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City of Green Bay Statement on November Election

(Green Bay) - The article published by the Wisconsin Spotlight makes egregious and false accusations about the integrity of the November election. The City's conduct of elections in 2020 has been heavily scrutinized, including being the subject of numerous records requests, news articles, and lawsuits. In each case, the City's actions have been upheld. These allegations are completely without merit.

The City conducted the election in accordance with state and federal laws, with our legal department vetting the decisions being made leading up to the November election, and City staff engaging in frequent consultations with the Wisconsin Elections Commission to help shape our decisions. The article also makes numerous statements that are inaccurate, so let this statement set the record straight.

The election was administered exclusively by City staff. As part of the \$1.6M election grant award, the City received technical assistance from experts in elections, security, public relations and analysis. They provided additional input and insight, but never had access to ballots, computers, storage, equipment or the like. When staff agreed with the recommendations, we implemented those suggestions. When staff did not, the City implemented our preferred course of action.

No ballots were ever in the care or custody of these consultants. Absentee ballots were kept at City Hall exclusively until they were delivered, by City staff and in City vehicles, to the KI Convention Center at 6:00am on Election Day, utilizing a clear, documented chain of custody made up exclusively of City staff. Central Count moved to the KI Convention Center at the request of both the Democratic and Republican Parties of Wisconsin, who jointly voiced concerns with holding Central Count at City Hall. In addition, City staff determined that compliance with social distancing recommendations, from our local, regional and national health authorities, would be difficult with an increased interest from observers. As required by statute, the City conferred with the Wisconsin Election Commission (WEC) before finalizing the decision to move Central Count

to KI. Elections observers were allowed at KI, and a livestream of Central Count was made available as a supplemental option to increase the ability for the public to observe as well.

The Central Count Chief Inspector was in charge at KI at all times, and was overseeing all activities. The Chief Inspector was present from the moment the doors were opened until the count was concluded.

The City of Green Bay was *one of over 100* municipalities in Wisconsin to receive an election grant. The “WI-5” refers to the only five municipalities in Wisconsin, including Green Bay, which were sued by Erick Kaardal of Minnesota for accepting the grant. Erick Kaardal was referred to the Committee on Grievances last month for possible sanctions after a judge determined that the lawsuits he filed to overturn the presidential election results in several states smacks of “political gamesmanship.” The funds were properly used to purchase PPE, supplies, equipment, pay poll workers, and to quickly adapt to ever changing circumstances due to the pandemic.

We are confident that the election was carried out legally and with integrity, and the hard work of our dedicated staff is to be commended. The City legal department has reviewed all of the allegations in the article and agrees that they are without merit.

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