

Public Comments  
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DATE: 12/13/2022

### AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION FORM

Welcome to Commissioners Court.

The following rules are designed to promote a fair and open process for the administration of Tarrant County Government.

- (1) Courtroom demonstrations are not permitted.
- (2) Any member of the public is welcome to address the Commissioners Court at its next posted regular meeting. Please indicate whether you are addressing an item on the posted regular agenda or whether providing general public comments. Regardless of the desired method to address the Court, public participation forms will not be accepted prior to the posting of the agenda.
- (3) Public participation forms submitted using the online form or in-person must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the regular posted meeting. The County Judge will recognize you at the appropriate time. Written statements will not be read aloud during the Court's session.
- (4) The County Judge as presiding officer of the Commissioners Court may impose time limits and any procedures deemed necessary for the effective operation of the Court.
- (5) THE COMMISSIONERS COURT IS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE COUNTY BUT DOES NOT HAVE JURISDICTION OVER LEGAL CASES HEARD IN JUDICIAL COURTS, SUCH AS THE CIVIL, FAMILY, PROBATE, OR CRIMINAL COURTS. The State Commission on Judicial Conduct is the Texas state agency responsible for investigating allegations of judicial misconduct and may be found at [www.scjc.texas.gov](http://www.scjc.texas.gov) or contacted by phone at (512) 463-5533.

Your presence is appreciated.

NAME: Belinda Darling

ADDRESS:

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PLEASE CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX

- ☐ I wish to address the Court on the following agenda item.
- ☒ I wish to address the Court on an item not on today's agenda.
- ☐ I do not wish to address the Court, but I would like to register the following opinion.

Agenda Item Number: May 24 Runoff Election

Subject Matter: Turn on ballot images and do not use rally stations

Comments:

I would like to address the Court about the digital ballot images in the last election. I also want to address the court about the bids for printing paper ballots for elections in 2020 and 2022

attached  
emailed comment

Belinda Darling's comment

**From:** Belinda <[mysweetbelinda@protonmail.com](mailto:mysweetbelinda@protonmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2022 1:23 PM

**To:** Natalie M. Rose <[NMRose@TarrantCounty.com](mailto:NMRose@TarrantCounty.com)>

**Subject:** Please enter these in the record .. I was not aware that phone calls were no longer allowed.  
Thank you.

You don't often get email from [mysweetbelinda@protonmail.com](mailto:mysweetbelinda@protonmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**EXTERNAL EMAIL ALERT! Think Before You Click!**

**Thank you Judge Whitley and I am glad you all made it through the weather this morning. This has been a special meeting and in the spirit of the day, I will say I do appreciate your willingness to communicate with me and many others on election integrity issues.**

**Wish I had more positive things to say today but here it goes .. My comment today is regarding our Tarrant County elections and the complicated maze of electronic hardware and software we use to count our votes.**

First of all, this is not a political party issue. This is an American issue and the problems with electronic voting systems were first brought up by Democrats - Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar. Things have only gotten more complicated since they spoke out about these problems years ago.

This is a hot topic but here I go ...

The Hart InterCivic electronic voting machines we use here in Tarrant County have two backup features – paper and digital- to insure the integrity of our elections. My understanding is that our current Election Administrator specifically urged the Commissioners Court to buy the Hart InterCivic voting machines because of these backup features.

Digital ballot images are extremely important because they are usually the first step in an audit. Last spring I learned that the Hart digital ballot imaging feature was not even being. It was turned off.

I began asking Judge Whitley and our election admin to turn the imaging on for the midterms in November. Initially I was told that the EA thought the paper ballot backups were sufficient and digital images were not needed. Apparently after multiple citizens demanding the images be turned on, our EA finally agreed to do so. When I inquired again in September, I was reassured by both yourself and the EA that the digital images would be turned on for Nov 8<sup>th</sup> election.

After the election, I talked to 2 election judges and neither one of them knew anything about the digital images. So I asked the EA how these digital ballot images were gathered from the voting centers and where they are being stored. I copied you on the email. That was Nov 30<sup>th</sup>. I have yet to hear back from either yourself or the election administrator. My questions are appropriate and should be answered. We are being asked to trust and believe in complicated systems that are not easily understood.

How do voters like myself even know if the digital imaging feature has actually been turned on in an election? Are the images stored separate thumb drives? How do these thumb drives get to the election office? Are there any written procedures for election judges? Where are these digital images stored? How do we

know they are secure? During the audit this summer, I was told that the digital ballots images had to be recreated by election office employees and that the citizen auditors were not even allowed to observe and monitor that process!

This is one of the many reasons why I and many others have concluded that we must do things better here in Tarrant County. We are asked to trust and believe in a system that we have great difficulty tracking and auditing. It is an exhausting process just trying to keep track of our votes. I agree with the Dallas County GOP Chair that we need to go back to paper. There is just too much work involved in trying to understand and monitor these electronic voting systems that have so many points of vulnerability.

**I know that you are on your way out of the court. We appreciate your service and we will be speaking with Judge Ohare about these voting issues.**

**Belinda Darling**