

# Nick Cocchi declares victory in Hampden County sheriff's race



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LUDLOW -- A decisive win for Democratic nominee for Hampden County sheriff [Nick Cocchi](#) became apparent early in his "war room" in an office suite on Election Day.

Nearly two dozen people were poised to plug numbers into a long spreadsheet on a projection screen. Phones began dinging with text messages and phone calls from the fleet of poll workers Cocchi's camp had fanned out across 23 cities and towns in Hampden County.

The team buzzed in a conference room at attorney Gary J. Scagliarini's office while the rest of the building was quiet.

"4A Westfield -- go," Chris Gelonese, a member of the executive committee of Cocchi's campaign, ordered to another member of the team. Participants of the war room were strictly ordered to raise their hands silently when they had results instead of shouting out numbers at random.

"Cocchi 689; Gill 81; Comerford 240," was the rapid-fire response.

Cocchi, an assistant superintendent at the Ludlow jail, faced off against James Gill, a deputy superintendent at the jail, and Republican John Comerford, a veterans services administrator.

Cocchi's well-oiled and well-funded machine discovered he had earned over 66 percent of the votes minutes after the polls closed at 8 p.m.

Cocchi paced nervously nonetheless.

"You're still nervous?" John Evon, campaign manager asked.

"Yeah," Cocchi responded with a grin, cracking jokes through the tension.

Cocchi had 43,324 votes by 8:20 p.m.

"Yeah, we're kicking their ass," Gelonese said.

About 15 minutes later, he declared victory.

Cocchi won a three-way Democratic primary on Sept 8, besting former Springfield Mayor Michael Albano and City Councilor Tom Ashe.

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A 23-year veteran of the sheriff's department, Cocchi entered the race early, announcing his candidacy in 2014 with the backing of outgoing Hampden County Sheriff Michael J. Ashe Jr.

Over the past two-plus years, he has run one of the most expensive campaigns in recent Pioneer Valley memory, raising and spending roughly a half-million dollars by the end of October, according to state finance records.

November 10, 2016 - 06:08PM ET

### Sheriff - Hampden - General

Massachusetts - 166 of 166 Precincts Reporting - 100%

Name	Party	Votes	Vote %
✓ Cocchi, Nick	Dem	129,989	68%
Comerford, John	GOP	33,298	17%
Gill, James	Unr	27,551	14%

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