



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

ELECTION LAW REVIEW

Legislative Council Conference Room
Madison, Wisconsin

November 17, 2004

10:00 a.m. - 1:40 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the November 17, 2004 meeting of the Special Committee on Election Law Review. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/2004studies.htm>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Leibham called the meeting to order. The roll was called and a quorum was determined to be present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Joseph Leibham, Chair; Sen. Jon Erpenbach; Reps. Stephen Freese, Marlin Schneider, and Steve Wieckert; and Public Members Marilyn Bhend, Joyce Buechel, Cindi Hesse, and Kevin Kennedy.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED Kathy Nickolaus, James Troupis, and Mike Wittenwyler.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Bob Conlin, Senior Staff Attorney; and Nick Zavos, Staff Attorney.

Approval of the Minutes of the October 13, 2004 Meeting

A motion was made by Cindi Hesse, seconded by Representative Schneider to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2004 meeting. The minutes were approved without objection.

Chair Leibham asked new committee member Janice Dunn to introduce herself.

Description of Materials Distributed

Mr. Conlin briefly explained the materials that had been distributed to committee members in advance of the meeting. Chair Leibham noted that he would like committee members to discuss the recount process at the next meeting of the committee and that members should review the document prepared by the Elections Board and distributed to members entitled *Election Recount Procedures*.

Discussion of Election Issues Relating to the November 2, 2004 Election

Kevin Kennedy presented an overview of the election night issues of which he was aware. He said only two complaints from Milwaukee had made their way to the Elections Board. He also said that there were two major issues concerning the elections on both the state and national levels. He said those issues were long lines and the conduct of observers at polling places. He commented that clearer direction was needed in the statutes on the conduct of polling place observers. Overall, however, he noted that it was his opinion that Wisconsin ran smooth elections on election night. In general, committee members concurred that election day went relatively smoothly and that the success of election day in Wisconsin was due to the dedication of election workers around the state.

Discussion of Committee Member Suggestions for Modifications to the Election Laws

Committee members identified and briefly discussed a number of issues that will be discussed at future meetings in more detail as ways to improve the election process in Wisconsin. Staff was directed to prepare a listing of the issues discussed for the committee at the next meeting. Among the broad issues discussed were the following: absentee voting; voting registration; poll workers; voting equipment; polling place hours; conduct at polling places by observers and others; voter identification; counting of write-in votes; and online reporting of results. Chair Leibham indicated that future meetings would be dedicated to discussing the issues raised at today's meeting as well as those issues presented earlier and summarized in Memo No. 2, dated November 10, 2004.

Plans for Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Special Committee was scheduled for *Wednesday, December 15, 2004, at 10:00 a.m., in the Legislative Council Conference Room*.

Other Business

There was no other business brought before the committee.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

RJC:tlu