

FISCAL REVIEW SECTION – LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

Executive Summary: 2005 Proposed Budget – Election Commission

1. The 2004 Budget funded 4 elections. However, due to recall and special election involving a state official, the City has participated in an additional special election. *(Page 2)*

Primary Election, February 17

General Election, April 6

Fall Primary, September 14

Fall General Election, November 2

2. In 2004, Online Campaign Finance Reporting is implemented for municipal officials, candidates and Political Action Committees (PAC). *(Page 3)*
3. 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 3)*
4. The 2005 Proposed Budget provides funding for 2 elections: *(Page 3)*
 - *Spring Primary Election on February 5*
 - *Spring General Election, April 5*
5. The 2005 Proposed Budget funds a total of 70 positions, a decrease of 40 positions, from 110 positions funded in the 2004 Budget. Poll workers are continually recruited. *(Pages 4 and 5)*
4. In Operating Expenditures, the 2005 Proposed Budget provides \$518,534, a decrease of \$465,579, -47.3% from the 2004 Budget of \$984,113. *(Page 6)*
5. In Equipment Purchases, the 2005 Proposed Budget provides \$7,513, the same amount funded in the 2004 Budget. *(Page 6)*
6. The 2005 Proposed Budget estimates the department will generate \$8,000 in revenue, a decrease of \$5,000, -38.5% from the 2004 Budget of \$13,500. *(Pages 6 and 7)*

FISCAL REVIEW SECTION – LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

2005 Proposed Budget Summary: Election Commission

| Category | 2003 Actual | 2004 Adopted | % Change | 2005 Proposed | % Change |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| Operating | \$1,316,923 | \$1,639,802 | 24.5% | \$1,090,490 | -33.5% |
| Capital | \$0 | \$0 | 0.0% | \$0 | 0.0% |
| DLH (O&M) * | 26,964 | 32,922 | 22.1% | 26,568 | -19.3% |
| DLH (Other) | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Positions*** | 72** | 110** | 52.8% | 70 | 36.4% |

* DLH totals do not include 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, including 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 from 202 to 199.
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 2004, 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.

2004 ELECTION ACTIVITIES

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 and resignation 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 To Date

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

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

On November 2, the General Election is for the following offices:

Federal

President
U.S. Senator
U.S. Representative

State

State Senators
State Assembly

County

District Attorney
County Clerk
Treasurer
Clerk of Circuit Court
Register of Deeds

The projected voter turnout is 48%.

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 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.

2005 MAJOR ISSUES AND PROPOSED CHANGES

2005 Elections

In the 2005 Proposed Budget, the Election Commission is scheduled to conduct 2 elections:

Spring Primary, February 5 – *(Projected voter turnout based on 2001, 5.89%)*

Spring General Election, April 5 – *(Projected voter turnout based on 2001, 11.66%)*

State – Supreme Court Associate Justice

*City – School Board Districts 4, 5, 6, 7
Municipal Judge Branch 1*

*Circuit Court Districts 1, 10, 18, 19,
21, 25, 27, 33, 34, 36*

PERSONNEL

The 2005 Proposed Budget funds 2 elections for a total of 70 positions, a decrease of 40 positions, -36.4% from the 110 positions funded in the 2004 Budget. Total direct labor hours (DLH) for 2005 is 26,568 hours, a decrease of 6,354 hours, -19.3% from 32,922 hours in the 2004 Budget. *DLH does not include hours for commissioners, election inspectors, and registrars.*

The 2005 Proposed Budget makes the following changes:

- 60 Temporary Office Assistant II (.11 FTE), SG 410 positions at \$143,760, down from the 100 positions funded in the 2004 Budget at \$239,600.

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

During the 2000 Fall General Election with on-site voter registration, some polling locations experienced long lines and extended waiting periods to vote. In order to alleviate the problems, the department has instituted the following policies and procedures:

- *Evaluate and enhance the training of election inspectors*
- *Increase the number of poll workers on those election days with anticipated greater voter participation*
- *Formulate a plan to recruit additional volunteers from the business community for election day*
- *Separate poll list books for multiple ward polling locations*

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 one-hour training session and qualified to vote.

Training

1. Poll workers are trained prior to every election. Training information from 2001 through 2004 includes:

| 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 1,328 | 2,454 | 1,224 | 1,304 (YTD) | 1,678 scheduled to be trained |

2. Through a State mandate for the 2004 elections, all 219 Chief Inspectors are required to receive training in compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). The City's cost will be \$12,000 to pay the Chief Inspectors to attend a three hour training session. Substitute Chiefs will be certified through this training and there are additional fees for their attendance. As of September 14, 2004, 208 Chief Inspectors were certified and trained as mandated.

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 begin at 6:30 a.m. (1/2 hour before the polls open) through 8:30 p.m. (1/2 after the poll closes), until election material has been secured. The poll workers take a 1/2 hour for lunch and dinner (not paid). At 13 hours a day, the hourly salary increases to \$6.47 per hour, from \$5.88 per hour, an increase of \$0.59 per hour.
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.

Polling Locations

There are 203 polling locations used for city-wide elections. They include:

| Location | Number |
|-----------------|--------|
| Field house | 8 |
| Firehouse | 9 |
| Parks | 18 |
| Public Building | 8 |
| Public Housing | 14 |
| Public Library | 9 |
| Public School | 108 |
| Private | 29 |

Complaints

Voter complaints from the past 2004 elections include the following:

| Type | Number |
|------------------|------------|
| Equipment | 83 |
| Polling location | 49 |
| Poll worker | 40 |
| Voter | 15 |
| Candidate | 15 |
| Other | 41 |
| Total | 243 |

LINE ITEMS

1. In Operating Expenditures, the 2005 Proposed Budget provides \$518,534, a decrease of \$465,579, -47.3% from the 2004 Budget of \$984,113. This includes:

Other Operating Services, \$452,755 will decrease by \$435,833, -49.0% from the 2004 Budget of \$888,588. This account decreases because of the fewer 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, \$12,700, for rental of polling locations. This is a decrease of \$11,900, -48.4% from the 2004 Budget of \$24,600, due to the fewer number of elections and the rental fees associated with private locations used as polling places.

General Office Expense, \$24,569, for general office supplies used for election related activities. This is a decrease of \$11,534, -31.9% from the 2004 Budget of \$36,103, due to the fewer number of elections.

Vehicle Rental, \$14,220, for vehicles used to verify polling location set-up and delivering of absentee ballots on election day, which increases with the number of elections throughout the City. This is a decrease of \$3,312, -18.9% from the 2004 Budget of \$17,532.

2. In Equipment Purchases, the 2005 Proposed Budget provides \$7,513, the same amount in the 2004 Budget. The funding will be used for easels, bulletin boards, chairs, tables, utility trays and file cabinets.

DEPARTMENTAL REVENUES

The estimated revenue is primarily from the sale of polling lists and ward books. The 2005 Proposed Budget estimates the department will generate \$8,000, a decrease of \$5,000, -38.5% from the 2004 Budget of \$13,500. According to the Comptroller's Office:

| Category | 2003 Actual | 2004 Estimate | % Change | 2005 Proposed | % Change |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| Charges for Services | \$59,093 | \$13,000 | -78.0% | \$8,000 | -38.5% |

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.

Revenues from voter registration lists for 2003 through 2004 include:

**Voter Registration
Lists**

| | Lists | Revenue |
|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 2003 | 160 | \$12,579.28 |
| 2004 (YTD) | 80 | \$ 4,810.53 |

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 (YTD) | 113 | \$ 4,528.94 |

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 (YTD) | 4 | \$102.77 |

4. In 2004, miscellaneous orders have included 106 requests for \$1,484 in revenue.
5. There are no new revenue sources for this department in the 2005 Proposed Budget.

Prepared by: Angelyn Ward (286-8661)
LRB-Fiscal Review Section
September 27, 2004