



Wisconsin Elections Commission

212 East Washington Avenue | Third Floor | P.O. Box 7984 | Madison, WI 53707-7984
(608) 266-8005 | elections@wi.gov | elections.wi.gov

DATE: October 27, 2020

TO: Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
Wisconsin County Clerks
City of Milwaukee Elections Commission
Milwaukee County Elections Commission

FROM: **Meagan Wolfe, Administrator**
Cody Davies, Elections Administration Specialist

SUBJECT: Badger Book Program Update

In past years, staff have coordinated a purchasing window each fall with Paragon Development Systems (PDS) to bring new municipalities into the Badger Book program. This process allowed for staff to sustainably onboard the new municipal partners by offering hands-on “train the trainer” sessions around the state after the municipalities received their equipment. The purchasing window will not take place in the fall of 2020 and will be rescheduled for later in 2021.

We understand that this news may come as a disappointment to municipalities who were interested in implementing Badger Books during a year with fewer statewide elections, but this decision was not made lightly. You will still be able to purchase Badger Books in 2021 but we will not be able to onboard any new municipalities for the spring 2021 election cycle.

To solicit feedback on how best to frame the purchasing window for 2021, we have prepared a brief survey. If you are interested in Badger Books, we would like to get some additional information from you. The survey can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LY9KQYJ>

Like all of you, we have been putting a tremendous amount of energy into preparing for the 2020 General Election for the past few years. After also factoring in the other three statewide elections this year, most of which were administered in the midst of a global pandemic, there has not been an opportunity for the Badger Book team to take a step back and reevaluate the program. In lieu of opening a purchasing window while we are all focused on the runup to the General Election and attempting to offer the crucial in-person training necessary to bring new municipalities onboard, 2021 will instead be an opportunity to revisit the structure of our electronic poll book program.

Staff will dedicate this time to research and development and will be closely examining the Badger Book software application. The Badger Book software application has performed well, but we are also cognizant of the fact that there is always room for improvement. By instead focusing our energy into a “rebuilding year,” staff will obtain feedback from the election officials and voters who currently use Badger Books. This feedback, coupled with usability testing of any enhancements to the application, will allow us to offer the best experience we can for all users, current and future.

Wisconsin Elections Commissioners

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

Administrator
Meagan Wolfe

In just three short years, the program has grown from the original eight municipalities to the 76 municipalities who currently use Badger Books. As of today, those 76 municipalities are home to almost 590,000 voters. This program will continue to grow, and we want to ensure that it will grow sustainably. By taking this time to get our house in order, we will be in a much better place to onboard new municipalities when the purchasing window opens again in 2021.

We thank you for your patience and are looking forward to bringing on new municipalities in 2021. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Help Desk at elections.wi.gov or (608) 261-2028.