

Poll Site With a Paper Ballot, Optical Scan Voting System

Visuals courtesy of the documentary "Bought And Sold, Electronic Voting in N.Y."

by Robert Millman. Copies of this 45min. DVD can be purchased by contacting r.millman@att.net



Suzanne M. Scarpa
Town Clerk
Lee, MA

For the 2004 presidential election, Suzanne Scarpa, the Town Clerk for Lee, MA. replaced the town's 8 lever machines with 1 optical scanner.



A voter walks in and registers at the check-in table.



After signing in, the poll worker hands the voter a new, unmarked Paper Ballot.



The voter heads for a private marking booth. A large poll site can have dozens of marking booths where many voters can mark their ballot at the same time.



The voter enters an available marking booth to privately mark her ballot.



Marking The Ballot

The voter marks her ballot in the booth. Usually the ballot has little circles that the voter fills in, similar to standard test forms in school.



An example of a New York City paper ballot. The voter fills in the little oval next to the candidate's name.



A Ballot-Marking Device ("BMD") for voters with disabilities and/or minority languages. "BMDs" are portable and a poll site can have several of them.

According to Ms. Scarpa, the pollworkers for this system passed their training "With flying colors!" There were no lines on election day: "People got right in and right out." The one scanner easily handled all 3,200 voters of Lee, MA. who turned out that day!

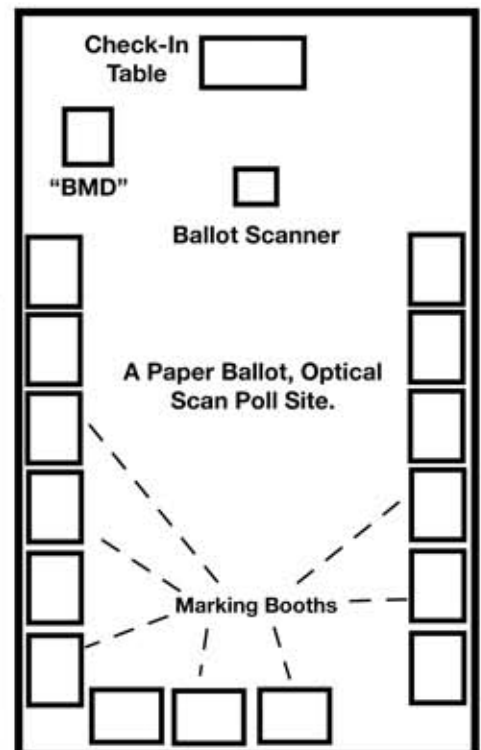


And most importantly, people felt very reassured because they could see their own marks on the ballot, votes that they, themselves made!



Scanning The Ballot

All ballots, whether marked by hand or by using the ballot-marking device, are fed into the scanner. The scan itself takes only a moment, and the ballot drops into a locked ballot box. Those ballots are stored in a vault, and can be retrieved and re-counted, if necessary.



Bird's-eye view

The marking booths are portable and can be arranged in any configuration. Same for the ballot-marking devices.