

Resolution #3-R-26
Expressing the City of Appleton's Support for Ranked-Choice
Voting in Municipal Elections

Date: April 1, 2026

Submitted By: Alderperson Stancil-Martin – District 11

Co-signed By: Alderperson Meltzer – District 2; Alderperson Wolff – District 12

Referred To: Safety & Licensing Committee

Resolution Summary: This resolution supports the usage of ranked-choice voting in municipal elections held within the State of Wisconsin. It underscores the benefits of ranked-choice voting, as well as urges state lawmakers to amend state law to authorize municipalities to adopt ranked-choice voting at their discretion.

WHEREAS, the City of Appleton currently uses primary elections for races that see more than two candidates vying for the same position; and

WHEREAS, the City of Appleton currently uses a plurality system for all municipal elections; and

WHEREAS, ranked-choice voting (RCV) determines the candidate with the strongest overall support by allowing voters to cast their ballots for the candidates they wish to without concern of a potential “spoiler candidate” effect; and

WHEREAS, under current Wisconsin election statutes, municipalities are not authorized to use ranked-choice voting for the election of local offices; and

WHEREAS, using RCV for municipal general elections would eliminate the need for primary elections, and would in turn be more cost-efficient for the city; and

WHEREAS, eliminating primary elections would minimize the number of trips voters take to the polls, and would streamline the election process; and

WHEREAS, RCV has successfully been implemented in municipalities across the United States, such as Springfield, Illinois; New York City, New York; and Burlington, Vermont; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Appleton supports the implementation of ranked choice voting for all municipal elections such as the offices of Mayor and of Alderpersons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Appleton urges the State of Wisconsin Senate and Assembly to amend state law to authorize municipalities to enact ranked-choice voting for local offices at their discretion; and

BE IT FINALLY FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Towns Association, the Wisconsin League of Municipalities, and all members of the State Legislature.