

FISCAL REVIEW SECTION – LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

Executive Summary: 2006 Proposed Budget – Election Commission

1. The 2004 Budget funded 4 elections. However, due to recall and special election involving a state official, the City participated in an additional special election. *(Page 3)*

Task Force Recommendations *(Pages 3 and 4)*
2. The 2005 Budget funded 2 elections. *(Page 4)*
3. Online Campaign Finance Reporting is implemented for municipal officials, candidates and Political Action Committees (PAC). *(Page 4)*
4. The federal government enacted the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to make reforms and improvements to voting system and voter access in all states. *(Page 4)*
5. The 2006 Proposed Budget provides funding for 4 elections: *(Page 5)*
 - *Spring Primary Election on February 21*
Spring General Election, April 5
 - *Fall Primary Election on September 21*
Fall General Election, November 7
6. The 2006 Proposed Budget funds a total of 110 positions, an increase of 40 positions, from 70 positions funded in the 2005 Budget. *(Pages 6, 7 and 8)*
 - Poll Workers *(Page 6)*
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7. In Operating Expenditures, the 2006 Proposed Budget provides \$1,056,000, an increase of \$537,466, 103.7% from the 2005 Budget of \$518,534. *(Page 8)*
8. In Equipment Purchases, the 2006 Proposed Budget provides \$18,000, an increase of \$10,487, 139.6%, from the 2005 Budget of \$7,513. *(Page 8)*
9. The 2006 Proposed Budget estimates the department will not generate any revenues, a decrease from the 2005 Budget of \$8,000. *(Pages 8 and 9)*

FISCAL REVIEW SECTION – LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

2006 Proposed Budget Summary: Election Commission

Category	2004 Actual	2005 Adopted	% Change	2006 Proposed	% Change
Operating	\$2,080,850	\$1,090,490	-47.6%	\$1,815,237	66.5%
Capital	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
FTE – O&M *	18.29	14.76	-19.3%	19.16	27.4%
FTE-Non-O&M **	0	0	0%	0	0%
Positions***	110**	70**	-36.4%	110	57.1%

* Total includes Commissioners, Inspectors, or Registrars.

** Election chief inspectors, regular inspectors and registrars are paid as vendors through the Other Operating Services Account, commencing in the 2002 Budget.

*** Authorized positions include full-time, part-time funded and unfunded positions, auxiliary positions and Election Commission Members.

The Election Commission registers City of Milwaukee voters and conducts elections. It is composed of three citizen members representing the 2 political parties receiving the most votes for governor in the City in the last general election. Staff assistance is provided by an Executive Director, 6 other full-time employees, and temporary employees utilized at election time.

Mission Statement: "To conduct elections that build the public trust in the democratic process."

PERTINENT HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. The 2001 Budget provided funding for 1 Customer Service Representative II position to assist with record maintenance and public information requests.
2. Redistricting action taken by the Common Council in 2001 resulted in a reduction in the number of election wards, from 335 to 314, and the number of polling locations is 202.
3. Commencing with the 2002 Budget, poll workers are paid through FMIS in the Other Operating Services account and not from staff salary.
4. In the 2002 Budget, the Election Commission was funded to conduct 4 citywide elections, which included judicial, state, and school board races. However, due to the retirement of the County Executive and recall of several County Supervisors, the city participated in 4 special elections that included 3 recall elections.
5. In the 2003 Budget, the Election Commission was funded to conduct 2 citywide elections. However, due to the recall and resignations of municipal, county and state officials, the City participated in 2 recall and 6 special elections.
6. In the 2003 Budget election inspectors received a 10% increase in salary, from \$76.50 per day to \$84.15, an increase of \$7.65 per day. The last increase for election inspectors was in 1998.

7. In the 2004 Budget, the citywide reduction of the number of aldermanic districts from 17 to 15 required a change in aldermanic district boundaries. As a result, the Election Commission revised the number and locations of polling locations according to the new boundaries.
8. In the 2004 Budget, 2 Office Assistant III, SG425 were reclassified to 2 Program Assistant I, SG 460 positions due to change in workload. One position is the Absentee Coordinator and directs the department's compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). The second position coordinates the poll worker activities, assignments, training and administrative duties.
9. In the 2005 Budget, the Election Commission was funded to conduct 2 citywide elections.

ELECTION ACTIVITIES

2004

In the 2004 Budget, the Election Commission was funded to participate in 4 elections. They included:

- Primary Election, February 17
- General Election, April 6
- Fall Primary, September 14
- Fall General Election, November 2

Due to the recall of a state official, the City participated in a special general election for the State Assembly, District 17 on January 27.

The following chart shows voter results in the 2004 elections.

2004 Election Activity

Election Dates	1/27/04	2/27/04	4/6/04	9/14/04	11/2/04
Pre-Registered Voters*	32,498	342,790	348,936	382,737	396,600
Ballots Cast	1,680	137,362	163,026	94,643	277,535
Voter Turnout	5.17%	40.07%	46.72%	24.73%	69.98%
Registered On Site	43	25,036	19,775	7,217	84,000
Absentee Ballots Cast	258	7,810	9,884	6,173	18,651

** The voter numbers are based on whether an election was city wide or by district.*

Task Force Recommendations

The 2004 Fall General Election process experienced major challenges before, during and after the November 2, 2004 election. The city had an high voter turnout, a record number of absentee voters, increased on-site voter registration, sometimes challenged by observers, and long lines at many polling locations causing voters to wait periods before voting. In order to alleviate these issues, the Mayor formed the Election Task Force to study the City's election system. On June 27, 2005, a study was issued with various recommendations related to voter registration, absentee ballots, polling locations and poll workers. The recommendations include:

Restructuring Staff – Staff will be restructured and cross trained in voter registration, absentee ballots, poll workers and polling locations.

Operating Procedures – Election procedures and policies are being updated. Partnerships will be developed with the private sector for recruitment in securing new Chief Inspectors and poll workers.

Training – Expand mandatory training for Chief Inspectors and Poll Workers and Registrars. Increase compensation for poll workers.

Recruitment – Develop a comprehensive plan to attract more eligible poll workers.

Recommendations requiring changes in state statutes include:

Prohibit the compensation of deputy registrars on the number of registration cards completed by registrars. Compensation is an incentive for error and fraud.

Establish an earlier "cut-off" date for voter pre-registration of 21 to 29 days prior to an election, in lieu of the current 13-day deadline. Deadline change increases the time to manage voter registration cards.

Allow electors to vote (in-person) absentee at a "satellite" location. Current law requires that absentee voting occur at the Office of the City Clerk, designated to the Election Commission office. A "satellite" location allows the staff to process more than one voter at a time.

Allow for the processing of absentee ballots at a "satellite" location rather than at the polls. Staff would count ballots, properly record each absentee ballot with voter, and record on the polling list prepared for election day.

Advance the statutory deadline for voter submittal of absentee ballot request applications to at least 7 days prior to the election, in lieu of the current deadline of 5 p.m. on the Friday prior to an election. Using the U.S. Postal service, applications can be processed more effectively, reducing time for confusion for the voter and staff.

2005

In the 2005 Budget, the Election Commission was funded to participate in 2 elections. They included:

Primary Election, February 15
General Election, April 5

The following charts show voter results in the 2005 elections

2005 Election Activity

Election Dates	2/15/05	4/5/05
Pre-Registered Voters*	442,209	436,405
Ballots Cast	12,712	30,908
Voter Turnout	2.88%	7.8%
Registered On Site	112	418
Absentee Ballots Cast	5,110	4,699

* The voter numbers are based on whether an election was city wide or by district.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

The public has access to campaign finance documents. Through CCFN 040264, funding was authorized for implementation of the Online Campaign Finance Reporting for municipal officials, candidates and Political Action Committees (PAC). Through the Election Commission's website, instructions and spreadsheets are given to report campaign finance contributions and loans, expenditures and obligations. The online system can be used for the July and January reporting cycles.

HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT

In 2002, the federal government enacted the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to make reforms and improvements to voting system and voter access in all states. HAVA mandated that all voter registration records be stored within a single registration system through the collection of specific information, including requirements for a single, centralized, voter registration database within a

state. In the State of Wisconsin, only municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 are required to register voters, representing approximately 75% of the state's voting age residents.

The Wisconsin State Election Board has partnered with local election officials to implement a Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). Many of the election reforms mandated by HAVA are already standing practice with local officials. The state election administration is responsible for greater uniformity and consistency throughout all municipalities. The State Plan Committee members are from various municipalities, counties and agencies from around the state, including Milwaukee. In response to HAVA and in order to receive federal funding, SVRS must design and implement a computerized statewide voter registration that is a single database for all registered voters; purchase voting equipment that meets the standards established by HAVA; and, train local election officials and chief inspectors.

In CCFN 031685, the Election Commission, representing the City, and the Wisconsin State Election Board agreed to a memorandum of understanding for a joint voter registration system to improve voter access in compliance with SVRS and HAVA. Deadline for implementing HAVA is December 31, 2005.

2006 MAJOR ISSUES AND PROPOSED CHANGES

2006 Elections

In the 2006 Proposed Budget, the Election Commission is scheduled to conduct 4 elections:

Spring Primary, February 21 – *(Projected turnout based on 2005, 10-11,000 voters)*

Spring General Election, April 5 – *(Projected turnout based on 2005, 28-29,000 voters)*

County – *Circuit Court Judges*

Fall Primary, September 21 – *(Projected turnout based on 2002, 85,000 voters)*

Fall General Election, November 7 – *(Projected turnout based on 2005, 150,000 voters)*

Federal – *U.S. Senator*

State – *Governor, Attorney, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, State Assembly*

County – *Clerk of Circuit Court, County Clerk, District Attorney, Register of Deeds,
Sheriff, Treasurer*

Personnel

The 2006 Proposed Budget funds 4 elections for a total of 110 positions, an increase of 40 positions, 57.1% from the 70 positions funded in the 2005 Budget. FTE's funded by O&M is 19.16, an increase of 4.40 FTE's, 29.8% from the 14.76 allocated in the 2005 Budget. *FTE's include positions for commissioners, election inspectors, and registrars.*

The 2006 Proposed Budget makes the following changes:

- 94 **Temporary Office Assistant II (.11 FTE), SG 410** positions at \$248,256, an increase of 34 positions from the 60 positions funded in the 2005 Budget at \$143,760.
- 6 **Temporary Election Laborer (.11 FTE), SG 205** positions at \$15,846. These positions were reclassified from Temporary Office Assistant II to provide more adequate response in the election process.
- 1 **Program Assistant I, SG460** (for a total of 3) was reclassified from Customer Service Rep. II, SG435, to process all voter registration and campaign finance reports.
- 1 Voting Machine Technician, SG240 was reclassified to **Election Services Coordinator, SG540** to provide more adequate response in the election process.
- 1 **Election Services Manager, SG006** will change to SG008 due to increased duties in assisting with developing and implementing a poll worker recruitment program, developing standard operating procedures, revising the training program and developing a formal training program for all temporary employees.

There are no vacancies in the department.

Poll Workers

Poll workers assist voters on election day at the polling locations in the wards. In the budget, poll workers have been listed in the Registration Division. The type and number of poll workers for elections is usually:

- *Chief Election Inspectors for every primary and general election* 219
- *Registrars for on-site voter registration at general elections* 314
- *Regular Election Inspectors for every primary and general election* 1240

Recruitment

1. The recruitment of poll workers is on-going. The department works with retiree organizations, churches, community-based organizations and the Democratic and Republican parties. The department also used community ads, Aldermanic newsletters, high schools and the MTEA's newsletter. The department is exploring ways to create partnerships with Milwaukee's corporate and educational communities for additional poll workers.
2. Qualifications to be a poll worker include being an eligible voter, a city resident, ability to read and speak the English language, attendance of a two-hour training session.
3. If a significant number of new poll workers are recruited, the department will implement split shifts that would require training for up to an additional 750 workers.

Training

1. Poll workers are trained prior to every election. Training information from 2001 through 2005 includes:

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1,328	2,454	1,224	1,304	979	1238 scheduled to be trained

Wages

1. In the 2003 Budget, election inspectors received a 10% increase in salary, from \$76.50 per day to \$84.15, an increase of \$7.65 per day. The last increase for election inspectors was in 1998. On Election Day, they generally begin at 6:30 a.m. and work until 9 p.m., with polls closing at 8 p.m. For a major election, sometime they leave by 12 p.m., until all election material has been secured. The poll workers take a 1 hour for lunch and dinner.
2. An adequate number of workers are assigned to each polling location to allow rotation of workers for breaks, lunch and dinner, managed by the Chief Inspectors. Each polling location is staffed with 5 personnel of which one is appointed "Chief Inspector". If a location covers more than one ward, additional personnel are assigned i.e., 2 wards required 7 poll workers, 3 wards require 9 poll workers, of which 2 are appointed Chief inspectors.

Polling Locations

1. There are 202 polling locations used for 314 wards in city-wide elections. Some locations have multiple wards (two or three). There are 94 multiple ward locations. All locations include:

Location	Number
Firehouse	9
City/County Parks	17
Recreation Building	12
Public Housing	14
Public Library	9
Public School	103
Public Buildings	7
Private	31

2. An Accessibility Survey was administered to all Milwaukee polling locations by the Election Commission and the State Election Board, for accessibility compliance. Of Milwaukee's 202 sites, 27%, 54 sites, are currently fully compliant with HAVA accessibility requirements for sites, accessibility, layout, space, equipment and materials and flow and circulation. The other 73%, 148 sites, have some form of non-compliance varying from site to site. Some sites require minimal modifications, with others requiring considerable modifications, which would likely result in the selection of a new site.

Equipment

The State Elections Board will release an acquisition plan by the end of 2005, to provide municipalities with a list of vendors with fully accessible election voting machines that meet 2002 State and Federal voting equipment standards. In 2006, the department will purchase fully accessible voting machines based on the State Election Board guidelines. The estimated average cost is \$4,800 per machine. Total cost for 202 polling locations is \$969,600. The State Election Board will use designated HAVA funds to purchase the equipment. The equipment will allow any person, regardless of disability, to vote independently and privately at any City of Milwaukee polling location, and is fully compatible with existing City voting equipment.

LINE ITEMS

1. In Operating Expenditures, the 2006 Proposed Budget provides \$1,056,000, an increase of \$573,466, 103.7%, from the 2005 Budget of \$518,534. This includes:

Other Operating Services, \$950,000 will increase by \$497,245, 109.8% from the 2005 Budget of \$452,755. This account increases because of the additional number of elections, and covers the cost for fees and commissions, transportation, communication, postage, printing, binding, advertising, reproduction, office training, and salaries for poll workers (*election chief inspectors, regular inspectors and registrars*).

Facility Rental, \$24,000 for rental of polling locations. This is an increase of \$11,300, 88.9%, from the 2005 Budget of \$12,700, due to the increased number of elections and the rental fees associated with private locations used as polling places.

General Office Expense, \$46,000, for general office supplies used for election related activities. This is an increase of \$21,431, 87.2% from the 2005 Budget of \$24,569 due to the increased number of elections.

2. In Equipment Purchases, \$8,000, the 2006 Proposed Budget provides \$8,000, an increase of \$487, 6.5% from the 2005 Budget of \$7,513. The funding will be used for easels, bulletin boards, chairs, tables, utility trays and file cabinets.

Computer Replacement, \$10,000, to purchase of computers that can handle the new State Voter Registration System. The 2005 Budget did not fund this account.

DEPARTMENTAL REVENUES

The estimated revenue is primarily from the sale of polling lists and ward books. The 2006 Proposed Budget does not provide a revenue estimate, which is a decrease of from the 2005 Budget of \$8,000. According to the Comptroller's Office:

Category	2004 Actual	2005 Estimate	% Change	2006 Proposed	% Change
Charges for Services	\$0	\$8,000	-	\$0	-100.0%

1. The fee for obtaining a citywide report of registered voters, \$1,675 established in 1999, has been challenged in court with respect to the city's cost in producing the record. In 1998, the fee was \$837.50. According to a September 26, 2000 article from the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, the cost to provide this record is estimated at \$360. File #001696, adopted by the Common Council on April 10, 2001, authorizes the department and City Comptroller to study the costs of retrieving, reproducing and providing lists of voters. Until the study is complete, the department may not charge more than \$365.00 for the voter poll lists for city-wide elections. Additional costs include \$3 per disc plus tax. Any change in the fee would require Common Council action.

2. Revenues from polling list orders from 2002 through 2004 reflects:

	Polling Lists Number	Revenue
2002	168	\$13,267.00
2003	175	\$13,545.61
2004	175	\$11,529.73
2005 (YTD)	34	\$ 2,937.71

3. Other revenue sources are from the sale of ward books and programming elections for outside vendors. The department indicates the cost is \$21 for each ward book. Revenues from ward books for 2002 through 2004 reflects:

	Ward Books	Revenue
2002	22	\$ 440.00
2003	8	\$ 109.46
2004	49	\$1,59.23
2005 (YTD)	-	-

4. In 2005, miscellaneous orders have included 49 requests for \$62.85 in revenue.
5. The department anticipates revenue for 2006, but the amount is not indicated. There are no new revenue sources in the 2006 Proposed Budget.

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