



## LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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### MEMORANDUM

July 5, 2018

**To:** Alderperson Lobner, Chair of Safety & Licensing Committee  
Safety & Licensing Committee Members, Common Council

**From:** Kami Lynch, City Clerk

**Re:** Central Count of Absentee Ballots

With the 2018 budget, a CIP was included for the purchase of electronic poll books. The decision was made to hold off on the purchase of these electronic poll books until 2019 as the hardware was more costly than anticipated and some of the operational details of the e-poll books are yet to be determined.

The use of e-poll books would have had a positive impact on processing the large quantities of absentee ballots received in general elections by making the process both easier and quicker. Since these e-poll books are no longer an option for the Partisan Primary in August and General Election in November I am requesting that the City approve the Central Count method of processing absentee ballots.

Central Count is when the absentee ballots are processed at a single location separate from the polling places. The processing and counting of the absentee ballots is done by the Board of Absentee Ballot Canvassers which is made up of a minimum of three qualified electors of the municipality appointed by the City Clerk. This takes place on Election Day and results are not totaled until the close of polls (8 p.m.). The results from the absentee ballots from each Ward are reported and added to the polling place totals.

At the last general election the City of Appleton had over 11,000 absentee ballots which resulted in additional hours after the close of polls being spent to process all of these absentee ballots. Central Count would allow for election inspectors to focus on other functions at the polling place where inspector staffing is already limited. It would also allow for a reduction in processing errors and quicker transmission of results. The proposed ordinance is attached for your reference.

If there are any questions regarding Central Count, please do not hesitate to contact me for more information.

Respectfully,

Kami Lynch, City Clerk