



City of Madison
Meeting Minutes - Final
MADISON ELECTION ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

4:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 103-A (City-County Building)

Roll Call

Present: Paul R. Malischke, Sybil R. Better, Warren E. Onken, Emanuel Scarbrough, Maribeth Witzel-Behl and Bob Ohlsen

Absent: Valerie A. Brown

Excused: Marlena G. Deutsch

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Onken, seconded by Scarbrough, to Approve the Minutes. The motion passed by acclamation.

Discussion Items

1. [05158](#) Preparation for Spring Primary and Spring Election

Ms. Witzel-Behl reported that the City Clerk's Office is updating materials in the Election Official binders, and is beginning to pack the supply boxes for the February 20 Spring Primary.

Mr. Ohlsen said the City of Madison ballot order is for a 30% turnout in February and a 40% turnout in April.

Mr. Scarbrough asked about Spanish-speaking and Hmong-speaking poll workers. Ms. Witzel-Behl responded that the on-line poll worker application asks individuals whether they speak a language and, if so, what languages they speak.

Mr. Malischke mentioned that absentee voting has its drawbacks, such as administrative burdens and susceptibility to fraud. Ms. Better said she could see more states going the way of Oregon, with voting by mail.

2. [05141](#) Establishment of additional polling places

Mr. Ohlsen told the committee that the County Clerk's Office has had problems coding the elections for the City of Madison because of the number of wards voting at polling places such as High Point Church, Alicia Ashman Library, and Elver Park. He said the Spring Elections do not pose as big of a problem.

Mr. Onken said that the biggest thing for the Madison Election Advisory

Committee to do is to keep emphasizing the necessity of allocating resources to resolve problems for 2008.

Mr. Malischke requested that the upgrade to the M-100 tabulators be included on a future agenda.

Mr. Onken said it would be important for the committee to include the need to establish additional polling places in a report to send to the new Common Council and the Mayor in April, sounding the alarm for 2008.

Ms. Better requested that this item be kept on the agenda.

3. [05142](#) Improving communication with poll workers

Mr. Malischke suggested that the City Clerk establish a poll worker e-mail list, and communicate with poll workers via e-mail.

Ms. Witzel-Behl said that she gives her e-mail address to poll workers, but that many poll workers do not have e-mail or a computer.

Mr. Malischke said he would like to invite poll workers to address the committee at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Ohlsen said poll workers probably would only come to a meeting if they were paid to do so.

4. [05146](#) Pollworker recruitment and training

Mr. Ohlsen suggested that a training session be held for City of Madison poll workers other than Chief Inspectors, explaining the reason behind each election task, from opening the polls to closing the polls. Ms. Witzel-Behl agreed that this would be a good idea. Mr. Ohlsen said the training would reduce the number of votes that could be thrown out in a recount.

Mr. Malischke said he would like to see poll worker training sessions offered at each branch library for the two weeks leading up to each election. He said Chief Inspectors and the League of Women Voters could offer the training sessions.

Ms. Witzel-Behl said she would be very concerned about misinformation being given out at training sessions of this type. Mr. Ohlsen said he has been in this business for over 30 years, and he still gets stumped by a new question every time he gives a training session. He said intensive training is needed in order to be able to train others on election law.

Mr. Malischke suggested that the training sessions be broken down into topics, with different Chief Inspectors trained on each topic. Ms. Witzel-Behl said questions would still be asked on other election topics. Mr. Malischke responded that the Chief Inspectors could seek out the answers to unrelated questions. Ms. Witzel-Behl responded that her experience with Chief Inspectors is that many of them make assumptions rather than call with a question.

Mr. Scarbrough suggested that smaller training sessions be held right after the election, when the City Clerk and County Clerk are not so busy with election preparations. Ms. Better said she did not know how many people would come to a training session after an election. Mr. Ohlsen said there is some real merit to Mr. Scarbrough's suggestion.

Ms. Better reported that the League of Women Voters is working on a pilot project to recruit more people of color and high school students to work at the polls. Mr. Scarbrough suggested putting poll worker information in the Madison Times and church bulletins. He also suggested that the League of Women Voters find ministries that deal with civic work. Mr. Scarbrough said the League of Women Voters would find that recruitment methods that are successful in Madison would be different from recruitment methods that are successful in Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and Beloit.

Mr. Malischke said he would like to see the poll worker shifts split even further.

5. [05148](#) Elimination of Common Council meetings on nights of General Elections
This item was referred to a future agenda.

6. [05152](#) Positions of unpaid volunteer poll workers
This item was referred to a future agenda.

7. [05155](#) Annual Report to the Common Council, Mayor, and City Clerk
This item was referred to a future agenda.

8. [05160](#) Confirmation of next MEAC meeting

Committee members confirmed that the next meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13.

The April 10 meeting was cancelled by proclamation of the chair.

Mr. Scarbrough will chair the next meeting.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Onken, seconded by Scarbrough, to Adjourn at 5:50 p.m.
The motion passed by acclamation.