ballots.

So, if all these figures are correct the total ballot count should have been 23,191.

#### **Secrecy as to how many ballots were printed**

Herein lies part of the problem, we don't know how many ballots and envelopes were printed and mailed and how many extras were kept. We also do not know what company printed the ballots. This whole operation was shrouded in a veil of secrecy.

**The following question was directed to POA management at the 2019 Ballot Counting Committee meeting, "How many ballots were made?"**

**The answer from management was, "That is for me to know."**

That is the wrong answer and is not acceptable. This answer gave Property Owners the appearance that ballots may have been mismanaged. It appears management was not being transparent about the ballots. Is this another instance of "it is not Property Owners' business?"

Now you can see some of the problems in the way this vote was handled and we do not know of any steps taken by the Board to overhaul this process.

### **Changing one's mind?**

While we do not know how many total ballots were printed, we do know there were extras. We understand the need to print extras for people that did not receive delivery of their ballot.

We also know there were Property Owners who came into the POA office to change their vote. This was confirmed.

Those changing their vote should be required to sign an affidavit in order to do this at the very least. Did they sign an affidavit? We don't know what happened to their old ballot. We were told the old ballot was put into a drawer with other ballots. This is not a secure process for maintaining the integrity of the vote. The old ballot should have been shredded in view of the property owner.

Truthfully, vote changes should not be allowed. One ballot should be printed for each property, with extras only for those owners who did not receive a ballot in the mail, for whatever reason. If someone loses their ballot or spills coffee on it, or has voter's remorse, that is a shame, but we don't need a lot of extra ballots laying around.

### **CEO had control of returned ballots**

All returned ballots were delivered to the CEO to be stored in a vault until the vote count. Who had access to the vault? Were the ballot totals kept track of daily? On a weekly basis? We do not know.



POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

CEO/2019 BOARD ELECTION  
HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE PROPERTY OWNERS ASS  
895 DESOTO BLVD  
HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE AR 71909-9919

default watermark



### **HSVPOA BOD election envelope addressed to CEO**

#### **Secure process**

Ballot packets mailed to property owners should contain the ballot, the ballot envelope, and the return envelope. The ballot should have no identifying marks, after voting for candidates, the ballot should be placed into the ballot envelope which is marked and requires the property owner signature (ideally the ballot envelope should have the lot number on it and a place for Property Owner signature). The ballot is then placed into the ballot envelope, which is then placed into the return envelope and mailed. The ballot envelopes should all be opened by the vote counting committee.

#### **No way to determine if the majority of ballots have been through the post office**

The ballots, for the most part, were not canceled at the post office. Usually, the Post Office does not put a cancellation mark on bulk business mail, but envelopes turned over to a clerk at the Post Office may receive a cancellation stamp. This is not mandatory and totally at the whim of the individual clerk unless it is requested of the clerk do this.

There was no way of telling if the envelopes had even been through the postal system, except for the few that were hand-canceled by local post offices. Management should also make available the USPS mailing records as proof of the number of ballots mailed and returned.

## The counting process

The ballots were counted by 30 volunteers at 15 tables. Each table had a team of two volunteer property owners and one paid POA employee.

Additionally, two nonemployee property owners monitored the process. These two monitors are there to make final decisions on questionable ballots. In other words, if a ballot is questioned as to how it should be counted, these two monitors made the decision whether the vote should be counted.

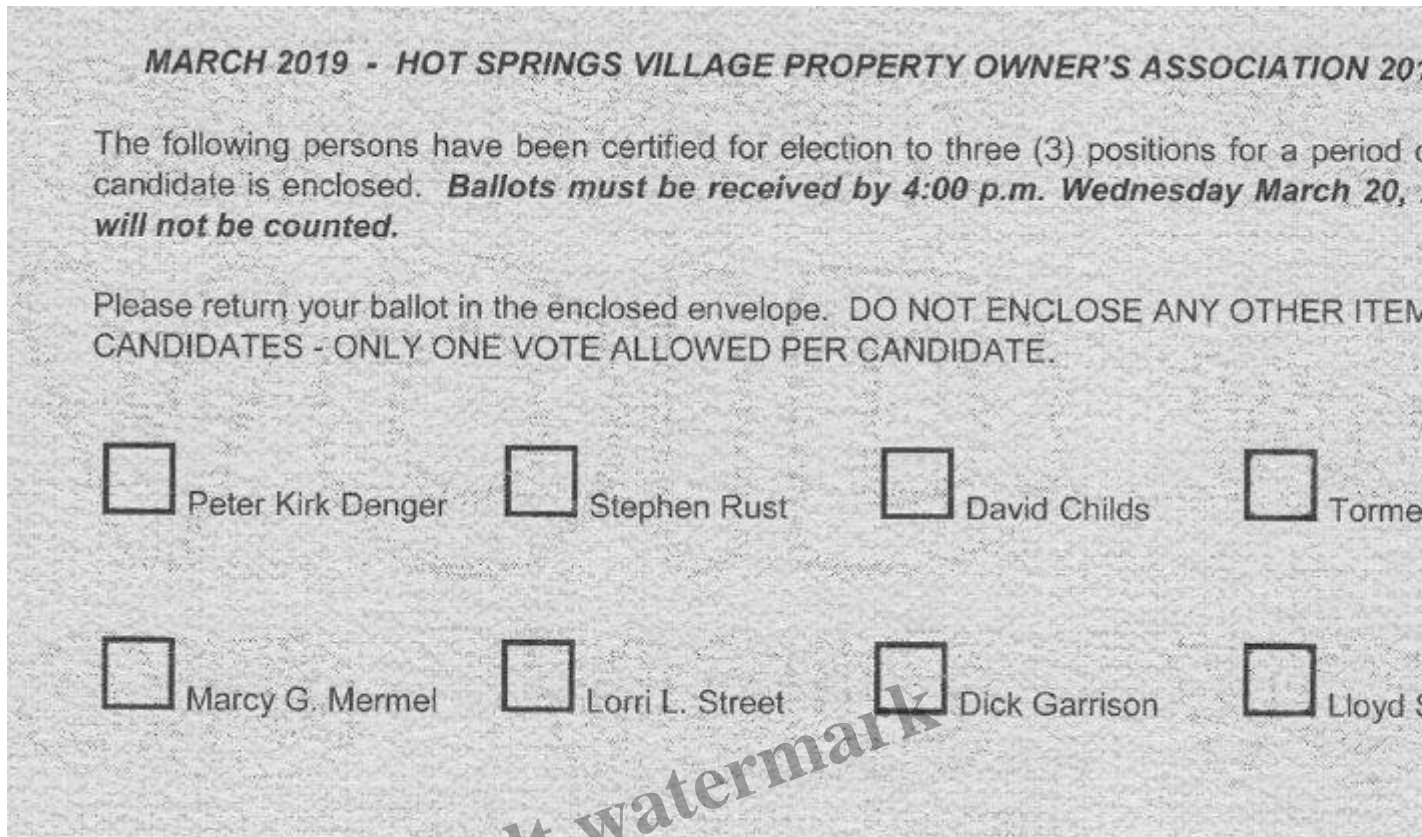
Each team of two was given a bundle of approximately 100 ballots at a time. We do not know if these ballots were in their original envelopes or if the envelopes had already been opened. Along with this bundle, each team also received two tally pages. Each bundle was counted by both volunteers and if the tally was not the same, then the bundle was recounted.

If the tally agreed, then the POA employee removed that ballot bundle and corresponding tally sheets. We do not know where these counted bundles and tally sheets were stored.

Then the process started over until all ballots were counted. NOW at this point who knew what was going on? POA employees monitored the ballot counters every move, but who monitored POA employees?

## This all adds up to a large problem

- Problem: The returned ballots were not securely held by the post office until counting day, instead, they were in the hands of the CEO. Her name was on the return envelope as being the receiver.
- Solution: Open a PO box so property owners have confidence the ballots are stored safely before the count. Returned ballots should remain at USPS until the pickup by ballot committee and witnesses.
- Problem: There were extra ballots floating around and not held in a secure place. (Think desk drawer.)
- Solution: All extra ballots should be accounted for at the ballot counting with the names of the Property Owners who received one of these and also the remainder of the extra ballots (the unused ones) should be accounted for at this time. There should be a very limited number of extra ballots/envelopes.
- Problem: Additionally, ballots did not come with ballot envelopes where there should have been a place for a signature and lot/block number on the ballot envelope.
- Solution: All ballots should come with a return envelope for mailing and a ballot envelope with a place for property owner signature and identification of lot number on the ballot envelope.



**2019 – HSVPOA BOD ballot – All ballots were printed the same with no identifying numbers or signature line, leading to a situation ripe for problems**

- Problem: We received one report of someone receiving two ballots. One was addressed to the correct property owner and the second was addressed to someone who previously lived in the home – from approximately 10 years ago. This is just another way we know there were extra ballots.
- Solution: The records need to be corrected.
- Problem: We have no idea how many ballots were printed and cannot get an answer.
- Solution: Management should be forthcoming with the invoice for the ballots on this issue and account for the number of ballots/envelopes purchased/printed, number mailed, number of extras, postal proof of initial mailing and postal proof of the return. No ballots should be turned in at the POA administration building.
- Problem: We do not know the name of the printing company.
- Solution: Management should provide the name of the ballot printer and provide the invoice.
- Problem: The ballot counting itself contained safeguards to monitor only the Property Owner counters, but HSVPOA employees were not monitored while they removed the counted ballots from the counting room.

- Solution: The ballots and tally sheets should not be removed from the counting room during the counting. They should not be taken to the CEO's office or anyplace else and a full accounting of the results should be announced to the counters upon completion. Management should not be involved in the counting process or the tally sheets.

## **HSVPOA BOD election reform needs to happen by establishing a committee to look into this and make recommendations to the Board**

The Board Director voting process leads to much distrust. This clearly proves the 2019 BOD voting procedure had no integrity and there existed a possibility of the procedure being compromised. We are not suggesting wrongdoing by any person, but only that this could be possible. The voting procedure needs to change.

We suggest a committee of Property Owners be quickly established in order to have a better procedure in place at the next Board of Director election in 2020.

Note: No doubt there are many more problems than what was outlined here. These are just some of my ideas. There may be better ideas. Please comment below as to problems you may have seen with the BOD election process and some possible solutions. Thanks!

by [Cheryl Dowden](#), July 5, 2019

[Max Pixel](#)

### **Category**

1. HSV Villager's Opinion

### **Tags**

1. hot springs village
2. hot springs village board of director candidate
3. hot springs village board of directors
4. Hot Springs Village Board Of Directors Candidate
5. hot springs village election
6. hot springs village election integrity
7. Hot springs village people
8. hot springs village property owner
9. Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association
10. hsv people
11. hsv POA
12. hsv poa board
13. hsv poa bod
14. hsv poa hot springs village poa
15. hsv property owner
16. hsv property owners
17. hsv property owners association

### **Date Created**

---

07/05/2019

**Author**  
lynn

default watermark