

Commissioners

MARISEL A. HERNANDEZ, Chair
WILLIAM J. KRESSE, Commissioner/Secretary



CHARLES HOLIDAY, JR., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Pat Dowell
Chairman, Committee on the Budget and Government Operations

From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-01 Same Day Voting

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Dowell requested the total number of registered voters in Chicago and the number of voters that registered via same day voter registration**

Total number of registered voters in Chicago:
1,584,293

Number of voters that registered via same day voter registration:
March 2020 – 14,799
November 2020 – 25,668

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-02 ADA Site Violations

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Reboyras requested a list of sites by Ward with ADA violations**

The Board continues to speak with the Department of Justice and our partners at Equip for Equality weekly on our efforts to ensure accessibility at all of Chicago's polling places. There were a total of 1,469 locations that the Board utilized historically as polling sites. Per their review, approximately all voting locations have one or more possible ADA infractions that have been identified, from the very minor to the very major.

Our investigators are currently in the field completing surveys for private polling locations and searching for replacements for inaccessible locations, and we will continue working with the City of Chicago and sister agencies including Chicago Public Schools and the Park District to identify accessible public locations for polling places. The Board is also still in the process of completing surveys for the private sites. Once these surveys are complete, the entities will notify the Board of what the final infractions are and the remediation protocols for ADA compliance. To date, approximately 850 surveys have been completed.

The Board will provide the Chicago City Council a full report at its next budget hearing in 2022.

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

Commissioners

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-03 Overtime and Extra Hires

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Thompson requested justifications for increased overtime and extra hire lines**

As there was no election in 2021, our 2022 budget plans for extra hires and employees utilizing overtime to assist with the upcoming June 28th Primary and November 8th General Elections, as well as initial preparations for the February 2023 Municipal Election and the April 2023 Run-Off Election.

Overtime and extra hire duties include: processing of vote by mail ballot applications; preparing voter applications and updating voter records; assisting with processing new voter registrations; assisting trainers with the training of judges, standby coordinators, and deputy registrars; assisting in the preparation of voting equipment; delivery of extra election materials and supplies to polling places as required; processing and counting vote-by-mail ballots; and additional support for the warehouse and movement of all stored equipment in and out of the facility.

This budget line also includes accrued vacation time and/or administrative leave payouts for employees that retire from or leave the Chicago Board of Elections.

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CHARLES HOLIDAY, JR., *Executive Director*

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-04 Non-ADA Sites

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Thompson requested the total number of non-ADA voting locations**

The Board continues to speak with the Department of Justice and our partners at Equip for Equality weekly on our efforts to ensure accessibility at all of Chicago's polling places. There were a total of 1,469 locations that the Board utilized historically as polling sites. Per their review, approximately all voting locations have one or more possible ADA infractions that have been identified, from the very minor to the very major.

Our investigators are currently in the field completing surveys for private polling locations and searching for replacements for inaccessible locations, and we will be working with the City of Chicago and sister agencies including Chicago Public Schools and the Park District to identify accessible public locations for polling places. Once these surveys are complete, the entities will notify the Board of what the final infractions are and the remediation protocols for ADA compliance. To date, approximately 850 surveys have been completed.

We plan to provide the Chicago City Council a full report by our next budget hearing in 2022.

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-05 Cyber Security

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Tunney requested a list of cybersecurity upgrades and investments**

The Board has proactively upgraded its cybersecurity around all of its election operations, including investing in:

- Increased firewalls for Board servers, backup hardware, desktop and laptop computers, and all additional software
- Increased website and email security
- Software upgrades – endpoint, intrusion detection & prevention, log monitoring, and anti-virus
- Penetration tests and phishing campaigns
- Cyber security trainings for staff and personnel
- Network security consulting services & configuration support
- Physical security upgrades to Board offices including security cameras

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MEMORANDUM

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-06 Ald. Reilly Pre-Hearing Questions

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

Ald. Reilly Pre-Hearing Questions:

- **Changes in headcount projected for 2022**

18 positions will be filled.

- **Number of funded vacancies and breakdown for 2022**

We have 18 current vacancies we are planning to fill, including for Spanish and South Asian Outreach Coordinators. Please note this information is also included in the 2022 Department Budget Hearing Document book provided to aldermen.

1. Seven Positions - Clerk
2. One Position - Principal Clerk
3. One Position - Computer Applications Analyst II
4. One Position - Senior Clerk
5. Two Positions - Polling Place Investigator I
6. One Position - Election Equipment and Supply Specialist
7. Two Positions - Community Services Representatives



- 8. One Position - Senior Supervisor
- 9. One Position - Compliance Officer
- 10. One Position - Supervisor of Registration

- **Number of vacancies being cut – what positions (job titles) are being eliminated?**

2 – Clerk

- **Number of non-union employees to receive salary increases in 2022 budget**

70

- **Description of outsourced services projected for 2022**

A description of outsourced services include: voting equipment, ballot printing, mailing, electronic poll books, temporary staffing for peak-period activities, election judge trainers, hearing officers, handwriting experts, Election Day investigators (off-duty police officers), cartage, couriers, database management, legal services, graphic design, printing, translations & language outreach.

- **List of savings and cost-efficiencies due to zero-based budgeting**

A description of savings include: increased use of mail room for small and mid-sized mailings; increased use of print room for small to mid-sized print jobs; and reduction in phone lines.

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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From: Charles Holiday, Jr.
Executive Director
Chicago Board of Election Commissioners

CC: Manuel Perez
Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-07 Precinct Consolidation

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. La Spata requested information on other cities on the impact of precinct consolidation on election turnout**

It is important to note that universal vote centers are an alternative to traditional precincts and provide a flexible option for voters to cast their ballot – but they are not a total replacement for other voting methods. When an election jurisdiction opts to use vote centers, voters may cast their ballots on Election Day at any vote center in the jurisdiction, regardless of their residential address. Under the vote center model, a jurisdiction may reduce the number of polling places from precinct sites. At vote centers, voters are checked in via electronic poll books to ensure the voter registration database is updated at all voting locations within the jurisdiction.

The advantages of using universal vote centers include: increasing voter convenience, as citizens can vote near home, near work or school, or anywhere that is convenient; and increasing financial savings, as fewer locations to staff means Election Day expenses are reduced. Vote centers also limit the number of provisional ballots if a voter votes at the wrong precinct since all voters are voting at the predetermined vote centers.

Seventeen states allow jurisdictions to use vote centers on Election Day: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa (for some elections), Kansas, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Additionally, the State of Illinois has allowed Election Day vote centers for the 2020 and 2022 elections, but only on a temporary basis due to



the COVID-19 pandemic. It proved to be a valuable and popular service for Chicago voters in 2020, but the Illinois General Assembly has *not* yet authorized the use of vote centers for any election after November of 2022.

Colorado was the first state to use vote centers with a pilot program in Larimer County in 2003 and 2004, consolidating the polling place locations from 143 precincts to 22 vote centers, which resulted in an efficient election with increased turnout and staffed by better trained personnel, per the [Larimer County Vote Center Statistics](#).

As for reducing the number of its precincts, the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners is greatly restrained by current state statutes that limit the number of registered voters who can live within a precinct. The Board intends to maximize the allowable number of voters in each precinct so as to reduce the total number of precincts as much as permissible under current state law. Many other election jurisdictions throughout the state, including the Cook County Clerk and the five other election commissions in Illinois, are encouraging the General Assembly to increase the statutory limits on the number of voters who reside within a precinct, thus allowing further reduction of the total number of precincts. The current statutory limit was established back when almost all voters cast ballots in their home precinct on Election Day, prior to the implementation of early voting and no-excuse mail-in balloting. With these newer voting options, only about 30% of voters actually cast ballots at their precinct in the 2020 general election. Thus, there is plenty of room to reduce the number of precincts without increasing the number of voters who actually use them, but the law must be changed in Springfield in order to have any great impact in this regard. The Election Code would also have to be amended to allow for the future use of vote centers on Election Day to supplement the reduced number of precincts.

For comparison, Chicago has many more precincts than other U.S. jurisdictions, despite the fact that on a national scale, fewer and fewer voters are casting ballots in person on Election Day. [A 2004 study by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#) found that the national average allows 1,100 voters per precinct, whereas Chicago has almost twice the number of precincts because of the statutory limit of only 600 voters each. Thus, Chicago could essentially cut in half its number of precincts and still remain roughly on target with the national average. Supplementing the reduced number of precincts with universal vote centers on Election Day, as discussed above, would also greatly improve voter convenience and accessibility, while still enjoying the tremendous cost savings of a substantial reduction in voting sites.

Recent media stories and election authority links on the impact of vote centers and/or precinct consolidation include:

- [With Mail Ballots, California Set Historic Voter Turnout Despite Pandemic, Distrust](#) – Times of San Diego, 11/28/2020
 - *“Mail ballots and vote centers in 2020 proved popular with voters, registrars said. We heard positive feedback from a lot of voters about being able to vote early, and then also be able to vote at any location,” said Deva Proto, Sonoma County registrar of voters.*”

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- [Vote centers bring turnout in Brazoria County despite cut in polling locations](#) – Houston Community Impact, Haley Morrison, 10/9/2020
- [An Initial Look at Voter Turnout in the 2021 New York City Primaries](#) – Gotham Gazette, Ethan Geringer-Sameth, 7/10/2021
- [Cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson and Boulder City have joined together to offer voting across jurisdictional boundaries](#) – 2019 Municipal Elections, LasVegasNevada.gov
- [Los Angeles County Vote Center Information](#)
- [Vote at the Voting Center On or Before Election Day](#) – City and County of San Francisco
- [Benefits of the Vote Center Model](#) – Larimer County, CO

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-08 Precinct Consolidation

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. La Spata requested a date on when aldermen would get an update on precinct consolidation and polling site finalization**

There is no set date when Chicago's new precinct map will be available. The Illinois Legislature must enact new legislation and amend the Election Code for the Chicago Board of Elections to be able to perform a major precinct consolidation. Furthermore, the Board's precinct remapping is heavily dependent upon the new Ward map that the City Council is planning to approve by December 1, 2021. If the City Council-approved map is challenged in the courts, or if the Council fails to approve a map by December 1 and competing maps are sent to a voter referendum, then those delays in finalizing the new Ward map would also delay the Board in establishing its new precinct map.

Assuming the City Council successfully adopts a new Ward map in December that is not challenged by any lawsuits, the Board's list of finalized polling places for the June 28, 2022, Primary Election would be released shortly after on-site surveys have been completed and agreements are signed by the polling place proprietors.

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-09 2022 Voting Information

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Spasato requested the upcoming 2022 Early Voting days, voting hours, and Vote-By-Mail start date**

Under state and federal law, voters may begin applying for mail-in ballots 90 days before an election. The Board may then begin sending those mail-in ballots to the qualified voters no sooner than 40 days before the election (or 45 days for federal military/overseas ballots). Early voting will begin no less than 15 days prior to each election (the rescheduled 2022 primary election will be held on June 28, 2022).

The Board is planning for its 2022 Election Calendar to be approved for publication at the October 12, 2021 Board meeting, and the document will then be readily available to elected officials and the general public on the Board's website and social media, and with paper copies available at its office.

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.

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Date: 9/30/21

Re: 39-10 Cybersecurity

The attached information is in response to questions posed at the hearing for the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners (the "Board") on 9/28/21 to discuss the proposed 2022 budget.

- **Ald. Villegas requested the name of our cybersecurity specialist**

Rahul K. Patel, PHD – Elections Information Security Officer, rpatel@chicagoelections.gov

As always, please let me know if you have any further questions.