

Debra Hadley,

Complainant,

v.

Complaint EL 24-96

Kim Trueblood,

Respondent.

RESPONSE OF MARATHON COUNTY CLERK KIM TRUEBLOOD

I. Background Information

I am the Marathon County Clerk, an elected official charged with certain local election duties, including choosing the canvassing board members from lists submitted by political party county committees. Wis. Stat. § 7.60(2). In my role as Marathon County Clerk, I received in November of 2023, a letter signed by Kevin Hermening naming, on behalf of the Republican Party of Marathon County (“RPMC”), the candidates for appointment to the Marathon County Board of Canvassers. Subsequently, on December 29, 2023, I received a letter from Mr. Hermening containing an updated list of RPMC’s candidates for appointment. The updated letter provided by Mr. Hermening substituted Joanne Leonard with Debra Bouche as the first name on RPMC’s candidate list. I then selected the first name on RPMC’s updated list for appointment to the Marathon County Board of Canvassers.

II. Challenge to Appointment

Debra Hadley now challenges my appointment of Debra Bouche to the Marathon County Board of Canvassers based on apparent belief that I disregarded the RPMC’s candidates and instead contacted the Municipal Clerk’s office asking for a new name for the canvassing position. Ms. Hadley also alleges that I called the party chairman, Kevin Hermening, told him what candidate I wanted, and that he may or may not have agreed – which seems to contradict Ms. Hadley’s allegation that I contacted and received a name for nomination from the Municipal Clerk’s office. As part of her challenge to my appointment of Debra Bouche to the Marathon County Board of Canvassers, Ms. Hadley claims that when she contacted Chairman Hermening “he could not remember sending anything...[and] does not have an explanation of how he thought this could have happened.” Based on the allegations contained in the Complaint, it appears that Ms. Hadley is unaware that on December 29, 2023, Kevin Hermening submitted an updated list of candidates on behalf of the RPMC. This update replaced Joanne Leonard with Debra Bouche as the first name on the party’s list of candidates.

III. Response to Challenge

I received a list of candidates for the board of canvassers from the RPMC in November, which was subsequently updated on December 29, 2023. I nominated a candidate from this updated list. While Ms. Hadley may disagree with the party's revised candidate list, this is an internal party matter that falls outside my responsibilities as an elected official. Wisconsin Statute § 7.50(2) only requires the clerk to select candidates for the county board of canvassers from the list provided by the political party, which I have done.

My role as the County Clerk does not include investigating or mediating internal disputes regarding the party's candidate selection process. Ms. Hadley's complaint does not identify any statutory irregularities pertaining to my duties as the County Clerk; instead, it focuses solely on the party's internal appointments, which are beyond the scope of my official responsibilities. Any concerns regarding the party's candidate selection process should be addressed internally within the party.

IV. Documents Provided

- 1. December 29, 2023, letter with the updated list of Republican Party candidates for the county board of canvassers.

V. Signature Verification and Assistance of Counsel

I, Marathon County Clerk Kim Trueblood, being first duly sworn on oath, state that I have personally read the above complaint, and that the above allegations are true based on my personal knowledge and, as to those stated on information and belief, I believe them to be true. I also certify that I have prepared this response with the assistance of counsel, Marathon County Deputy Corporation Counsel Dejan Adzic.

Kim Trueblood
Signature

Oct. 8, 2024
Date

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
) ss.
County of Marathon),

Sworn to before me this 8th day of October, 2024.

Kimberly A. Vande Voort
Notary Public, Kimberly A. Vande Voort
My commission expires 08-14-2026





Po Box 834 Wausau Wi 54401

December 29, 2023

Kim Trueblood, County Clerk
Marathon County Courthouse
500 Forest Street
Wausau, WI 54403

Dear County Clerk Trueblood,

In accordance with the Wisconsin State Statutes, this correspondence provides the names of the Republican Party of Marathon County candidates for appointment to the Marathon County Board of Canvassers.

It is our understanding that you will appoint one of the candidates from our list and the appointment will be a term of two years beginning on January 1, 2024-December 31, 2025

Debra Bouche debra.bouche@gmail.com

Laura Goergen grrun@yahoo.com 715-680-8190

Josephine Olhoff josie.olhoff@gmail.com 715-581-5233

Thank you for your consideration,



Kevin Hermening
Chairman
Republican Party of Marathon County
715-571-0950
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RPMC@marathonwisgop.com