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disincorporation

St. Louis Public Radio | By [Jason Rosenbaum](#)

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This article first appeared in the St. Louis Beacon. - A bid to disincorporate Uplands Park has failed. The north St. Louis County village will not become part of unincorporated St. Louis County.

For a few minutes on Tuesday, it appeared that Uplands Park was going to disincorporate. But that changed after St. Louis County updated its website.

[Citing a dysfunctional local government](#), some residents of the roughly 445-person village had gathered enough signatures to place a disincorporation vote on Tuesday's ballot. Had the ballot item received 60 percent or more of the vote, the tiny municipality would have become part of unincorporated St. Louis County.

At 8:09 p.m. on Tuesday, the St. Louis County Board of Elections' website posted unofficial results stating that the initiative had passed with exactly 60 percent of the vote. The site indicated that 1 out of 1 precincts had been counted, which means that all votes have been tabulated.

That led some media outlets to report that the vote had succeeded. This reporter, for instance, [Tweeted out a screenshot of the 8:09 p.m. results from the county website](#).

But about 10 minutes later, [the county elections website updated again to show that the ballot initiative had only received about 51 percent of the vote](#). That meant that the effort had failed –

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Rita Days, the election board's Democratic elections director, told the Beacon that a staffer published the 8:09 p.m. results "before we had a chance to review the results."

"The normal protocol is we get that [information] from the tab room," Days said. "I look at that. [Republican director] Gary Fuhr looks at that. And we say 'OK, push it to the website.' For some reason... I don't know if it got past him, but it did get past me."

Days said that the situation was evidence that "seconds matter" in reporting election results – especially in an age where social media tools like Twitter are prime conduits for information.

"It was very important to those people out there. When they look at 60-40 and they say, 'Oh yeah, we've got it.' And then in the next second or two – 'no, you didn't,'" Days said. "And so, that was unfortunate on our part. I take full responsibility for that. And what we have now is the 51 percent result – and no it did not make it."

The Uplands Park vote is the second time in recent years that a municipality tried to disincorporate. In 2011, [voters in St. George voted to dissolve the south St. Louis County town.](#)

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