



STATE OF MAINE
COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS
AND ELECTION PRACTICES
135 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0135

April 29, 2022

By E-Mail and Regular Mail

Mr. Jason Desjardins
306 North Bath Road
Bath, ME 04530

Dear Mr. Desjardins:

The staff of the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices (“the Commission”) has completed its review of your request for certification as a Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA) candidate. We determined you submitted 58 valid qualifying contributions (QCs), which is less than the 60 QCs required to receive MCEA funding. You have an opportunity to appeal this staff determination to the members of the Commission, as discussed in Section III.

I. Legal Requirements for MCEA Funding

Duty to Collect 60 QCs

Candidates for the Maine House of Representatives must obtain QCs during the qualifying period from at least 60 verified registered voters from the candidate’s House district. 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3)(D)(3). A QC is defined as a donation:

- A. Of \$5 or more in the form of cash, a check or a money order payable to the fund and signed by the contributor in support of a candidate or made over the Internet in support of a candidate according to the procedure established by the commission;
- B. Made by a registered voter within the electoral division for the office a candidate is seeking and whose voter registration has been verified according to procedures established by the commission;
- C. Made during the designated qualifying period; and

D. That the contributor acknowledges was made with the contributor's personal funds and in support of the candidate and was not given in exchange for anything of value and that the candidate acknowledges was obtained with the candidate's knowledge and approval and that nothing of value was given in exchange for the contribution, on forms provided by the commission.

21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(A)-(D).

Required Documentation

In order for a QC made by check, cash, or money order to be valid, the contributor must sign a Receipt & Acknowledgement form. 21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(D) & 1125(3-B). The signature is an important verification that the contributor knowingly made a QC in support of the candidate from their personal funds. For QCs given by cash, the MCEA requires contributors to "sign a form prepared by the commission affirming that the contributor made the contribution with personal funds." 21-A M.R.S § 1125(3)(F).

Proof of Contributors' Voter Registration

Under the Commission's rules, a candidate's request for MCEA funding must include proof of the contributors' voter registration. 94-270 C.M.R. ch. 3, § 3(1)(A). The proof of registration must be received by the Commission within the qualifying period. The candidate must verify that each contributor is registered to vote in the candidate's legislative district through the Commission's online QC service or through written verification from the clerk in the contributor's municipality.

94-270 C.M.R. ch. 3, § 2(4)(F).

Deadline to Submit QCs, Voter Registration Verifications, and Receipt & Acknowledgement Forms by 5:00 p.m. on April 20, 2022

The candidate "must submit qualifying contributions, receipt and acknowledgement forms, proof of verification of voter registration ... during the qualifying period according to procedures developed by the commission" 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(4). For candidates for the State House of Representatives, the qualifying period ends at 5:00 p.m. on April 20th of the election year. 21-A M.R.S § 1122(8)(B). Under the Commission

Rules, the Commission and its staff may not grant extensions for a candidate to submit the QCs and verifications of voter registration. 94-270 C.M.R. ch. 3, § 3(1)(F).

II. Determination by Commission Staff

When your MCEA qualifying materials were submitted to the Commission on Wednesday, April 20, the Commission's online QC service indicated you were submitting 78 QCs. The Commission staff has determined 20 of the QCs from this submission were invalid, and that you submitted 58 valid QCs.

18 Unverified Contributors

There were 18 contributors for whom the Commission's online QC service was unable to verify the voter registration status. You did not submit additional confirmation from the municipal registrar that any of these voters were registered voters in your district and their QCs are invalid:

Ryan Anderson

Suzanne Ater

Josh Barrett

Bill Brown III

Mary Druesdell

Raymond Durgan

Rosemary Dyer

Allen Gaul

Larry Haines

Nancy Horton

Julie Hunt

Peter E Johnsn

Joe Maist

Denice L. Manhardt

Majorie L. Robinson

MaryAnn Sarni-Rogers

Raymond E. Temale

Stephanie Warren

Receipt & Acknowledgement and Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation Forms Signed by Someone Other than the Contributor

The Receipt & Acknowledgement ("R&A form") is a form prepared by the Commission, as directed by 21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(D) & 1125(3-B), that must be signed by any contributor who has given a QC. The Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation form ("Cash QC form") is a form prepared by the Commission, as directed by 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3)(F), that must be signed by any contributor who has made a QC in cash. Your April 20th submission of qualifying materials included R&A forms and Cash QC forms for two contributors that were signed by someone other than the contributors.

- On March 11th, you received two \$5 QCs in cash on behalf of Harold Eames III and Kim Eames. Harold Eames clearly signed for both himself and Kim Eames on both forms. In order for Kim Eames to make a valid cash QC in your support, she would have needed to sign the R&A form and the Cash QC form to affirm that she made a contribution with personal funds in cash, under 21-A M.R.S. §§ 1122(7)(D), 1125(3)(F), & 1125(3-B). Because the forms you submitted to our office during the qualifying period did not contain her signature, we cannot count the QC for Kim Eames as valid.
- On March 26th, you received two \$5 QCs in cash on behalf of Dawn E. Nadeau and Anthony W. Nadeau. It appears that Dawn Nadeau may have signed the R&A form and the Cash QC form for Anthony Nadeau. The signature for Mr. Nadeau on these forms is significantly different than his actual signature on his voter registration application card on file with the Bath City Clerk. Because you did not submit forms to our office containing his signature during the qualifying period, we cannot count the QC for Anthony Nadeau as valid.

Because 20 of your QCs do not meet the legal requirements to be counted toward certification, the Commission staff has determined that your campaign submitted 58 valid QCs.

III. Your Right to Appeal

You have a right to appeal the staff determination to the members of the Commission, pursuant to 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(14). If you wish to do so, please submit the appeal, in writing, *within seven days*, addressed to:

William A. Lee III, Chair
Maine Ethics Commission
135 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0135

You may file the appeal through U.S. Mail or other delivery service, by hand, or by email addressed to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov. The Commission is required to hold a hearing

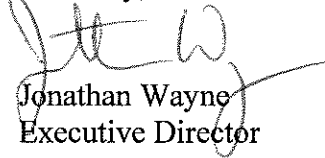
Mr. Jason Desjardins

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to consider the appeal within five calendar days of receiving the appeal. The hearing would be held in accordance with the State Administrative Procedure Act (5 M.R.S. §§ 8001-11008). You would have the burden of proving that the Commission staff's decision was in error as a matter of law or was based on factual error. The Commission must rule on the appeal within five business days after the hearing. I am happy to answer any questions concerning the Commission staff's determination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Wayne', is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jonathan Wayne
Executive Director

Maine Clean Election Act Admin

Online Qualifying Contribution Service

Contribution Search: Results

[Log Out](#)

Contribution Search

[Contribution Receipt & Acknowledgment Download](#)

[Online Contribution Totals](#)

Results

Show entries

Search:

Date of Contribution	City or Town	Contributor Name	Verified Online	Refunded
04/16/2022	BATH	Bonnie Stimpson	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	Thomas A Lunney	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	BARBARA E SMITH-LUNNEY	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	Majorie L Robinson	No	
04/16/2022	BATH	Daniel Fahey	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	MaryAnn Sarni-Rogers	No	
04/16/2022	BATH	Edwin A Rogers	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	Lynn Hudson	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	David Hudson	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	DONALD PAUL FREEMAN Sr.	Yes	
04/16/2022	BATH	Vivian Freeman	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	DEAN STEPHEN BAILEY	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	MARY E SMALL	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Martha M Bourque	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Susan L Barrows	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Robert Barrows	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Patrick Byrnes	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Barbara Johansen	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	William Moore	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Carol Moore	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Dillon Bates	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Leforest Willey	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Mary Druesdell	No	
04/11/2022	BATH	David Wetherbee	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Janet Comeau	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Raymond Durgan	No	
04/11/2022	BATH	Brian Bennett	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Gary Hart	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Stephanie Warren	No	
04/11/2022	BATH	Barbara Hackett	Yes	
04/11/2022	BATH	Alice Brassard	Yes	

Desjardins-6

Staff Use	Last Name	First Name & Middle	Suffix	Address	City/Town	Submission Date
* ✓	Anderson	Ryan		29 ANDREWS RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Ater	Suzanne		65 MIDDLE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
	BAILEY	DEAN STEPHEN		980 WASHINGTON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Barrett	Josh		15 PINE HILL DR	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Barrows	Robert		70 WINSHIP ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Barrows	Susan L		70 WINSHIP ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Bates	Dillon		219 WHISKEAG RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Begley	Colleen		84 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
*	Bennett	Brian		7 MATTHEWS AVE	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Berry	Sally A		9 CRAWFORD DR	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Bourque	Martha M		184 RIDGE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Brackett	Kimberly M		887 MIDDLE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Brassard	Alice		60 DENNY RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Brassard	Heather		15 RIDGE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Brown	Bill	III	29 ANDREWS RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Byrnes	Patrick		223 MIDDLE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Comeau	Janet		6 MATTHEWS AVE	BATH	4/20/2022
	Desjardins	Jason		306 N BATH RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Druesdell	Mary		165 WHISKEAG RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Dunlap	Luella		65 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Durgan	Raymond		5 MATTHEWS AVE	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Dyer	Rosemary		300 SEA FARER LANE	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	EAMES	HAROLD ALFRED	III	69 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Eames	Kim		69 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Fahey	Daniel		390 RIDGE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Farrow	Frank		3 WINDJAMMER WAY	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	FREEMAN	DONALD PAUL	Sr	147 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Freeman	Vivian		147 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Gaul	Allen		838 WASHINGTON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hackett	Barbara		59 DENNY RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Haines	Larry		336 N BATH RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hanscom	Eugene		7 MEADOW WAY	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hargreaves	Daniel		16 PINE HILL DR	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hart	Gary		8 MATTHEWS AVE	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Horton	Nancy		1086 HIGH ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Howard	Gary W		136 RIDGE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hudson	David		9 HOUNDS WAY	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hudson	Lynn		9 HOUNDS WAY	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Hunt	Julie		27 CHESTNUT ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	JAMES	JOHN W	IV	30 GARDEN ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Johansen	Barbara		90 RICHARDSON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Johnsn	Peter E		47 West Chops Point Rd	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Lair	Maggie		16 MEADOW WAY	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Leask	ANNE MARIE		399 CENTRE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Lebel	Paul		338 N BATH RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Lunney	Thomas A		4 PARK ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	MacDonald	Peter		28 NEWTON RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Maist	Joe		847 HIGH ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Manhardt	Denice L		153 Varnery Mill Rd	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Manhardt	Joseph P		153 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Marzen	Amie		926 WASHINGTON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Mason	PHILIP		842 WASHINGTON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Moore	Carol		199 WHISKEAG RD	BATH	4/20/2022

* ✓	Moore	William		199 WHISKEAG RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Morse	Kevin		887 MIDDLE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* SS ✓	Nadeau	Anthony W		14 DIKE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Nadeau	Dawn E		14 DIKE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	POULIN	GLENN SCOTT		2 ASPEN LN	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Ramirez	Barbara		335 N BATH RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Robinson	Majorie L		277 OLD BRUNSWICK RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Rock	Jessica		59 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Rogers	Edwin A		5 OLD SLOOP LN	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	ROSKOWINSKI	Jessica		47 ACADEMY ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Ryan	Richard A		400 RIDGE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Sarni-Rogers	MaryAnn		5 OLD SLOOP LN	BATH	4/20/2022
	SENER	KENNETH DAVID		699 HIGH ST	BATH	4/20/2022
	SMALL	MARY E		980 WASHINGTON ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	SMITH-LUNNEY	BARBARA E		4 PARK ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	SONIA	BARBARA		170 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	SONIA	HAROLD JOSEPH	Jr	170 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Stimpson	Bonnie		151 VARNEY MILL RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Streb	Kelly		6 DIKE RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Temale	Raymond E		845 HIGH ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	VAUGHAN	David		211 CENTRE ST	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Warren	Stephanie		68 DENNY RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Wetherbee	David		11 SEEKINS DR	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Willey	Leforest		30 N BATH RD	BATH	4/20/2022
* ✓	Wilson	Erin		22 SNOW PARK	BATH	4/20/2022

Notation Key:

* []	- material (not online) QC
[]	- unverified by online site
[✓]	- signatures match and \$5 contribution is present
* [SS]	- spouse appears to have signed for contributor

May 5th, 2022

Jonathan Wayne
Executive Director
Maine Ethics Commission
135 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333
287-4179

Subject: An appeal to the MCEA ruling regarding qualifying contributions.

Mr. Wayne,

Thank you for taking the time to review my application for MCEA funding. In an email I received May 3, 2022 of a Letter dated April 29th, 2022 of the denial for funding, I have found discrepancies with the qualifying contributions found to be invalid during the review provided by the Maine Ethics Commission.

The Ethics Commission (EC) found a total of 58 qualifying contributions out of the required 60 needed. I am asking for an appeal due to the discrepancies noted in the list below.

1. There is person(s) who were denied approval in my submissions list of QCs who also have been qualifying contributors to MCEA candidates in the past while at the same address.
2. I have an email Dated April 14th, that lead me to believe that the "status" of the website was a suitable point to observe the individual QC submission status change from "Pending" to "Valid" for the online submissions/QC service. I feel that I left myself ample time to get additional contributions if needed. Most of the entries for QCs were submitted days before this email was sent. Note: As of this writing the QC status on the website has still not been updated as indicated in the email.
3. The contribution Receipt & Acknowledgment Download online tool did not provide an output report for city hall verification in a timely manner. It is also not available at the time of this writing.

Sincerely,

Jason

Jason Desjardins
Candidate for House District 50
207-891-0341
306 North Bath Rd Bath, ME

Gordon, Erin

From: Gordon, Erin
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 2:44 PM
To: clipofsky@aol.com
Subject: RE: How to Request MCEA Certification

Everything should pretty much be in "Pending" status until I process it, including the online QCs.

Erin Gordon
Candidate Registrar

From: clipofsky@aol.com <clipofsky@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 2:29 PM
To: Gordon, Erin <Erin.Gordon@maine.gov>
Subject: Re: How to Request MCEA Certification

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Erin -
Thanks for the speedy response.
Another question - how long does it take for the online submission of QC's to process? Submitted Monday late afternoon and they all are pending still. And if some do not qualify do we still send their \$5 contribution in?

Christina

-----Original Message-----
From: Gordon, Erin <Erin.Gordon@maine.gov>
To: clipofsky@aol.com <clipofsky@aol.com>
Sent: Thu, Apr 14, 2022 8:43 am
Subject: RE: How to Request MCEA Certification

Good morning,

One money order to cover all the cash received as QCs is best.

Thank you,

Erin Gordon
Candidate Registrar

From: clipofsky@aol.com <clipofsky@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2022 6:40 AM
To: Gordon, Erin <Erin.Gordon@maine.gov>
Subject: Re: How to Request MCEA Certification

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Desjardins - District 50

Question regarding a money order for cash QC's. The handbook says one per R&A sheet and elsewhere I've read one bulk money order. So do I need one for each page or one for all (say 7 pages)?

Please let me know -

Thanks

Chrisitna Desjardins (treasurer for J. Desjardins)

-----Original Message-----

From: Gordon, Erin <Erin.Gordon@maine.gov>

Cc: Burke, Emma <Emma.Burke@maine.gov>

Sent: Fri, Apr 1, 2022 11:56 am

Subject: How to Request MCEA Certification

Good afternoon Candidates,

The deadline to request MCEA certification is approaching, April 20, 2022. We have attached to this email a Request for Certification form and a checklist that you can use as you prepare your materials for submission. While many candidates choose to drop their submission packet off in person, we are also including a PDF with mailing instructions if you would rather submit your packet that way; mailed submissions must be postmarked no later than April 20, 2022 to be accepted.

You will use the online QC site at www.maine.gov/cleanelections to check the voter registration status of all your in-person contributors. The Seed Money Report will be filed at www.mainelectioncampaignfinance.com. Please ensure that you and your treasurer can log into those sites and contact us as soon as possible if you have trouble.

As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to your assigned Candidate Registrar.

Erin Gordon, Candidate Registrar

House Districts 1-76 | Senate Districts 1-17

(207) 287-3651 | erin.gordon@maine.gov

Emma Burke, Candidate Registrar

House Districts 77-151 | Senate Districts 18-35

(207) 287-4727 | emma.burke@maine.gov

135 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0135

45 Memorial Circle, Augusta, ME



To: Candidates for the Maine House of Representatives, District 50
cc: Commission Members and Counsel
From: Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director
Date: May 9, 2022

NOTICE OF HEARING

Hearing Scheduled for May 11, 2022

On April 29, 2022, the staff of the Maine Ethics Commission completed its review of a request for Maine Clean Election Act funding by Mr. Jason Desjardins, a candidate for the Maine House of Representative, District 50. The Commission staff found that Mr. Desjardins did not submit 60 valid qualifying contributions during the qualifying period. Specifically, the Commission found a total of 18 qualifying contributions were invalid because the candidate did not submit confirmation that the contributors are registered to vote in the candidate's house district, and the Receipt & Acknowledgement and Cash Qualifying Contribution Affirmation forms submitted for two contributors were signed by the contributor's spouse rather than the contributor. For these reasons, the Commission staff determined Mr. Desjardins did not meet the requirements to receive Maine Clean Election Act funding under 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(5).

Mr. Desjardins has appealed the staff determination. Pursuant to 21-A M.R.S. § 1125(14), the Commission will hold a hearing on his appeal, with the agreement of the appellant, on **Wednesday, May 11, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.** The hearing will be held at the Commission office at **45 Memorial Circle, in Augusta.** The hearing will be streamed to YouTube for the public to access.

The May 11, 2022 hearing will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Commission's rules (available at www.maine.gov/ethics) and the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, 5 M.R.S. §§ 8001 et seq.

Issue to be Addressed at the Hearing

At the hearing, Mr. Desjardins will have the burden of proving that the determination by the Commission staff was in error as a matter of law or was based on factual error. The members of the Commission are expected to reach a decision in the matter as part of the hearing.

Opportunity to Present Evidence and Legal Argument

The appellant, the Commission staff, and any intervenors may present evidence and legal argument at the May 11, 2022 hearing.

Subpoenas

Any requests to the Commission for issuance of subpoenas under 5 M.R.S. § 9060 should be made as soon as possible. Requests should be addressed to the William Schneider, Commission Chair, and emailed to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.

Relevant Statutes and Rules

The following provisions are relevant to the proceeding:

21-A M.R.S. § 1122(7) & (8)

21-A M.R.S. § 1125(3), (3-B), (4), (5) & (14)

Commission Rules, Chapter 3, Sections 2(4) & 3(1)

Applications to Intervene as a Party

Any person who wishes to intervene as a party to the proceeding should submit a letter to the Commission as soon as possible. Please address the letter to William Schneider, Commission Chair, and email the letter to Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.

Questions

If you have any questions concerning this notice, please call me at (207) 287-4179 or e-mail me at Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov.

Jonathan Wayne
Maine Ethics Commission
135 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0135
Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov

Dear Jonathan,

I would like my letter to be added to the appeal by Jason Desjardins for his denial of Clean Elections certification.

When he told me he had fallen short of the 60 required contributors by two names I was curious who had been rejected. Especially since he had submitted 77 names and although he knew some were not voters he chose to include them since the people wanted to help out his campaign.

According to Jason, he never received word that any names were rejected and I hope you look into this. I can't say one way or another whether he received notice but I have no reason to disbelieve him. I wondered if the names that were submitted a week before the deadline were checked then or not until the hard copies were submitted the day of the deadline. Obviously this would make a difference but would a candidate know this?

When I looked at the rejected list he received along with his letter of denial, I did not recognize some of the names that were rejected but two of the names, Denise Manhardt and Allen Gaul have been staples of my nominating petition and qualifying contribution collection efforts for decades. Neither one had moved so we looked further and discovered the state computer did not accept them because of a missing initial.

Since both are registered voters in his district and signed their names less an initial, he did meet the deadline of April 20th. I checked the sign up sheets and it does not say anywhere that a middle (or first) initial must be included to make the signature valid. I frequently sign checks and other papers with and without my middle initial. I have never had the bank return a check for insufficient signature.

The previous method of taking sheets to the town office to have them certified was far superior because a City Clerk would see the name and address and figure out that although the middle initial was missing it was the registered voter. Then the candidate would know ahead of time that the names he submitted were acceptable. This new method allows the whimsy of a state computer system to determine registration without allowing any common sense.

Granted a savvy candidate or one with lots of staff at their disposal would submit the names early enough to learn which ones needed to be corrected and then follow through with that. If they did not hear anything back they or staff would check with Ethics. This grossly favors the incumbent. If you have done it previously you might know the state's voter system is rigid but a first timer on their own has no way of knowing. Indeed Jason used a city voter list to get some of the names and so had every expectation that those names would be accepted. My guess is there are a good many more than the two I mentioned that were rejected for want of an initial.

Going forward it might be a good idea to state on the sign up sheet that a signature must include all initials or it will be rejected. Or revert back to having Town/City clerks verify the signatures so the candidate knows exactly how many verified signatures they have.

Leaving the decision up to a state computer seems to work opposite to the national trend of voter inclusiveness. Since he did submit names and contributions for at least 60 legal voters in his district before the deadline, I hope members of the Ethics Commission will rule on his appeal in his favor and accept him as a Clean Elections candidate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Small
980 Washington St.
Bath, Maine 04530
207-607-0536
Votemyway@yahoo.com