

Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: Schmidt, Dale

Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 6:35:00 PM


To: Town of Ashippun Clerk

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle

Subject: Ballot Drop Boxes

Response requested: No

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Good evening, Michelle,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Ashippun has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system.

Let me be clear, it is **my intent is to ensure every legitimate vote is counted and everyone who is legally permitted by law to vote has the opportunity to vote one time.**

I am asking today for some clarifying information so that I know what exactly you have in place. While it is your job to collect and count the votes, if there are complaints of fraud or illegal election activity, it is the responsibility of law enforcement to investigate any illegal activity. Here are my questions:

1. Are you in fact using election drop boxes?
2. What specifically is your process? (Where is the box located, how often are the ballots collected, is anything else allowed to be dropped in the same box) A photo of your drop box would be very much appreciated.
3. Is your drop box monitored by a camera?
4. Is your camera located in a place where it can't be tampered with?
5. How long is your video footage stored?
6. Is your video storage capability consistent with your municipality's ordinance on record retention. (remember if your ordinance doesn't define how long you keep video, it must be kept according to state statute retention standards)
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9. How will you ensure that only one ballot is dropped off by the person who is voting as required by the Supreme Court (unless voting for a disabled person as allowed by the Supreme Court)?
10. Do you have any other security procedures in place regarding drop box voting?

It is very important that I have answers to these questions and appreciate your assistance in obtaining this information. As we have our next election in just under 2 weeks, I would appreciate a response as soon as you are able. I want to do my diligence in ensuring our election processes are done well and without even the perception of fraud. I appreciate your assistance in doing so.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

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DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

WILEAG ACCREDITED AGENCY

Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: [Schmidt, Dale](#)

Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 6:36:00 PM


To: clerk@townofhustisford.gov

Cc: [Van Egtern, Danielle](#)

Subject: FW: Ballot Drop Boxes

Response requested: No

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Good evening, Agnes,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Hustisford has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system.

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Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

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FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

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DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

WILEAG ACCREDITED AGENCY

Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: Schmidt, Dale

Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 10:12:00 AM

To: Aimee Mallon

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Thank you for the quick response, Aimee,

I completely appreciate what you are saying and the dilemma you have. My concern is that if you allow these without the continued follow up of having them come in, will only spread and more and more in future years will do it because one neighbor told another neighbor and now you have more and more people doing it.

My recommendation would be to tweak your process slightly as I understand the issue. If I were you I would still post that it is not a drop box. I would still call people in to verify as you are able because your posting would say it is not a drop box, but since drop boxes are legal, you if someone didn't show up, you wouldn't have to reject it at the poll.

I think this would be best for the town, best for the integrity of the election process, and best to keep you out of any media (or social media) story that might pop up if people find the town does accept them.

Of course, it is your decision, and I am simply making recommendations, but that is how I think it would be best handled to alleviate the issue you have. I am confident if you don't do it this way, it will snowball and be a bigger issue in future elections.

Let me know your thoughts and thank you for the difficult work you do with elections. It is a thankless job.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

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Cell: 

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DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

WILEAG ACCREDITED AGENCY

From: Aimee Mallon <townclerkofbd@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 8:44 PM
To: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>
Subject: Re: Ballot Drop Boxes

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Verify sender before opening links and attachments.

Good evening,

I apologize for the format of this email, but it seemed the easiest way to respond to your questions.

- **Are you in fact using election drop boxes?**
- I am not advertising the use of drop boxes. The town hall has a secure drop box to the left of the main door that I cannot close off as it is used for tax and permit payments. IF someone drops their ballot off that way I plan to accept it and put it on the dropbox incident log as provided by Danielle. Every election, even with a sign on the drop box, I have always gotten one or two ballots in there. I have then done my best to then contact the person and have them come to the town hall and physically hand the ballot to me and explain why they put it in the dropbox that was marked not to (as trained by Abby Klodowski). Everytime the person has stated it was because they remembered during Covid when they could. If the person fails to reach back out to me that ballot has been rejected at the polls. Accepting it now would eliminate the ballot being rejected.
- **What specifically is your process? (Where is the box located, how often are the ballots collected, is anything else allowed to be dropped in the same box) A photo of your drop box would be very much appreciated.**
- As stated above I am not anticipating any ballots being put in the drop box and it is also used for payments to the town. The drop box is checked every time myself or the treasurer (she is also an election worker and the one who places the absentee ballots in the DS200) are at the town hall, almost daily from the time absentee voting started. I am in the office tomorrow and can send you a photo or you are welcome to stop out and see the dropbox/camera system whenever, just let me know and I will meet you at the town hall. The drop box is a slot to the left of the main door and the box part itself is located inside the town hall.
- **Is your drop box monitored by a camera?**
- Yes, the town hall has cameras monitoring the parking lot, front door outside and inside, as well as other areas inside the town hall. The drop box is in camera view.
- **Is your camera located in a place where it can't be tampered with?**
- Yes, they are physically too high to be reached and there are other cameras that would catch any attempt to tamper with the main ones with the view of the drop box. The system itself is located inside the Town Hall Police Department.
- **How long is your video footage stored?**
- **Is your video storage capability consistent with your municipality's ordinance on record retention. (remember if your ordinance doesn't define how long you keep video, it must be kept according to state statute retention standards)**
- I will double-check with Chief Feucht, but I do believe it follows the state retention standards. The Town formally adopted the state standards shortly after I became clerk as I did not see an ordinance for record keeping when I started. The camera system was set up with former Police Chief Matt Riel and Richard Dahl after this.
- **Is your video storage in a secure location?**
- Yes, it is located in a locked room inside the Town Hall that very few have a key too. The town hall is also always locked unless myself or the treasurer are there to meet with someone.
- **What is your process if suspicious activity is discovered?**
- IF suspicious activity were to be discovered I would contact WEC and then Danielle to let her know what occurred and the WEC response for how to handle appropriately. I would then handle it based on their recommendations and document it.
- **How will you ensure that only one ballot is dropped off by the person who is voting as required by the Supreme Court (unless voting for a disabled person as allowed by the Supreme Court)?**

- I have the ability to view the cameras and look up the person's photo ID to verify identity. Each absentee voter must have their ID on file with me.
- **Do you have any other security procedures in place regarding drop box voting?**
- Other than cameras and an incident log I do not. I am open to what else you think I should be doing. I am open to putting a sign on the drop box stating no absentee ballots again, but I cannot guarantee people won't drop them in there anyway. I also feel like I should still accept them as they are allowed to use one?

Complaints I have gotten for the last few elections that I have worked have been that people view the drop box as more secure than the mail and wanted to see it come back. They trust that it is getting to me securely, on time, and not potentially being tampered with in the mail.

They also raised the point that once I mail an absentee ballot out I cannot be sure who is voting on it and mailing it back. In listening to the voters I see their point and I want to provide them with the means they are comfortable voting, but I also understand why others would not be comfortable with this.

Hoping we can work together and come up with a plan (that while we may not like it) we feel it is most secure for everyone and not hindering their voting,

On Thu, Aug 1, 2024, 6:33 PM Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us> wrote:

Good evening, Aimee,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Beaver Dam has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system. Let me be clear, it is **my intent is to ensure every legitimate vote is counted and everyone who is legally permitted by law to vote has the opportunity to vote one time.**

I am asking today for some clarifying information so that I know what exactly you have in place. While it is your job to collect and count the votes, if there are complaints of fraud or illegal election activity, it is the responsibility of law enforcement to investigate any illegal activity. Here are my questions:

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10. Do you have any other security procedures in place regarding drop box voting?

It is very important that I have answers to these questions and appreciate your assistance in obtaining this information. As we have our next election in just under 2 weeks, I would appreciate a response as soon as you are able. I want to do my diligence in ensuring our election processes are done well and without even the perception of fraud. I appreciate your assistance in doing so.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

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Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: Schmidt, Dale


Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 4:26:00 PM

To: Aimee Mallon

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Thank you, Aimee. I think you made a wise decision. I appreciate you taking time to evaluate my input. Keep up the great work.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: 

Cell: 

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**DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE**

WILEAG ACCREDITED AGENCY

From: Aimee Mallon <townclerkofbd@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 1:20 PM

To: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Subject: Re: Ballot Drop Boxes

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Verify sender before opening links and attachments.

Thank you,

I have placed a sign on the drop box asking for them to be mailed or given to me in person. If I happen to receive one I will contact the voter to confirm they are the person who dropped it off. I will also document this on the ballot log given to me by the county.

As we are discussing elections I want to let you know that the Town of Beaver Dam has plans to move onto Bagdger Books instead of the paper pollbook used in the past. This was ordered at the end of 2023 and has

been back ordered for months, I am now anticipating deliver this Monday according to an email update they sent this week.

I do not plan to use Badger Books until 2025.

Thank you,

On Fri, Aug 2, 2024, 10:12 AM Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us> wrote:

Thank you for the quick response, Aimee,

I completely appreciate what you are saying and the dilemma you have. My concern is that if you allow these without the continued follow up of having them come in, will only spread and more and more in future years will do it because one neighbor told another neighbor and now you have more and more people doing it.

My recommendation would be to tweak your process slightly as I understand the issue. If I were you I would still post that it is not a drop box. I would still call people in to verify as you are able because your posting would say it is not a drop box, but since drop boxes are legal, you if someone didn't show up, you wouldn't have to reject it at the poll.

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Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

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From: Aimee Mallon <townclerkofbd@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 8:44 PM

To: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Subject: Re: Ballot Drop Boxes

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Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

FBI LEEDS 81st Class

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

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Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: [Schmidt, Dale](#)


Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:45:00 AM

To: [Michelle Liesener](#)

Cc: [Van Egtern, Danielle](#); 'Chairman Meyer'

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Thank you, Michelle,

For your information, you are the only municipality that I am aware of in Dodge County that has decided to continue with a drop box. There were 3 but the other 2 have since decided against it. Also, for your awareness, I will be putting together some kind of release to the community that I have worked with the clerks to ensure security of our elections to the best of my ability. I will not be specifically citing your town in my release, but if asked, I will share that Ashippun is the only one accepting drop box ballots.

Additionally, there are no answers to the questions cited regarding #8 and #9 below. I would encourage you to ensure that processes be in place regarding those items.

Thank you for your time in reviewing this and thank you for your work as the Clerk in Ashippun.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

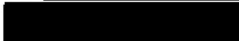
Dodge County Sheriff's Office


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**DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE**

WILEAG ACCREDITED AGENCY

From: Michelle Liesener <townclerk@townofashippun.org>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:28 AM

To: Schmidt, Dale <dtschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>; 'Chairman Meyer' <chairmanmeyer@townofashippun.org>

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Verify sender before opening links and attachments.

Sheriff Schmidt,

I answered the questions below in red. I also attached photos of the secure drop box at the Town Hall. Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Michelle Liesener

Clerk/Treasurer Town of Ashippun

From: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 6:36 PM

To: Town of Ashippun Clerk <townclerk@townofashippun.org>

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>

Subject: Ballot Drop Boxes

Good evening, Michelle,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Ashippun has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system.

Let me be clear, it is **my intent is to ensure every legitimate vote is counted and everyone who is legally permitted by law to vote has the opportunity to vote one time.**

I am asking today for some clarifying information so that I know what exactly you have in place. While it is your job to collect and count the votes, if there are complaints of fraud or illegal election activity, it is the responsibility of law enforcement to investigate any illegal activity. Here are my questions:

1. Are you in fact using election drop boxes? yes
2. What specifically is your process? (Where is the box located, how often are the ballots collected, is anything else allowed to be dropped in the same box) A photo of your drop box would be very much appreciated. See attached photos. Box is checked 1 time a day. Other items are allowed in the same box.
3. Is your drop box monitored by a camera? yes
4. Is your camera located in a place where it can't be tampered with? yes
5. How long is your video footage stored? 90 days or as long as needed.
6. Is your video storage capability consistent with your municipality's ordinance on record retention. (remember if your ordinance doesn't define how long you keep video, it must be kept according to state statute retention standards) yes
7. Is your video storage in a secure location? yes
8. What is your process if suspicious activity is discovered?
9. How will you ensure that only one ballot is dropped off by the person who is voting as required by the Supreme Court (unless voting for a disabled person as allowed by the Supreme Court)?
10. Do you have any other security procedures in place regarding drop box voting? Security sticker is used. Limited access to keys to open box.

It is very important that I have answers to these questions and appreciate your assistance in obtaining this information. As we have our next election in just under 2 weeks, I would appreciate a response as soon as you are able. I want to do my diligence in ensuring our election processes are done well and without even the perception of fraud. I appreciate your assistance in doing so.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office

President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

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Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:12 PM

From: Schmidt, Dale


Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 1:28:00 PM

To: Michelle Liesener

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle; 'Chairman Meyer'

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Ok, Thank you.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

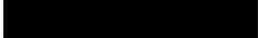
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From: Michelle Liesener <townclerk@townofashippun.org>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 12:03 PM

To: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>; 'Chairman Meyer' <chairmanmeyer@townofashippun.org>

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Verify sender before opening links and attachments.

I didn't realize I am the only one using a drop box. So far I have not received any returned absentee ballots in the drop box. I have decided to close it.

Thank you,

Michelle Liesener

Clerk/Treasurer Town of Ashippun

From: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:48 AM

To: Town of Ashippun Clerk <townclerk@townofashippun.org>

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>; 'Chairman Meyer' <chairmanmeyer@townofashippun.org>

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

Thank you, Michelle,

For your information, you are the only municipality that I am aware of in Dodge County that has decided to continue with a drop box. There were 3 but the other 2 have since decided against it. Also, for your awareness, I will be putting together some kind of release to the community that I have worked with the clerks to ensure security of our elections to the best of my ability. I will not be specifically citing your town in my release, but if asked, I will share that Ashippun is the only one accepting drop box ballots.

Additionally, there are no answers to the questions cited regarding #8 and #9 below. I would encourage you to ensure that processes be in place regarding those items.

Thank you for your time in reviewing this and thank you for your work as the Clerk in Ashippun.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office

President – Badger State Sheriffs' Association

President – Dodge County Executive Law Enforcement Association

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From: Michelle Liesener <townclerk@townofashippun.org>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:28 AM

To: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>

Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>; 'Chairman Meyer' <chairmanmeyer@townofashippun.org>

Subject: RE: Ballot Drop Boxes

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Verify sender before opening links and attachments.

Sheriff Schmidt,

I answered the questions below in red. I also attached photos of the secure drop box at the Town Hall. Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Michelle Liesener
Clerk/Treasurer Town of Ashippun

From: Schmidt, Dale <dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us>
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 6:36 PM
To: Town of Ashippun Clerk <townclerk@townofashippun.org>
Cc: Van Egtern, Danielle <dvanegtern@co.dodge.wi.us>
Subject: Ballot Drop Boxes

Good evening, Michelle,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Ashippun has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system. Let me be clear, it is **my intent is to ensure every legitimate vote is counted and everyone who is legally permitted by law to vote has the opportunity to vote one time.**

I am asking today for some clarifying information so that I know what exactly you have in place. While it is your job to collect and count the votes, if there are complaints of fraud or illegal election activity, it is the responsibility of law enforcement to investigate any illegal activity. Here are my questions:

1. Are you in fact using election drop boxes? yes
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Dale Schmidt
Sheriff
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Archived: Thursday, September 5, 2024 4:14:11 PM

From: [Schmidt, Dale](#)


Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 6:33:00 PM

To: townclerkofbd@gmail.com

Cc: [Van Egtern, Danielle](#)

Subject: Ballot Drop Boxes

Sensitivity: Normal

Original mail: Ballot Drop Boxes.msg 

Good evening, Aimee,

I am writing to you this evening as I have learned that the Town of Beaver Dam has elected to allow the use of ballot drop boxes for this year's election cycle. I understand that the supreme court has allowed for their use, and it is your right to do so. However, I have serious concerns regarding the use of drop boxes and even though it is your right to do so, I strongly encourage you to avoid using a drop box. Even if set up the best way possible to avoid the potential for fraudulent activity, criminal activity many times finds ways to subvert even the best plans. I also struggle with even the appearance of the potential for fraud even if no fraud occurs. The appearance of fraud can degrade trust in our system.

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It is very important that I have answers to these questions and appreciate your assistance in obtaining this information. As we have our next election in just under 2 weeks, I would appreciate a response as soon as you are able. I want to do my diligence in ensuring our election processes are done well and without even the perception of fraud. I appreciate your assistance in doing so.

Respectfully,

Dale Schmidt

Sheriff

Dodge County Sheriff's Office


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