

Mono residents shocked to receive voter PIN for dead dog ahead of vote

By Jasen Obermeyer

By now, most Mono residents have received their voter registration information and a PIN number that allows them to participate in the Town's electronic voting, but Heleena Ens wasn't expecting to receive them for her dog Cookie.

"My husband said "you want to take a look at the mail," is how she described receiving it. "I'm just sure surprised that my dog got one."

She added that Cookie has been dead for four years, and she is unsure exactly how her dog could have gotten on the voters' list. "It kind of left me scratching my head."

Fred Simpson, Mono's Deputy Clerk, stressed that it is illegal for anyone to vote in someone else's name or to vote twice. "If this is actually a dog, there's no way of proving it."

He explained that in order to vote, you need both the PIN and identification by date of birth. "That affords a level of protection."

He added that he couldn't remove the PIN, because if it is valid, and it is for a person, he would be taking away their right to vote.

"I thought this was so bizarre," noted Ms. Ens.

Mr. Simpson confirmed that at the latest count there were 7,159 eligible voters in Mono. "That number will change."

Under the new voting system, Mono residents can vote by computer or telephone anytime between October 12 and election day, Oct. 22.