



Department of Administration

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Sharon Robinson
Director

ELECTION MANAGEMENT TEAM

Background Statement:

In November of 2004, the City of Milwaukee experienced an unusually high voter turnout, a record number of absentee voters and many questions surrounding how the election was conducted. The Mayor immediately formed an Election Task Force to study the election process in Milwaukee to address problematic areas. The recent February election in Milwaukee had a low voter turnout and few problems. However, the April election is approaching rapidly and a significantly higher voter turnout is expected.

Objective:

Given the issues that surfaced during the November 2004 election, the Mayor is committed to ensuring that the April election runs as smoothly as possible and provides all citizens of Milwaukee the opportunity to vote and have their vote counted.

Proposed Solution:

While the Election Task Force Committee is continuing to study the various issues surrounding the November election to recommend changes that need to be made to how elections are administered in the City of Milwaukee, an Election Management Team to be appointed by Mayor Barrett to manage the April Election. This proactive approach will require four City employees who have demonstrated strong management and organization skills to participate on this team to focus on four of the primary areas of concern.

Specific Recommendations:

- Four areas of focus
 - Absentee ballots
 - Voter registration
 - Poll workers/Polling Locations
 - Campaign Finance
- Four candidates for team (One individual will be designated to work on-site at the Election Commission Office through the April 5, 2005 election)
 - Cheryl Oliva
 - Mary Reavey
 - Donna Skenadore
 - Lori Lutzka

- Critical component for expertise of operations
 - Permanent Election Commission Staff:
 - Kathy Thornton (Customer Service Representative)
 - Edie Greene (Poll Worker Coordinator)
 - Ryan Ranker (Absentee Ballot Coordinator)
 - Denise Walton (Administrative Assistant)
 - Phyllis Whitley (Election Supplies and Equipment Coordinator)
- Common elements of all areas that need improvement:
 - Organization
 - Quality control issues
 - Timeliness
 - Planning
 - Advance preparation where possible
 - Communication
 - Coordination
 - Documentation of procedures/establishing procedural manuals
- Additional needs for success:
 - Commitment of all available City resources.
 - City department heads may be asked to loan at least one employee to the management team for election purposes effective March 1, 2005.
 - City departments may be asked to loan additional employees on a part-time basis as needed up to and during the election.
 - Citizens will be encouraged to volunteer to serve up to and during the election on one of the four critical areas.
(Department heads designees' and citizen volunteers should be encouraged to contact the appropriate management team leader directly for assignments.

A comprehensive de-briefing will be held with the management team leaders after the election to advise the Election Task Force on strengths and specific areas of concern.