Blooming Grove Post-Election Audit Minutes for November 17, 2026, 8:00 AM
Town of Blooming Grove Hall Front Office
1880 S Stoughton Rd, Madison, WI 53716

Auditors Present: John Wright and Kellene Leicht

Public Present: None

The 2026 Audit of Wards 3-7 results in the Town of Blooming Grove, Dane County, Wisconsin began at 8:00 AM, November 17, 2026. All ballots were tallied on Election Night, November 3, 2026 on a single, ES&S tabulator, so there were no hand count of ballots, no provisional ballots, or any other tabulator to consider. It was confirmed by auditor Wright that the Notice of Post-Election audit was posted on November 13, 2026, more than 48 hours in advance.

Both auditors confirmed that they had a copy of the ES&S DS200 zero tape for the November 3, 2026 General Election, the ES&S DS200 results tape from the same election for Wards 3-7, the sealed ballot bag containing 443 ballots from Wards 3-7 for the November 3, 2026 General Election, normal tally sheets (50 ballots per the four contests reviewed) pre-filled with the contest title, candidates, write-ins/scattering, overvotes/undervotes, an empty ballot bag for securing the ballots post-audit, ink pens for tallying the results, and the 2026 Post Election Voting Equipment Audit Form.

Auditor John Wright reviewed the objectives and standards to be used to conduct the audit per the 2026 Post-Election Voting Equipment Audit Field Guide produced by the Wisconsin Elections Commission with auditor Kellene Leicht. Wright's preference is to unseal the ballot bag (security seal 00142714) that contains all 443 ballots cast for Wards 3-7 and to divide the contents into stacks of 50 ballots. Each full and one partial stack of ballots will be temporarily labelled with a Post-It Note from 1 to 9 with stacks 1 through 8 containing 50 ballots each and stack 9 containing only 43 ballots.

The goal, as stated by the Election Commission, is to tally the results for four contests, 50 ballots at a time. The auditor is to count the ballots as the machine would read them rather than to try and determine voter intent. If an auditor is in doubt, that ballot or ballots should be tagged with a Post-It Note so that both auditors can review the Field Guide to determine how it should be tallied. Under no circumstances are any ballots to be marked on or handled by the public who have not been assigned as auditors. Each of the two auditors will complete the tally of the same lettered stack and compare the results. If there is a difference of count, the stack shall be reviewed again by each auditor independently until the total count is the same. Once the total ballot count is the same, then the tallied results of each auditor shall be compared to see whether they match. Once the lettered stack matches, that stack with the tally sheets shall be set aside and the next stack can be reviewed with the same goals.

Once all nine stacks have been tallied, the results should then be compared cumulatively by contest and candidate to the results tape for Wards 3-7 to see whether they match. If the tally totals in each stack for both agree, but a contest or contests don't match the printed machine results tape, then the two auditors shall focus upon the contest or contests that do not agree with the tape and provide a plausible explanation for the difference unless the difference can be reconciled with the ballots.

At 8:15 AM, auditor Wright reviewed the zero tape with auditor Leicht to confirm no vote counts prior to the General Election held on November 3, 2026. The two auditors then confirmed which Wards and contests they were to tally. Auditor Wright then cut open the ballot bag (which has been stored in a locked vault since election day) containing all 443 ballots for Wards 3-7 for the 2026 General Election. The total stack of ballots was removed from the bag and the two auditors counted out nine piles according to the method described above. Each stack then had a Post-It Note attached to designate a sequential number from 1 to 9. While counting out the stacks, a

ballot from Wards 1-2 was encountered and set aside. The total number of ballots from Wards 3-7 added up to 442; it was decided to move on and reconcile the first eight stacks of 50 before searching for the missing ballot.

As each stack was tallied independently by the two auditors, each tally sheet was then compared for uniform results. This continued until the eighth stack was tallied and the results compared. This process ended at 11:40 AM. The few mismatches between each tally of fifty that were tabulated by each auditor were quickly reconciled because the ballots for each stack of fifty were further divided into five stacks of ten to isolate particular data mismatches by contest and location within the stack. Once the first eight stacks were reconciled, both auditors tallied the remaining forty-two ballots; those two tallies matched. The first eight stacks were recounted to make certain that no stack accidentally contained fifty-one ballots. Once it was determined that the only option left was that one ballot from Wards 1-2 was sealed in the security bag for Wards 3-7, so logically one ballot from Wards 3-7 might be sealed in the security bag for Wards 1-2. The security bag for Wards 1-2 with security seal 00142715 was opened and both auditors searched for a ballot from Wards 3-7 inside. At around 11:50 AM the ballot was located. The ballot from Wards 1-2 was added to that stack before inserted inside the original bag and then sealed into a new security bag with seal number 00142689 around 12:10 PM. The final ballot was then tabulated by both auditors independently and that stack reconciled.

Each of the auditors then added together all nine of the tally sheets for which they were responsible. These totals for each contest, each candidate, each write-in, and each over/undervote were compared to the ES&S DS200 machine tape for Wards 3-7. At 12:35 PM, it was determined that there were no differences between the tally sheets and the totals tape.

The ballots and the original ballot bag were sealed inside a new ballot bag with tamper evident security seal number 00142716. As is the practice for Dane County, the voted ballots are retained by the municipality and locked in a secure location. All completed documents were then scanned and shared with the Wisconsin Elections Commission along with a request for reimbursement. A press release was prepared and posted to the website and available for anyone who may request it for publication, posting, or as a FOIA request. The bags of voted ballots will be retained for a period of 22 months, as prescribed by law whereupon they may be destroyed if there is no court order indicating otherwise.

All steps of the audit were concluded at 12:45 PM.

Minutes prepared by John Wright, Town of Blooming Grove Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator