

Presidential ballot recount enters second day

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MADISON (AP) — The tedious task of recounting Wisconsin's nearly 3 million votes for president began Thursday with scores of hastily hired temporary workers flipping through stacks of ballots as observers watched their every move.

The action in Wisconsin could soon be duplicated in Michigan and Pennsylvania, where Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein was pushing for recounts. Donald Trump narrowly beat Hillary Clinton in all three states, but recounts were not expected to flip nearly enough votes to change the outcome in any of the states.

The Wisconsin recount marked the first time in 16 years there was a candidate-driven recount of a presidential election. But it does not carry the same drama as the Florida presidential recount of 2000, when the outcome of the election between Al Gore and George W. Bush hung in the balance.

"This is certainly not Bush v. Gore," said Wisconsin's chief elections administrator, Mike Haas.

Even so, the campaigns for Trump, Clinton and Stein all had observers spread throughout the state to watch the process. The recount will have to move quickly. The federal deadline to certify the vote to avoid having the fate of Wisconsin's 10 electoral votes decided by Congress is Dec. 13. Even if that were to happen, the votes would almost certainly go to Trump, since Republicans control both chambers of Congress.

Most counties will recount the ballots manually, although Stein lost a court challenge this week to force hand recounts everywhere. The state's largest county, Milwaukee, was recounting the ballots by feeding them through the same machines that counted them on election night. In Dane County, where Clinton won 71 percent of the vote, the ballots were being counted by hand.

Workers in Dane County are being paid \$20 an hour and will work two shifts over about 12 hours a day to get the recount done by the deadline, said County Clerk Scott McDonell. He didn't expect much change in the results.



ONE-BY-ONE

ONE-BY-ONE — Jefferson County officials gathered in Room 202 at the courthouse Thursday to begin the tedious task of recounting the presidential ballots. For more photos, [click here](#).

“I think we will be very close to what was reported on election night,” McDonell said Thursday.

Jefferson County Clerk Barb Frank is proceeding with a hand count because the machines already had been utilized before.

Tabulators and the Jefferson County Board of Canvassers have gathered in Room 202 at the Jefferson County Courthouse for the recount. On Thursday, recounts were completed in the cities of Watertown and Waterloo and Village of Johnson Creek. It was not clear if there had been any change in the results of any of the three communities as of this morning.

The clerk was already moving forward with recounts in Fort Atkinson today.

“It is going very well,” Frank said in the early stages Thursday morning.

She said identifying the absentee ballots out of the total ballots cast had been the most challenging.

Jefferson County electors gave President-elect Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence 23,410 ballots.

Democrat Hillary Clinton and running mate Virginia U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine received 16,561.

Overall, Clinton lost to Trump by about 22,000 votes in Wisconsin, or less than a percentage point.

Stein has argued, without evidence, that irregularities in the votes in all three states suggest that there could have been tampering with the vote, perhaps through a well-coordinated, highly complex cyberattack.

“Verifying the vote through this recount is the only way to confirm that every vote has been counted securely and accurately and is not compromised by machine or human error, or by tampering or hacking,” Stein said in a statement Thursday.

Stein’s critics, including the Wisconsin Republican Party, contend that she is a little-known candidate who is merely trying to raise her profile while raising millions of dollars. Stein has taken in nearly \$7 million for the recounts, which is about twice as much as her longshot presidential campaign took in.

The Wisconsin recount was estimated to cost about \$3.9 million. Stein paid \$973,250 for the requested recount in Michigan.

Trump on Thursday objected to a recount of Michigan’s presidential votes, at least delaying the planned Friday start of the recount there until next week.

The Board of State Canvassers will meet Friday to hear arguments. The Michigan Bureau of Elections said the recount cannot proceed until two business days after the four-member, bipartisan board resolves the objection.

Trump's attorneys said Stein, who finished fourth in Michigan, is asking for an expensive, time-consuming recount "on the basis of nothing more than speculation."

Stein countered that Trump's "cynical efforts to delay the recount and create unnecessary costs for taxpayers are shameful and outrageous."

In Pennsylvania, a hearing is scheduled for Monday on Stein's push for a recount.

to secure a court-ordered statewide recount, a legal maneuver that has never been tried, according to one of the lawyers who filed it.

Stein's attorneys want a forensic analysis of electronic voting machines in Pennsylvania to see if there any evidence that their software was hacked. But counties where Green Party-backed voters have sought a recount are refusing to do such forensic examinations.