



CITY OF COLUMBUS

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Column #31 – The Polls Are Open

“Under the Clock Tower”

I’m writing this month’s *Under the Clock Tower* on the day of the 2016 Iowa Caucus. Wait, didn’t that happen months ago? You mean with all of news and seemingly endless chatter about the Presidential Candidates there hasn’t even been a vote cast yet?

Today also marks the day that voters in Wisconsin can vote absentee for the Spring Primary. For these reasons, and given it’s another Presidential election year, I “elected” to write about election issues, ones that really mean something to us in Columbus.

2016 will see the City hold four elections: the Spring Primary, on February 16th; the Spring General, on April 5th; the Fall Primary, on August 9th and the Fall General (or Presidential) on November 8th. For Columbus, the Spring Primary does have an election to work with. It’s the Wisconsin Supreme Court election, where currently three candidates are to be whittled down to two. The election for local offices (City Council and School Board) will be held on the Spring General, because the number of candidates were not enough to trigger a primary.

One of the biggest changes that voters will experience this year is the return of the photo ID requirement for voting. After a couple of years of court challenges and legal review, this requirement is now, required. The City of Columbus website: www.cityofcolumbuswi.com has further information on how you should prepare for casting your votes this year.

The switch to the photo ID requirement is just one of the many constant changes that the State and Federal government imposes on the procedures for elections. City Clerk Anne Donahue is continually reviewing and planning for how to implement them. Another key cog in the process is the dedication and hard work of our city’s Election Workers, who put in long hours to ensure a smooth and legal election process. This goes well beyond their work on Election Day, but also through many hours of training to keep up to speed with the rapid changes imposed from above that I alluded to earlier. Please treat our Election Workers with the respect afforded to those who truly want to serve their community, which they clearly do.

For those who have never voted in the City of Columbus, the polling place is the Columbus Area Senior Center, 125 N. Dickason Boulevard. The polling hours for Election Day are 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. I hope to see you there!

If you have any questions on this or any other issue before city government, please contact me down at City Hall at 623-5900 or via email at pvaardersanden@columbuswi.us.

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