



LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Office of the City Clerk

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MEMORANDUM

September 7, 2018

To: Alderperson Plank, Chair of Finance Committee; Finance Committee Members

From: Kami Lynch, City Clerk

Re: Rental of DS450 Machine for Central Count of Absentee Ballots

In July of this year, the Common Council approved Ordinance #66-18 moving the processing of absentee ballots on Election Day from the polling places to one central location, also known as Central Count.

The August 14th Partisan Primary Election was the city's first experience utilizing this method of processing absentee ballots. Two DS200 machines (our two spare election tabulators that are at the polling places) were used to process ballots. Although these machines are adequate for a smaller number of absentee ballots more machines would be necessary to facilitate processing of absentee ballots for a larger election, such as the General Election on November 6th.

At the last General Election the City of Appleton had 11,000 absentee ballots and it is anticipated that we will have numbers close to this for the upcoming General Election. A DS450 is a machine from our current election equipment vendor, Election Systems & Software that was designed specifically for central count locations. It can process 75 ballots per minute and has the ability to separate ballots containing write-ins or ballots with potential errors. After the experience with central count for the August election I think it is crucial to explore the most efficient option for conducting central count for the November election and the DS450 meets those needs.

The DS450 is very costly to purchase and it wouldn't be necessary to own this equipment for use only once every four years. Therefore, we have the option to rent the machine for approximately \$12,700 which includes delivery, set-up, training, and site support on Election Day. The rental of this item was not included in the 2018 budget as we had hoped to utilize electronic poll books in lieu of central count. There are funds available in the other contracts/obligations account for election programming and ballot set-up as well as the election printing/reproduction accounts as there have been significant cost savings with Outagamie County doing the election programming and ballot layout as well as the entire county using the same ballot printer and style. It is my intent to use these unspent funds toward the rental of the DS450 for the November 6th election.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have on this endeavor.

Respectfully,

Kami Lynch