

It's definitely been a thrilling ride so far and it does not appear to be ending in the immediate future. Last night, [nearly 45% of registered citizens](#) in the city of Birmingham [elected Larry Langford as its next mayor](#). As I write this it appears that [Patrick Cooper plans to ask for a recount](#). A decision on that will come in the near future. Another decision will also follow if the results stand about who will fill the seat vacated by Mr. Langford on the Jefferson County Commission from Montgomery.

I've been checking the math with results from other areas of the Southeast and while many may feel that it was a pathetic turnout, our city has outperformed its contemporaries in terms of its level of participation. Hopefully the issues of voting irregularities and any formal requests for a recount will be dealt with swiftly and quickly.

For the record, I was necessarily surprised not by the fact that Langford won the popular vote, but that, if the numbers stand, he has become the next mayor of the city of Birmingham without having to first go through a runoff.

Based on what our polls said, it would be safe to say that the majority of our readership is disappointed with the unofficial results. There are many that are upset and who feel that their voices were not heard. I'd beg to differ.

Birmingham's young professional population demonstrated that they would not sit by quietly during this election. They made sure that people knew where they stood on the issues and - whether it was here or elsewhere on the web, in print, or in broadcast media - and definitely made people aware of their presence.

The Magic City's online population demonstrated that the web, with all of its issues and with criticism coming from all sides, could in fact play a major role in discussions about what faces the city and the region. Mainstream media joined in on the act, relying on video podcasts and online forums to aid voters in making an important decision about where the city needs to go next.

So, what are our next steps?

Well, one of the great things about the Internet in general and the blogosphere in particular is the ability to engage people in dialogue. To that end, we have already extended an invitation to Larry Langford to write a column in this very section of The Terminal on a regular basis. If it is determined that a runoff is necessary and Mr. Cooper wins, we will extend the same opportunity to him. **NOTE:** *We have not received a response as of yet, but we will let you know when we do.*

The only way we think you can move the city forward is to continue this level of interest and conversation. If those that feel they lost clam up and say nothing afterwards then all is lost. Hopefully providing a platform for open, honest dialogue will help us see tangible progress that all are happy with.

In my original plans for this site, I had never intended to give the election the type of coverage and attention that we did, but I am extremely happy that I did. I am quite grateful to those of you that decided to check in with us from time to time as we all went on this ride together. I am also grateful to those candidates that took the time to answer the questions submitted by The Terminal's readers. I only hope that we will be able to continue to push more people to become engaged in talking about this city and all that it has to offer.

André Natta is the publisher and managing editor of The Terminal. To submit letters in response to this commentary or to contact for general information, use any of the methods listed on [our contact page](#).