**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wisconsin Elections Commission**

Accessibility Advisory Committee Summer 2021 Meeting

Wednesday, June 23, 9am-12pm

**Agenda**

1. Public Comment
2. Introductions
3. WEC Update
	1. April Election Overview
	2. Committee member observations
		1. Jason – quiet at the polls
		2. Denise – even when hotlines are quiet, a gap remains between those who experience barriers and those who speak up about barriers, encourage more reporting
		3. Wendy – confusion among long term care facility residents about how to use an assistant and witness signatures on absentee ballots, curbside voting accessibility is not consistent
		4. Nino – concerns about mail being late due to federal holiday, voters not alerted when absentee ballots aren’t counted
		5. Richard – low voter turnout, local recounts, no major issues
		6. Brianna – special election June 8th, very little election communication
	3. 2022 preparations
		1. Brianna – switching to Zoom, elections.wi.gov usability survey, launch goal Dec 2021
		2. Richard – focusing on training, standardized election inspector training, MyVote updates, elections.wi.gov overhaul
	4. Voter List Maintenance
		1. Richard – 4 year maintenance postcard, July 15th deadline to respond, by Aug 1st records will be deactivated
		2. Janet – with mail delivery taking longer now than when the 30 day response statute was written, the response time should be extended to reflect that
		3. Wendy – anything that requires a proof of residence/ID is more difficult for people without consistent access to transportation
		4. Denise – people who need an assistant to read mail need more than 2 weeks to get the postcard back in the mail, exacerbated by covid with the disabled population tending to be higher risk and limiting people coming into their homes
		5. Jason – the postcard could be more accessible over email so a screen reader could read the card, more people provide an email although it wouldn’t reach anyone
	5. Other
		1. ERIC
			1. Richard – state statute doesn’t specify what to do with voters identified as possibly having moved after contact has been attempted, cards will go out by the end of June, deactivation will be determined by municipal clerks, 2019 movers will be deactivated Aug 1st
			2. Denise – can WEC offer guidance to muni clerks so treatment of ERIC movers can be more consistent across the state, sees potential for future litigation, disproportionate rate of high mobility and homelessness among the disabled population is a concern
		2. Type B notice updated to include more accessibility info including voting with an assistant
		3. Indefinitely confined letters went out in May
4. Litigation Updates
	1. Ongoing lawsuits
	2. Complaints
	3. Other
		1. Richard – expect a lot of litigation on redistricting, delaying local redistricting deadlines because of late data due to covid, determines who can run in spring 2022, who can sign nomination papers, WEC works with decided data
5. Training
	1. Upcoming trainings
		1. Richard – training county clerks in September, developing mentorship program for new clerks
	2. Other
6. Accessibility Report
	1. Overview
	2. Committee feedback
		1. Denise – important to emphasize the actions of this committee, use the report as a tool to move forward, use in communication in advocacy, 7% of polling places having issues doesn’t sound as bad as it is, the severity scale needs to include emotional severity in addition to physical severity
		2. Nino – send report to committee members when published
		3. Jason – emphasize to rural communities that the WEC is committed to accessibility across the state
		4. Janet – how are testing sites chosen, “postings and notices” is too broad of a topic, doors need to be properly marked with instructions on how to use accessibility features, want to emphasize the inaccessibility to voting before a voter can even get to the polling location, can we follow up to make sure low cost fixes are implemented
		5. Richard – door signs and official notices are separate in the survey, anecdotal evidence is hard to capture in the data
		6. Brianna – clerks get follow up emails and calls if there are problems with plans of action or the implementation of the plans
7. Accessibility Program Overview
	1. Supply program update
		1. Brianna – signs with phone numbers are back ordered, cones, doorbells, signature guides, page magnifiers ordered in mid-June
	2. Accessibility concern form responses
	3. Access Elections website update
		1. Brianna – new website will connect with WisVote, clerks have a separate access, pictures of polling locations, direct communication to clerks
	4. 2022 Accessibility Polling Place Reviews
		1. Brianna – not enough time to get reviews done for the AD37 special election in July 2020, revamp user survey and severity rankings, adding questions to survey that cover some of the anecdotes that need data, chose polling locations that had never been reviewed or haven’t been reviewed in a while
	5. Discussion
		1. Wendy – there are 2 prongs to voting accessibility, physical access/ADA compliance and broader access
		2. Nino – look at policy that are road blocks before voters even get to the polls
		3. Richard – this committee has helped educate and provide feedback to legislators about voting accessibility, continue collaborating with the committee and commissioners at every step of progess in accessibility
		4. Denise – would like a section in the report that names issues with access for the disabled and aging communities
8. Next Steps/Meeting Date
	1. In person/remote meetings
		1. Nino – like hybrid approach to meetings, in person and remotely
		2. Denise – need an accessible format so remote attendees aren’t left behind in discussions
		3. Richard – WEC is working on the technological aspects of hybrid meetings