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DATE: August 30, 2017

TO: Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
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Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: Richard Rydecki Jennifer Webb
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SUBJECT: Electronic Poll Book FAQs and Survey Reminder

The Wisconsin Elections Commission staff recently sent out a survey seeking your feedback and comments regarding Electronic Poll Book development and use. This survey focuses on general E-Poll Book interest, implementation timelines, hardware and device preferences, and connectivity. [Please click here to complete the survey.](#) Below are some frequently asked questions that you may find helpful when considering electronic poll books.

Q: What is an electronic poll book?

A: The electronic poll book system is an electronic version of the paper poll books that are used today. An electronic poll book is commonly referred to as an e-poll book. The e-poll book allows voters to check in or register to vote at the polling place on Election Day using a laptop or tablet instead of a paper poll book or voter registration form.

Q: How could e-poll books help my municipality?

A: After Election Day, the e-poll book data would be imported directly into WisVote, eliminating the need for clerks to manually record election participation and enter Election Day Registrations. E-poll books can also be used to assist election inspectors in handling complicated Election Day processes by providing step-by-step instructions. In short, e-poll books can make both the voter experience and election officials' work more efficient.

Q: Are municipalities required to use an e-poll book?

A: Municipalities are not required to use e-poll books in their polling places. E-poll books are an option that municipalities may use to increase the efficiency of voter check-in and post-election WisVote data entry processes.

Q: Who is developing the software to run an e-poll book?

A: At the June 20, 2017 meeting of the Wisconsin Elections Commission, Commissioners approved staff's recommendation to build an electronic poll book system in-house and offer the

software to Wisconsin clerks at no cost. In response to that decision, the Wisconsin Elections Commission staff is currently developing an e-poll book system.

Q: Who is responsible for the cost of the hardware device (laptop, tablet) for the e-poll book?

A: While the software will be available to clerks at no cost, local jurisdictions would need to purchase the hardware needed to run the system, such as a laptop or tablet, and any peripheral devices such as signature pads, scanners or printers needed to support the system.

Q: How much does a hardware device cost?

A: The specific hardware configuration and costs are not known at this time, but staff anticipates costs between \$500 and \$1,000 per poll book station, depending on the specific hardware needed. Each municipality would need to determine the number of stations needed at individual polling place. Using an e-poll book would eliminate the need to divide the poll list and voter lines by alphabet. E-poll books could be used at the registration table and the table where ballots are issued.

Q: Does an e-poll book require an internet connection?

A: Internet connectivity is an optional feature of e-poll books that may enhance its capabilities, but is not required for its use.

Q: How secure is an e-poll book?

A: Security of the e-poll book is an essential element of the system. WEC staff is incorporating features to ensure that data on any e-poll book remains secure and any potential risk to the system is minimized.

Q: When will the e-poll book be ready for an election?

A: At this time the Commission intends to pilot the new e-poll book system in three to six jurisdictions in the 2018 Spring Election. The e-poll book will be available to all clerks in time for the 2018 August Partisan Primary.

Q: Do my election inspectors need to know how to use a computer?

A: Not necessarily. Ease of use has been identified by interested clerks and WEC staff as a critical design element and the system will be tested at several points during development to ensure usability. Our research of other states' experience with e-poll books has found that some small group training classes allow most poll workers to quickly become comfortable with the new technology and would never want to go back to the prior paper-based system.

Q: Who do I contact if I am interested in participating in the e-poll book development process?

A: Staff would like to work with a diverse group of clerks and election workers in order to develop the best possible system. If you are interested in using the e-poll book system and would like to provide feedback to Commission Staff during the design phase, please contact the Elections Help Desk at ePollbook@wi.gov or (608) 261-2028.