

'UpFront': Local government coalition defending clerks ahead of tomorrow's election

Posted on Monday, Apr 4, 2022

Ahead of tomorrow's spring election, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities is defending local election clerks.

"Our motivation is first to rebuild faith and confidence in elections because if we don't have that, we don't have democracy," Jerry Deschane, executive director of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, said on WISN's 'UpFront.' "That's tremendously troubling. Our ulterior motive, and we have an ulterior motive, is we want to keep those talented clerks doing the job of a municipal clerk."

The league, alongside the Wisconsin Counties Association and Wisconsin Towns Association, launched a new "Build Trust in Elections" coalition along with a statewide PSA featuring election clerks from the Town of Neenah, Village of Kohler and Village of Cobb.

"What we're trying to point out in the PSA is these are not people working in a deep dark office behind a locked door somewhere," Deschane said on the program, which is produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

He noted the campaign was specifically launched after the legislative session ended and is expected to continue through the fall election.

"We wanted to be very clear, this is not about the policy discussion," Deschane said. "This is not about any particular piece of legislation. This is about the people that run elections."

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley says a decision could come early this summer on whether the Republican National Committee will pick Milwaukee to host the 2024 convention.

Crowley, a Democrat, was part of a Milwaukee delegation that made its final pitch to RNC officials in Washington.

“This is a bipartisan effort,” Crowley said. “When we think about the Republican National Committee coming here to have one of their big parties right here in our own backyard, we want them to know this is an inviting place, this is a safe place and we have a lot to offer.”

Crowley acknowledged more discussions may need to take place with members of the Milwaukee Common Council, which would have to sign off on the plan.

“I think that we have to continue having this conversation,” Crowley said. “And I think the question is have they been engaged in those conversations up until this point, and if they haven’t, we have to make sure that we are.”

Milwaukee and Nashville are the two finalists.

Crowley said he’s continuing his behind-the-scenes push to convince the Legislature to allow the county to increase its local sales tax, pointing to potential from big events like the RNC.

Crowley noted that the estimated \$6 million in economic impact from the recent NCAA tournament weekend in Milwaukee will result in \$32,000 for Milwaukee County.

“We’re continuously having those conversations,” Crowley said. “Unfortunately they’re not in session right now, so we’re talking with businesses, we’ve been having MMAC, GMC at the table talking to businesses, and they’re on board on why we need this sales tax in order to make the quality of life investment right here in our backyard.”

Former Foxconn executive Alan Yeung is pushing back at criticism over his new job at UW-Madison’s College of Engineering.

“My first intent had been to serve, to actually pay back to my alma mater that gave me everything I accomplished, and that’s the intent,” Yeung said.

UW-Madison said Yeung will serve as a professor of practice for entrepreneurship. He started his new position Friday.

“It’s always hard when you fight for increased state investment in higher education and then see absurd spending decisions that piss money away,” State Rep. Gordon Hintz, D-Oshkosh, tweeted about the hire.

Yeung is out with a new book where he documents his time as a Foxconn executive during the height of the Wisconsin project’s negotiations and deal.

“I think there were a lot of people who were behind the scenes working hard to make it happen, and these were patriots,” Yeung said.

The deal with the state has since been renegotiated and scaled back and the company’s initial commitment of 13,000 jobs has dropped to 1,454 by 2025 in its new contract with the state.

“I think everybody would look back and say we aimed very high,” Yeung said. “And I think that’s a culture and aspiration of this company, Foxconn. I think we aim very high. We want to do a lot, and we achieved good things. As I said before, if you feel disappointed maybe your time frame is a little bit too short. I think we have a few years ahead of us that many great things will happen.”

Watch the show:

<https://www.wisn.com/article/upfront-groups-warn-of-continued-clerk-scrutiny-ahead-of-election/39614044>