



2008 September Primary Debriefing prepared by the City Clerk for the Madison Election Advisory Committee

Overview

The City of Madison had a voter turnout of 6 percent on September 9, 2008. There were 9,870 votes cast. Election Officials registered 805 voters at the polls. Of the Election Day Registrations, 494 voted and 312 registered but did not vote. On campus we had 288 students register but not vote.

For comparison, the City of Madison had a voter turnout of 18 percent in September 2004, with 29,424 votes cast. Election Officials registered 2,558 voters at the polls in September 2004.

Training

We offered 6 training sessions for Election Officials in the 81st Assembly District the Thursday before the election. All polling places received a copy of the Power Point handout used for training.

Election Day Challenges

Custodial staff at Toki, Van Hise, Elver, and St. James did not admit the poll workers into the polling place right away at 6:15 a.m. Polling places receive a reminder letter from the Clerk's Office two weeks before each election, a reminder phone call before election equipment is delivered, and a face-to-face reminder when we deliver the election equipment the week before each election.

We were surprised to find an armed security officer in the parking lot at Dudgeon School. The Chief Inspector was able to convince the school that the gun was not necessary. We immediately contacted the Government Accountability Board and will be following up with Dudgeon School. This morning we received a complaint from a voter regarding the presence of the security guard's weapon at this polling location. The Government Accountability Board also received a voter complaint about this issue.

Five tabulators broke down and needed to be swapped out yesterday. Nine AutoMarks had problems that we were unable to resolve.

The lights inside the Elver Park shelter automatically turned off at 6:45 p.m. The Mayor's Office helped us get in touch with the Parks Superintendent, who sent a park ranger to Elver Park. Eight people voted in the dark. The park ranger arrived at 8:02, but was unable to turn on the lights. The Election Officials had to complete the Inspectors' Statement under the dome light of one of their vehicles.

Visit from U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)

Government Accountability Board Director and General Counsel Kevin Kennedy, EAC Executive Director Thomas Wilkey, EAC Research Director Karen Lynn-Dyson, and

EAC Deputy Research Director Shelley Anderson visited three of Madison's polling places yesterday. The group observed the Election Officials setting up the polling place at Blessed Sacrament, observed the opening of the polls at Hoyt, and observed the polls at Blackhawk Middle School before heading to Sun Prairie, Delavan, Brookfield, Elm Grove, and Milwaukee.

Visit from Government Accountability Board Staff _____

Staff from the Government Accountability Board conducted accessibility surveys at The Jefferson and at Madison Public Library. They also gathered data on absentees to evaluate the manner in which this data will be collected in November. The Government Accountability Board has received an Election Data Collection Grant from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. This will involve the collection of more data at the polls.

Preparations for November _____

The September Primary provided a good training opportunity for our new staff (Ronda, Adam, and Jean). Jean was able to streamline some of our election equipment delivery procedures. We will have our office election debriefing next week, after we have retrieved all of the election equipment from the polling places

All Chief Inspectors completed an accessibility survey at the polls on Election Day. The Chief Inspectors also determined how they would set up their polling places for November.

The Government Accountability Board has voter registration applications that should have been processed before the September poll books were printed. We have requested that Madison's registrations be sent directly to the City of Madison for processing. This will allow us to make sure all of our new registrations are processed before the November poll books are printed.