

# TOWN OF BEDFORD New Hampshire



October 28, 2021

BEDFORD, NH 03110

Dear

After each election, we conduct a post-election reconciliation process to verify the number of votes cast with the number of ballots issued at the polls and through the absentee ballot process. After the 2020 General Election, we determined that a group of absentee ballots had inadvertently been moved into the "completed" area at the polls without being cast. As detailed in the enclosed letter, just received from the NH Attorney General, we contacted you to inform you that your absentee ballot for the November 2020 General Election was one of the ballots mistakenly not cast.

When we discovered this, we immediately reported it to the NH Secretary of State. It was determined that these ballots would not have impacted the outcome of any of the races. We were advised to keep these ballots secure, and to wait further instructions before taking any further action. The following week, we were informed that the matter had been referred to the NH Attorney General's office for investigation. The AG requested some information from us and we submitted it on November 19, 2020. We were told not to discuss this with anyone, not even the Town Council, because it was a pending investigation. As time passed, we made numerous attempts to get resolution from the AG's team. Finally, in July their investigation began which resulted in the findings spelled out in the enclosed letter.

Proactively we created a new comprehensive procedure to help control the ballot processing. This plan was implemented at the September 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 Special Election, and subsequently accepted by the AG (see enclosure). Our overall accuracy and poll management procedures were validated by a recount conducted by our Secretary of State for the Special Election.

Bedford handled more absentee ballots at the November 2020 General Election than any other town in New Hampshire, and more than the totals in two counties. Huge voter turnout, impacts of Covid-19, and the need to recruit many new poll workers created an unprecedented challenge for us. We sincerely apologize to you for what happened, and assure you that the changes we have implemented, and our vigilance moving forward will afford our voters reliable and accurate elections.

If you have any questions, please direct them to our Senior Assistant Moderator Brian Shaughnessey via email at: [brian@srlaw-nh.com](mailto:brian@srlaw-nh.com).

Regards,

Sally Kellar, Town Clerk

William Klein, Town Moderator

enclosure