

Wed, Jan 11, 2023 5:30PM

## Item 23-0028: Resolution Changing the District 12 Polling Place

Safety and Licensing Committee

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### Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 00:52

We have no public hearing or appearances. So, we'll move into action items. the first of which is 23-0028 resolution changing the district 12 polling place.

### Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 01:04

Move for approval.

### Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 01:05

Second.

### Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 01:06

Motion to approve Alfheim Hartzheim. Sorry, reverse that Hartzheim Alfheim. Any conversation here? Yes.

### Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 01:20

Hello. So, I was just curious on the process of picking a new local—er our current or...Our new polling location, what was the process for?

### Clerk Kami Lynch 01:41

Thank you. So, the process for choosing any polling place, really, is to look at available facilities within the district if there are some. So first started with the new building owner of the former St. John's church to see if they would be interested in continuing to be a polling place for district 12. Unfortunately, did not receive a response back from that—the new facility owners. So, then we had compiled a list of other potential options. So, District 12 is very residential. There's not a lot of other facilities within it. So, the recommended location here, St. Pius is just outside of District 12. It is the facility with the best space and parking, easiest to get to for voters and constituents. So reached out to St. Pius first as they were the top of our list, and they worked very quickly with us and were very accommodating to let us tour the space and move forward with the change for the District 12 polling place.

### Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 02:59

So, they were first on the list. They were like the first place that you contacted after you the original place?

### Clerk Kami Lynch 03:06

Correct. Yes, they were.

### Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 03:07

And after that, we just kind of went with it, correct?

### Clerk Kami Lynch 03:11

Right. Yes. We were very happy with—once we saw the space inside the facility, and the parking options where voting would take place. So, we proceeded with that location.

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**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 03:26**

Alder Fenton, would you like to?

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 03:28**

Thank you, Vice Chair. Um following along with that, when—can I direct my remarks to Clerk Lynch?

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 03:37**

Certainly.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 03:38**

Please. Thank you. Um, so St. Pius, as everybody knows, is in District Six. And when the information—particularly when Alder Wolff posted on social media got a pretty fair amount of response from residents in District Six who currently vote at Scheig Center in Memorial Park, which is in District 14. So, this move is going to take us to five districts that currently have polling places that are not in the district. So, I appreciate the explanation of the process for going through that.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 04:23**

Can I just ask when District Six moved from Mount Olive to the Scheig Center? And that was, I think, probably while we were redistricting, and that was going on in the process while we were redistricting. So—but I think all of the proposed maps put Memorial Park not in the district. Was St. Pius contacted for District Six at that point?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 04:46**

No St. Pius was not contacted as having a public facility—that's the first thing in the statutes that's recommended for a polling place is that it's a public facility. So, we own the Scheig Center. It's a public facility, and having that ownership over the space gives us a lot more flexibility in terms of planning for elections.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 05:12**

So, number one is public facility, and number two is within the district in terms of the criteria?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 05:21**

So, our criteria is not public facility. That's in the statutes. So, we obviously we try to adhere to those as we can. It references public facility and then the official in charge of elections can recommend something else, if it's better suited.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 05:41**

How—can I ask? Thank you for indulging...

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 05:44**

Yes certainly

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 05:44**

...me vice chairs

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 05:45**

It's a worthwhile conversation.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 05:47**

So, when we make arrangements, do we have a contract with the facilities? And what period of time is that for?

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**Clerk Kami Lynch 05:55**

Yeah, so we do—so we enter into an agreement with a polling place to be used for a full election cycle. An election cycle is two years. So, it covers usually six elections, if it's kind of normal election years. And then the agreement requires the polling places to give us a year notice when they can (St. John's gave us as much notice as possible when the building was going to be for sale) if they no longer wish to be a polling place so that we have adequate time to find a new polling place.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 06:30**

Thank you. Thank you, Vice Chair.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 06:33**

Certainly. I'm just going to follow up just a little bit to that. How often do we evaluate opportunities to bring our polling places into our districts? It feels like one out of three is kind of a of a large number of polling places to be outside of our voting districts. And I guess I wonder how often do we evaluate the situation? Are there opportunities that arise or how often do we look at it and say, "Okay, there might be some new opportunities," or maybe something we've done in the past that we could reevaluate and see if it's a better polling option to get our polling places within our districts.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 07:06**

So, we don't—we don't look at moving polling places more than we have to. Obviously, most of our polling places that are now out of their district, they changed due to redistricting. So, with the redistricting map that was chosen, put some polling places outside of their usual district, and also it made a lot of polling places on the very edge of their district. Not ideal; however, residents that remained in that district still go to the same polling place. And when we switch a polling place, we know that we're going to—just side note, we do plan to mail letters to registered voters in district 12 so that they are notified of a polling place change. But we know that changing a polling place is inconvenient, or even kind of scary for some people. So having consistent polling places that residents/voters are used to, also that we have relationships with, since it is so, so difficult to find suitable facilities to house votings. So, we don't look at—we don't look at changing them. Also, we don't really consolidate polling places. I think voters prefer to have shorter lines on election day versus longer lines. So that would really be another option that we don't see would be suitable for City of Appleton voters is to combine so that we could have more polling places within districts.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 08:39**

Have we seen any issues with those changes? You know, voting outside of one's district, does it cause any concern, or is it people are pretty much habituated to where they're used to voting, and they're going to vote there, regardless of the line changes or the district changes?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 08:57**

Yeah, as a result of redistricting—of course, we mailed letters to people that were redistricted and had new polling places. Of course, there they expressed frustrations with, you know, having to go further away. But I think everybody has found their way to their new polling places. We haven't seen continued concerns since those have changed.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 09:23**

Thank you. Thanks for that insight. Go ahead.

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**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 09:28**

Thank you, chair. To piggyback on your questions, my one question (I'm not sure if you answered it Clerk Lynch or not) is: so, we know now that this polling place is in District Six. Is there some point in time where we will say now that's going to be the District Six voting place and then have another district 12 polling place, or are we so limited in that regard that it's going to have to remain as is?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 10:00**

I would say that we are very limited. So, if district—St. Pius district 12 became District Six, then that leaves district 12 without a polling place. There isn't something closer. So, kind of how it's situated now is, is...

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 10:19**

The best that you can offer.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 10:20**

The best that we can offer unless we wanted to go through and look for new polling places all around the city.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 10:27**

And presumably, this is something that your staff is always working on trying to make sure you we've got them procured make sure we've got them, you know, as close as possible to where we're going to be.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 10:37**

Correct. Yes. We're even, we're always looking for in a emergency situation like a contingency plan for backup polling places, and that is equally as difficult.

**Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 10:49**

Excellent. Thank you.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 10:51**

Alder Wolff. Did you have anything additional?

**Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 10:52**

Oh, yes. Thank you, chair. So, I know that this is—and I appreciate, you know, the process and the fact that it's not, you know, extremely out of the districts, right. It could be at Memorial Park. But so, how, or what's the process, like, look like in mailing out those letters, right? Are we just looking at old registered voter information? Or are like, do we send it to apartments as well? Or are we—like all the apartments, because we know how much people move in and out of apartments? So, we don't want to necessarily miss someone who just moved there. Like, just from an information perspective? What does that look like?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 11:39**

So typically, we've mailed letters to registered voters within that district. So that does not include those that have moved and registered elsewhere, or voters that are not registered, because those voters can go to the My Vote website. However, now we have—we have a little bit more information at our fingertips with the recent redistricting, that we can pull addresses and send it to every address. So, there's that option, too. We thought we would just do registered voters for the spring primary. But if it would be preferred to do all households, or property addresses, we could do that as well.

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**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 12:22**

That would be—like, for me, I would prefer that. I think that everyone wants to know where their polling location is, even if they're not registered, and don't want it at all. So that's kind of why I followed up on that. I know that you mentioned it. My next question is, so what does this—like this is for the 2023 primary? Correct.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 12:47**

So, this would be—this would get us through the 2023 elections, and then continue going forward. The St. Pius has already expressed interest in, barring nothing terrible happens, for the upcoming elections that they would be interested in entering into the agreement, the agreement for the full election cycle to remain a polling place.

**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 13:13**

Alright, thank you. And one last question. When this was discovered, on this location, is there a reason why, as an alderperson, I wasn't really told about that. I knew that I was expecting a new polling location, but it would have been nice to know about uh so that I could share that with my constituents before this meeting, compared to like in this last week.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 13:38**

So, by statute, the municipal clerk determines what's a suitable polling place.

**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 13:42**

Yeah, I mean like...

**Clerk Kami Lynch 13:43**

Then it goes to governing body for approval and that's why it's here now.

**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 13:47**

All right. Thank you.

**Clerk Kami Lynch 13:48**

Alder Alfheim.

**Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 13:50**

Um just to follow up. I like the idea of mailing all addresses as opposed to the registered voters. Do we know what the cost difference would be to accomplish that?

**Clerk Kami Lynch 13:58**

I do not have that information.

**Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 14:00**

I think it'd be wise, just so that we're aware. I think those dollars may be wise to spend. But we might want to know what that would be before we officially make that change official. Just to be transparent, I guess. But I think it's a good idea. Good.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 14:15**

Thank you. So, you're on that same note, I will tell you from experience working at the District 10 polling place in the last election, there were plenty of people who had been redistricted and just didn't—they may have gotten they were probably registered voters. In fact, they were still in the Badger Books database, but they were completely unaware. So even letters may not necessarily—I'm not saying we should not because we definitely

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should. But even letters may not necessarily get you there. So, it's going to be your election place people who are going to be directing folks, "You got to go down the street, or you have to go to a different place." So, this is more of a challenge because if they go to a church that is no longer occupied and for sale, they might be very confused. But I think that there's there are plenty of ways that we can teach our voters where they need to be.

**Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 15:08**

Go ahead.

**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 15:09**

Sorry. So, the church has—it will have new occupants soon, so they would be able to tell them where it is hopefully. But on that, we can also do that as alderspersons is canvass and let our constituents know as well, which I plan to do. On the cost as well, I look forward to helping figure that out as need be. And thank you very much.

**Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 15:36**

Any additional comments from committee? Or guests? I would just echo our gratitude for going through this process and the challenges that it poses to try and, you know, get a polling place as close as possible to districts when these lines are redrawn. And, you know, citizens are used to going to a place for 30 years. They don't want to uproot that and go to a new polling place. So, thank you for the department's work in trying to make this as seamless as possible. With that, let's take a vote. All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? Ayes have it.

**Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 16:13**

Move on to 23-0013 Class B and Class B liquor license...

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 16:19**

Chair if I may, could I make a motion to approve the remaining action items?

**Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 16:25**

You may.

**Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 16:27**

Second.

**Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 16:27**

We have a motion from Alder Hartzheim to approve remaining and appro—second by Alfheim. All those in favor? Aye. Opposed? The ayes have it.