TO**:** Anoka County Board of Commissioners and Staff

FROM: Anoka County Election Integrity Team (ACEIT)

DATE: July 27, 2023

SUBJECT**:** 3rd Request to Hand Count Select 2023 Elections

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**Introduction:**

On June 27th and July 11th, we requested that the Anoka County Commissioners and their Elections Team collaborate with the responsible city and/or school board clerks and staff to implement a hand count process for the upcoming November 7, 2023 elections. This request stands.

I think we’ve established the fact that hand counts are not prohibited. No new legislation is required.

However, there seems to be continued thinking by some on the Board that the random audits of the past election are enough proof that the counts are accurate. The fact is that the random audits, though increased, are still NOT enough proof. We need substantiation that each ballot was accurately counted for each race involving more than one candidate. The only way that can happen is through a hand count.

* What is this Board’s concern with providing the citizen’s request of 100% transparency?
* Why would you, as fellow citizens of this county, not want to put forth practices that provide certainty of fair and honest results?

**Considerations:**

Presently, we can only surmise your answers to these questions due to your lack of interaction/communication with us on these requests. So in the surmising, we offer the following points around our request for hand counts of all ballots.

* The random audits of the past election are NOT proof that the counts are accurate.
* We’ve provided industry standards and processes explaining the minimum-mandated PAT’s and PER’s are not adequate.
* Additionally, whether it is 4 random races or 6 random races – it isn’t thorough. Far too much assumption is made when we don’t hand count every race.
* With regard to tabulation, it has been proven that machines are not 100% reliable.
* Machines make overcounting and undercounting errors in multiple scenarios, e.g. stray marks on the ballot, misinterpretation of the voter’s mark, folds in the ballot, etc.
* People teams don’t have these issues AND people teams double-check their counts to ensure overcounts and undercounts don’t occur.
* What we’re requesting is supported by MN state statute. We don’t need a change to state legislation in order for you to provide transparency through 100% hand-counts by each precinct.
* YOU, as County Commissioners, DO HAVE the ability to authorize and/or influence the institution of hand counting in all elections held in Anoka County.
* Let’s have a working session together to perform a mock hand count audit and then talk about the issues and options. We’ll even provide the mock hand count exercise for all of us to participate in.
	+ We can easily work together on this.
	+ To say that you’ve engaged with the citizens because one time, about a year ago, you had a one-hour open forum discussion with a few people on this matter does not justify collaboration.

**Conclusions/Requests:**

* Hand counting ballots is a viable process and the only process that will provide the transparency we’re asking for – proving we have a county with elections that are just [fair, impartial, unprejudiced, correct, moral].
* We would like a response from the board now on why they are not responding, or why they are not moving forward with working with us on hand counting” or something more direct like that so they actually have to answer.
* We make a 3rd request that the Anoka County Commissioners and their staff collaborate with the responsible city and school board clerks and staff to implement a hand count process for the November 7, 2023 elections occurring within Anoka County. If you won’t re-institute hand counting, we’re asking that you respond to us on this as well with an explanation for your decision.