

WEC NEWSLETTER

VOLUME III, ISSUE XVIII
OCTOBER 30, 2023

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Welcome, Commissioner Riepl

Earlier this month, Gov. Tony Evers announced the appointment of Carrie Riepl to the Wisconsin Elections Commission. Riepl, the former City of Eau Claire clerk, replaces former Commissioner Joseph Czarnecki. Riepl's appointment was effective immediately for a term ending in May 2026.

Riepl has worked for the city of Eau Claire since 2011, serving as a human resources specialist and human resources manager and as the city clerk from 2017 to 2022. She completed the clerk's institute at UW-Green Bay and has a bachelor's degree in legal studies with a paralegal certificate from Hamline University.

Riepl said her goals as a WEC commissioner are "to ensure that all eligible voters who wish to vote are able to do so with confidence that their vote will be counted, and to provide guidance to Clerks which allows them to conduct elections according to the law in an impartial and transparent manner."

Polling place changes in WisVote

To preserve election history and accessibility records, WEC will now create

and edit all polling places in WisVote for municipalities.

Managing polling places can be vexing – it is not as easy as it seems. It's easy to make mistakes in the process, making the data inconsistent. To prevent errors, we're changing the way polling place records are created, edited, and deactivated.

If a polling place needs to be added to WisVote, complete the EL-501 New Polling Place Accessibility Self-Assessment form and send it to elections@wi.gov. We'll take it from there and let you know when it's ready to add to your election plans. Just send the Help Desk an email if you need to make changes to an existing polling place record.

You can still edit the primary contact and phone information on a polling place record. This should be someone other than a clerk that oversees the actual building space who can be reached in an emergency.

*NOTE: Polling place records will only be deactivated if the physical building no longer exists (is torn down). To maintain location history, they will stay active in case the building is used as a polling place again. If that location is not included in the reporting unit set-up in the Election Plans tile, it will not appear to voters as a polling location.

Badger Book MOU

Memoranda of Understanding

Signed agreements for legacy users are due December 1

The Badger Book program is an innovative electronic poll book program that aims to increase efficiency when checking in voters, decrease costs, and improve data accuracy. Memoranda of Understanding were created to codify the relationship and expectations between the WEC and Badger Book users. The MOU outlines (among other things):

- The terms and conditions of the program, including the roles and responsibilities of both parties
- The resources and support that will be provided to participating municipalities

The clerk of each Badger Book municipality has or will receive a Request to Complete MOU from The Learning Center (TLC) (<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/>). Legacy Badger Book jurisdictions have already received the agreement and it is due back to the WEC by December 1, 2023. New Badger Book users will be assigned the MOU to complete after they attend Introduction to Badger Books training in mid-November.

We ask that ALL new and continuing Badger Book Municipalities review the MOU carefully and sign it to indicate their commitment to the program.

Thank you to all Badger Book municipalities who continue to make this still-growing program the best it can be!

Training Reports Due Soon

Submit your training hours by December 31

Municipal clerks are required by state law to take and report to the Wisconsin Elections Commission at least six hours of election training each two-year training term. For training purposes, municipal clerks are currently in the 2022-2023 term and must complete this term's election training by December 31, 2023. Election training taken between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023 will recertify a municipal clerk for the 2024-2025 term. For new municipal clerks, three of the six hours must be the Municipal Clerk Core class, taken either in The Learning Center or an in-person class with a certified clerk-trainer.

If you have training to report to us, please use the Clerk Reporting Form (<https://elections.wi.gov/wec-form/mct-certification-hours-reporting>) on our website or enter the training directly into WisVote if you use the system. You can find directions on how to enter your training directly into WisVote by visiting The Learning Center (TLC) (<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/course/view.php?id=56>). The training will be displayed as "approval pending" until we review the training submission and mark it approved or denied. It will still appear in the posted training report. Training taken in The Learning Center (TLC) does not post to your WisVote training record. Our goal is for a future platform of TLC to do so.

The Time is Now

2023 – 2025 Elections Calendar

WEC staff are excited to announce that the final version of the clerk-reviewed 2023–2024 Calendar of Election Events is now ready for use. Thank you to all the clerks and local election officials who helped in the review of the calendar. Your comments and suggestions have been incorporated.

The updated calendar includes dates and deadlines from November 2023 through January 2025, and is a valuable tool for election officials and the public to use throughout the election cycle. The calendar is currently available in multiple formats including PDF, Word, and Excel, along with an Excel file that can be imported into Microsoft Outlook.

You can find the 2023 and 2024 Calendar of Election Events available online. (<https://elections.wi.gov/memo/2024-2025-calendar-election-events-finalized>)

As a reminder, the calendar of election events no longer includes campaign finance filing deadlines. For campaign finance deadlines visit the Wisconsin Ethics Commission website: ethics.wi.gov.

For questions or further guidance please call the Elections Help Desk at (608) 261-2028 or email the Elections Help Desk at elections@wi.gov.

Make Sure Voters Can Find You!

Check your staff info on MyVote

Maintaining your contact information and staff list in WisVote is crucial for ensuring that voters can contact your office and that only active election officials have access to this sensitive database. You can easily verify that your municipality's clerk contact information is correct by using MyVote. Click on the "Find My Clerk (<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/My-Municipal-Clerk>)" link in the footer and enter a local address.

Also, as a matter of routine, please keep the WEC Helpdesk aware of any incoming staff members who need WisVote access, or outgoing staff

members whose access should be removed, and the dates to change their access.

Please contact the WEC Helpdesk if you have any questions about your staff's credentials for WisVote.

“Haunted” inn No Longer as Spooky for City Clerk

Mineral Point’s Christy Skelding Returns Home to Serve Community

While growing up in Mineral Point, city clerk and treasurer Christy Skelding was quite aware of the community lore surrounding the Walker House. Back in her youth, one of the oldest inns in Wisconsin sat empty, and every kid in town had heard the rumors.

“My cousin tried to go back there with a Ouija board once, but got too scared and left,” said Skelding. “Everybody knew that it was a haunted place. It wasn’t open for a very long time, and it was just kind of this old building that just sat there and looked creepy.”

These days, the beautiful 42-room, 16,000-square foot inn and restaurant, carved from local stone by craftsmen in 1836, is thriving again. Yet talk of it being one of the most haunted places in Wisconsin has persisted ever since townspeople packed around a nearby gallows in 1842.

An accused murderer and scallywag named William Caffee was hanged. Rumored paranormal occurrences at Walker House have been connected to his supposed ghost ever since.

It’s part of a rich history that makes the artsy and charming former mining town a popular tourist destination -- some visitors even occasionally wander into Skelding’s City Hall office seeking information.

She had not planned to be back in her hometown, forging a career as a municipal clerk.

When she left Mineral Point after high school her plan was to be an elementary school teacher. She switched degree paths at Madison’s

Edgewood College, and went to work for University Hospital with a communications studies degree, helping schedule patients for surgery.

She kept the job, commuting to Madison, after she and husband Justin decided to move back to Mineral Point so daughter Harper could grow up closer to family and friends.

“He kind of put the bug in my ear that that job was coming open, and it would be really nice to work in town, and (he said) I think you would be really good at it,”

At the time, Skelding’s father, Mike Fenley, was Mineral Point’s building inspector. He caught wind of a position opening at City Hall: deputy clerk.

“He kind of put the bug in my ear that that job was coming open, and it would be really nice to work in town, and (he said) I think you would be really good at it,” said Skelding. She applied, “And here we are.”

Skelding loved the work and enjoyed giving back to her community, but the deputy clerk position lasted only a year-and-a-half. COVID changed everything, including the closing of Harper’s daycare.

That’s when Skelding decided to open her own. “I had to step away from the deputy clerk role, and to make ends meet, I figured I wanted to be a teacher at some point, why not start daycare,” said Skelding. She figured: “I can help other people who are in the same situation, who’ve lost their daycare.”

It was going well, yet she still kept tabs on City Hall happenings. In the fall of 2021, she learned the clerk had left, and the deputy clerk departed a few months later.

Skelding had developed a strong working relationship with interim city administrator Bob Buckingham, and she knew both he and her community were in a bind.

“And I reached out to see how I could help, at night, after hours, stuff like that,” she said. Buckingham asked Skelding if there was any way she would consider coming back to be the city clerk.

By this time, Harper was in school. Skelding’s parents were retired. Daycare needs were diminished. Still, she loved the kids and families she was serving, and knew they would have to scramble if she shut down. It

was a tough decision, and in the end, she let the daycare families know that she felt a calling to the clerk's role. "They were the best people, and all understood and wished me well," she said.

Skelding felt a calling and stepped into the clerk's role. She teamed up with her mentor, Buckingham, who had decades of experience working in municipal government. "We just made a really good team, trying to keep the city afloat, with limited resources at the time," said Skelding.

As the new clerk, she drew upon customer service experiences assisting daycare parents and scheduling surgeries for hospital patients, "explaining how things are going to go and trying to keep them calm in situations they're a little bit nervous about."

Deep family community roots brought her immediate public trust. "I think it makes a difference when people come in and know who you are," said Skelding. "It's a small town (population 2,500) so pretty much everybody knows everybody, and if they don't know you exactly, they know your parents, or they know somebody in your family."

Nearly two years into the job, Skelding is now working with a new administrator and a new deputy clerk: "We're all very new and I think that is the biggest challenge – just not having the knowledge here that we had in the past."

She taps into area clerks and Mineral Point's former clerk for guidance, as well as using WEC resources for election assistance.

As for family/work balance, City Hall is just a short distance from the Skelding home, meaning she can stay close to Justin, 8-year-old Harper, and Ella, the 1-year-old family dog. "So if I'm at a meeting to 7 or 7:30 at night, I'm home five minutes later," said Skelding.

The Walker House is nearby, too, yet to this day Skelding has yet to go there, and not so much because she finds it overly spooky these days. She said she wants to visit, but just has a lot on her plate, particularly

"My cousin tried to go back there with a Ouija board once, but got too scared and left," said Skelding. "Everybody knew that it was a haunted place. It wasn't open for a very long time, and it was just kind of this old building that just sat there and looked creepy."

with the 2024 election cycle just around the corner.

“We know it’s going to be busy, and contentious,” Skelding said, “so we’re trying to do all the trainings and refreshers.” Skelding said the goal for her office is to “stay on top of our game and make sure we’re running our election the way it needs to be run and as smoothly as it can be run and keep people happy in a busy year.”

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

Upcoming Events

- November 1, 2023 – **Webinar:** What to Expect in a Polling Place Review .
- November 15, 2023 – WEC sends Type A Notice for 2024 spring elections to clerks.
- November 28, 2023 – Clerks publish Type A notice of 2024 spring elections.
- November 30, 2023 – Deadline for political parties to submit election worker lists to municipalities.
- **December 1, 2023**
 - First day to circulate nomination papers for the 2024 Spring Election.
 - First day to set the date for caucus.
 - Deadline for electors of a village to petition for a primary.
 - Municipal clerks certify the number of electors to county clerks.

Upcoming Commission Meetings

- November 2, 2023 – Quarterly Meeting
- December – Special Meeting (TBD)

Upcoming Elections

- February 20, 2024 – Spring Primary (if necessary)
- April 2, 2024 – Spring Election & Presidential Preference Primary
- August 13, 2024 – Primary Election
- November 5, 2024 – General Election

Recent Clerk Communications

- October 26, 2023 – 2024-2025 Calendar of Election Events Finalized
- October 9, 2023 – 2024-2025 Calendar of Election Events
- October 3, 2023 – Appointment of Election Inspectors from Lists Submitted by Political Parties
- September 29, 2023 – UPDATE Absentee Envelope Designs Approved by the Commission
- September 29, 2023 – Revised Subgrant Documentation
- September 28, 2023 – EL-362 WisVote Clerk Contact Information Update Form
- September 25, 2023 – 2023 ERIC Movers Review Process – Quarter3

Questions or comments? Call 608-261-2028 or email elections@wi.gov
(<mailto:elections@wi.gov>)

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