Lundquist And Kaplan Even Closer With All Precincts Reporting

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

It took until after midday (Wednesday) for all the State House District 36 precincts to report in, but even after the last two did, the outcome of the tight race for the Democratic nomination was no clearer.

With 14 of 14 precincts reporting, candidates Andy Lundquist and Dave Kaplan are now only seven votes apart: Lundquist leads with 504 votes to Kaplan’s 497.

Two mainland precincts, Nondalton and the combined Iliamna-Newhalen voting district, didn’t return results until early (Wednesday) afternoon. Before that, Lundquist had a 23-vote lead. Nondalton voted 14-to-5 in favor of Kaplan, while Iliamna-Newhalen went for Kaplan 23-to-16.

Both Kaplan and Lundquist were amazed at the small margin.

There are still an unknown number of absentee and questioned ballots outstanding, according to the Alaska Division of Elections. The state has up to 15 days after the election to count all the ballots, but they're shooting to have that done by September 5th – which is next Friday.

The election will be certified on or about September 17th. After that date, a defeated candidate OR 10 voters registered in District 36 can request a recount.

If the difference between the candidates is less than one-half percent, the $2,000 fee for a recount is waived. Currently Lundquist and Kaplan are 7-10ths of one-percent apart.

Kaplan says the sooner the votes are tallied, the better, so that the winner can get to work at campaigning against his Republican rival.

Lundquist is taking a wait-and-see approach to the drawn-out process.

If the two candidates are tied after all the absentee and questioned ballots are counted, the state will conduct an automatic recount. If they are still tied after that, the victor will be determined by a coin flip.

The eventual winner will face Alan Austerman, who ran unopposed in the closed Republican primary. He received 1,101 votes.

Check out the precinct-by-precinct breakdown of votes in District 36 in this updated PDF from the Alaska Division of Elections.