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TO: Advisory Committee

FROM: Steven Braatz, City Clerk

TOPIC: Current polling sites and potential future sites

The City of West Allis currently has 20 separate polling sites to accommodate 25 wards. Managing this many polling sites is both time consuming and costly. Furthermore, there are significant issues with many of the sites that have caused me to actively seek out new polling sites.

Trying to find new polling sites has been difficult. There are not that many large facilities that are handicap accessible and offer appropriate parking. There have been recent strides on a few sites. I ask for the Committee's assistance and input.

Below is a list of each of the current polling sites, broken down by category of ownership and listed with the issues involved. Following this list are possible new polling sites.

City-Owned Buildings

Liberty Heights Park Field House, 6101 W. Orchard St.

Services: Ward 1

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 985

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 683

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 658

Issues: At the 4-2-19 election, the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) conducted an accessibility audit. One of the findings determined that the upper ramp has a slope greater than 8%, which does not meet ADA requirements. After consultation and verification with Public Works, the only solution would be to tear out the current ramp and replace. The less costly option would be to find a different polling site.

West Allis Police Satellite Station, 6900 W. National Ave.

Services: Ward 2

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,236

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 860

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 788

Issues: This site is simply too small for the amount of voters in Ward 2. The Six Points Apartments likely contributed to the increase in registered voters. The West apartments will only further increase that number.



Fire Station #2, 2040 S. 67 Pl.

Services: Wards 4

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,360

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,013

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 986

Issues: This site currently uses the bays of the Fire Station, which means all vehicles must be removed from the bay and stored outside. The Fire Chief has inquired about the possibility of ending the use of Fire Station #2 as a polling site.

West Allis City Hall, 7525 W. Greenfield Ave.

Services: Wards 6

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,065

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 709

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 683

Issues: This site currently uses Room 128, which is a small room but is sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 6. If the Common Council Chambers were used, this site could easily accommodate two more wards.

West Allis Library, 7421 W. National Ave.

Services: Wards 8

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,082

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 733

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 707

Issues: This site currently uses the Constitution Room, which is sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 8. No real issues here.

County-Owned Buildings

McCarty Park Pavilion, 2567 S. 78 St.

Services: Ward 9

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,404

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 993

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 945

Issues: This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 9. The only real issue here is the long walk from the road to the building.

LaFollette Park Pavilion, 9418 W. Washington St.

Services: Ward 11

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,456

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,045

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,000

Issues: This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 11. The only real issues here are the parking is rather far away and difficult to find, and the long, uphill walk from the parking area to the building.



Private Business

Heritage West Allis, 7901 W. National Ave.

Services: Ward 7

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,187

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 955

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 845

Issues: This site currently uses a room inside the building, on the main floor towards the end of a hallway when heading west (right) after entering through the main area. The room is sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 7. This facility seems to have had multiple turnovers in staff, and each new person does not seem to be very responsive to our needs. Another issue involves the parking situation. The parking lot has roughly 24 spots, and each election, I seem to have to remind them to remind visitors and staff to park in alternate parking lot behind the building to allow for available spaces for voters.

Village at Manor Park, 3023 S. 84 St.

Services: Ward 19

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,557

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,001

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 936

Issues: This site currently uses a small room fairly far inside the building. Aside from that, there is plenty of parking and it is certainly handicap accessible. The reason for the low number of voters in comparison with the high number of registered voters is due to the fact that a significant portion of the registered voters are residents of this facility and vote absentee. This site is sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 19. No real issues here.

WAWMSD-Owned Buildings: High Schools

Central High School, 8516 W. Lincoln Ave.

Services: Ward 17

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,459

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 977

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 953

Issues: This site currently uses a foyer on the east portion of the building. Due to the number of activities, the school is not interested in letting us use the gym. The only real issue here is the area is sometimes difficult to locate, as many voters attempt to go to the main entrance vs. the eastern entrance. This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 17, but with proper use of the space, the site may be able to accommodate another ward.

Nathan Hale High School, 11601 W. Lincoln Ave.

Services: Wards 22, 24 and 25

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 3,458

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 2,399

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 2,277

Issues: This site currently uses the alternate gym on the south side of the building, as is, by far, our largest space. There are no real issues here except for a time or two where the School District held teacher training at this school and failed to communicate that with us.



This caused some parking issues. I have been ensured that there will be better communication and scheduling in the future. This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Wards 22, 24, and 25.

WAWMSD-Owned Buildings: Middle Schools

Lane Intermediate School, 1300 S. 109 St.

Services: Ward 13

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,731

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,289

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,262

Issues: This site currently uses a foyer in the front portion of the building. At the 4-2-19 election, the WEC conducted an accessibility audit. One of the findings determined that the accessible entrance is not clearly marked with the appropriate signage at the door, which does not meet ADA requirements. I am ordering a sign/sticker from WEC for the school to place on the door. Another finding determined that it took more than eight (8) pounds of force to open the accessible door (it required 22 pounds of force). The school could adjust the tension or install a power-assist device, or we could install a bell box. This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 13. There are no other real issues here.

Frank Lloyd Wright School, 9501 W. Cleveland Ave.

Services: Wards 16 and 18

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 2,741

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,948

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,919

Issues: This site currently uses the gym on the west side of the school. This is one of our largest sites. This site is currently sufficient for the amount of voters in Wards 16 and 18. Aside from the parking lot being full during the heaviest voting periods, there are no other real issues here.

WAWMSD-Owned Buildings: Elementary Schools

NOTE: The School District has requested that we no longer use elementary schools as polling sites. They are considering resuming school during elections, and have safety concerns.

Longfellow School, 2211 S. 60 St.

Services: Wards 3 and 5

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 2,040

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,420

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,344

Issues: This site currently uses the gym. Based on suggestions from the school, the entrance to the site is through the side door of the gym. This entrance has poor lighting during dark hours. The entrance is not handicap accessible, but alternate acceptable methods have been used. This site has been sufficient for the amount of voters in Wards 3 and 5.



Madison School, 1117 S. 104 St.

Services: Ward 12

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,329

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,018

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 928

Issues: This site currently uses a gym area. The space has been great and sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 12.

Franklin Field House, 1964 S. 86 St.

Services: Ward 14

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,033

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 769

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 670

Issues: This site has used the Field House gym area. The space has been great and sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 14. However, there is very limited amount of street parking with no on-site parking. Furthermore, at the 4-2-19 election, the WEC conducted an accessibility audit. One of the findings determined that the curb cut/ramp in the on-street parking area had a slope greater than 8%, which does not meet ADA requirements.

Woodrow Wilson Field House, 8710 W. Orchard St.

Services: Ward 15

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,049

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 750

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 824

Issues: This site used a small room in the Field House. The space has been sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 14. However, the entrance to the area immediately opens to the voting area, which makes keeping heat in difficult for cold days.

Irving School Field House, 10230 W. Grant St.

Services: Ward 21

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,346

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 976

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 960

Issues: This site used a small room off of the northwest playground area, with entrance off of 104th St. The space has been sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 21. The location of the actual voting site is a little difficult to find. The biggest issue has been the lack of assistance from the janitor there. DPW crew has, on numerous occasions, had difficulty accessing the site during setup.



General Mitchell Field House, 10125 W. Montana Ave.

Services: Ward 23

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 1,528

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,123

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,048

Issues: This site used a small room off of the west playground area, with entrance off of 102nd St. The space has been sufficient for the amount of voters in Ward 23. The biggest issue has been the school mainly provides picnic tables, which are not suitable tables to use for elections, especially for elderly poll workers.

WAWMSD-Owned Buildings: Other Buildings

Recreation Center, 2450 S. 68 St.

Services: Wards 10 and 20

Number of total registered voters as of 10-24-19: 2,315

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-8-16 election: 1,575

Number of at-polls voters at the 11-6-18 election: 1,528

Issues: This site will be under construction during the Spring elections and a new site is needed. This site used to use a small room within the building, with entrance directly into the voting site. This made it difficult to contain heat inside, and forced many voters to stand outside when the line was long. After construction is complete and resuming use in the August 2020 election, we will be using a larger room further in the building. There will be larger space and a larger parking lot, and voters will mainly be contained inside.

Possible New/Alternative Sites

West Allis City Hall, 7525 W. Greenfield Ave.

Using the Common Council Chambers, we could easily add two more wards here. Ideally, Wards 6 (currently at City Hall), 7 (currently at Heritage), and 8 (currently at Library) would be the wards. However, with the lack of a suitable site in the northeastern portion of the City, Ward 1 (currently at Liberty Heights) might need to move the City Hall. City Hall is handicap accessible, there is sufficient parking, and the space could easily accommodate three wards, and the layout is suitable for long lines being contained inside.

West Allis Senior Center, 7001 W. National Ave.

We recently met with the Senior Center staff, and they have agreed to allow us to use the dining area on the east side of the building, with access from the southern parking lot. The facility is handicap accessible, there is sufficient parking, and the space could easily accommodate two wards, if needed. This could be a replacement of Ward 2 (currently at the Police Satellite Station) and possibly even Ward 1 (currently at Liberty Heights).

Meadowmere and Mitchell Manor, 2330 S. 54th St.

We recently had the opportunity to register voters at the Meadowmere senior living facility. Afterwards, we took a tour of a room they have that gets very little use. This room is located on the 54th St. side, it is handicap accessible and fairly large. This could easily be a suitable relocation of Wards 3 and 5 (currently at Longfellow School) and possibly even a third ward, ideally Ward 4 (currently at Fire Station #2). The only issue is parking, which is mainly



street parking. However, with that large facility there, few cars currently park on the streets. The streets are also wide, and the location is walkable for the immediate area.

Mary Queen of Heaven/Mother of Perpetual Help, 2360 S. 106th St.

Mary Queen of Heaven (now known as Mother of Perpetual Help) owns a former school building to the south off of 106th/Hayes. The school part of the building is currently being leased out to All About Learning. There is a gym attached that would be a very suitable location as a polling site. I reached out to the business director who sounded interested in being used as a polling site. The space seems large, it is handicap accessible, and there is a very large parking lot. I have yet to tour it, but based on the outside and fact it is a gym, the space could be suitable relocation of Wards 15 (currently at Woodrow Wilson Field House), 16 (currently at Frank Lloyd Wright), and 21 (currently at Irving School Field House). Ward 23 (currently at General Mitchell School) would replace Ward 16 at Frank Lloyd Wright, which makes more sense geographically.

Beloit Senior Housing Clubhouse, 2505 S. 72nd St.

We toured the clubhouse at the Beloit Senior Housing facility off of 72nd/Beloit. Although it has a strange layout, this could be a temporary location for Ward 20 in the February and April elections while the Recreation Center is under construction.

West Allis Memorial Hospital Campus

I inquired to Robert Figueiroa about the use of any available space located on the hospital campus. He passed on my inquiry to the Advocate Aurora associate, and I await a response.

Rainbow Park Building, 705 S. 119th St.

I inquired to Milwaukee County Parks about the use of Rainbow Park Building, and I await a response.

Central High School, 8516 W. Lincoln Ave.

Even though we only use a foyer area, the space is fairly large, and could accommodate a second Ward.

Hampton Inn & Suites, 8201 W. Greenfield Ave.

We toured the Hampton Inn facility. They have a large banquet hall as well as a smaller, yet still large, meeting room. They would be willing to let us use the meeting room, but the banquet hall is used daily and is revenue for them. However, the August 2020 election is right in the middle of State Fair, so using this site would be difficult.

Berkshire West Allis, 1414 S. 65th St.

We toured the Berkshire apartment building. There is plenty of space, but only street parking in the middle of downtown.



Other inquiries

We reached out to a number of other places and either were turned down or received no response. Chief Pooler contacted St. Augustine, which owns and leases a school building to The Richardson School across the street from Fire Station #2. They were not interested. I contacted St. Rita's Catholic Church, 2318 S. 61st St., but their large community room is in the basement and is not handicap accessible. I contacted Victory Outreach Church, 1204 S. 61st St., but they are cleaning out the school building to lease to someone. There is a gym adjacent to this property owned by another organization, but I have been unable to locate contact information. I sent an email to City of Faith Church, 6420 W. Mitchell St., but have not heard a response. I also inquired about the use of the Greenfield Golf Course clubhouse, but have not heard a response.

Possible New/Alternative Sites

Part of the search for new polling sites includes the location of alternate emergency sites, in the event we need to move a polling site on election day. Any one of the new sites listed above could act as an emergency location if they are not ultimately selected as a regular polling location. Hampton Inn, for instance, was interested in being one of these emergency sites.

SUMMARY

The West Allis West Milwaukee School District has asked that we leave elementary schools, at the very least. Several other sites have significant issues. Managing 20 polling sites is difficult and cumbersome, including reserving and managing the sites, having this many sites for DPW to deliver and set up equipment and supplies, and having an increased number of poll workers. New sites are needed. Assuming we reach deals with some new sites, trying to determine which wards go where has been equivalent to putting a large puzzle together. We also have a conglomerate of existing and potential sites in a small area of the City, from 70th St. to 84th St. and Burnham St. to Greenfield Ave. There are very few viable options on the east side and central part of the City. Any assistance, guidance, and input is appreciated.