



TERI FEIBEL, CMC

CITY CLERK & TREASURER

2021 ELECTION CONCERNS FOR DUPLICATE VOTING

THE PROBLEM

What is the problem?

- Having two polling places within Thorne Bay with only one voter precinct register.

What is a Precinct Register?

- The precinct register is used on Election Day and includes a space for each registered voter to sign his or her name. Only those voters who register 30 days prior to the election will appear on the precinct registers.

How was the problem created?

- The City Council adopted Ordinance 21-02-02-01, establishing two (2) polling places within Thorne Bay, 1) City Hall Council Chambers, 2) Davidson Landing Fire Hall

Why should this problem be solved?

- Two polling places with the same precinct register allows for one to vote in each location, which would invalidate the results of the election.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

All Municipal and State Elections have only ONE (1) polling location within each precinct. In Thorne Bay's case, the precinct covers all residents within the boundaries of Thorne Bay.

The official polling place for municipal elections is the Thorne Bay City Hall Council Chambers.

In 2015, the State of Alaska began holding absentee voting on election day in the Fire Hall at Davidson Landing. This was a result of residents requesting a polling place be put at Davidson Landing, so people did not have to drive 12 miles one way to the polls on election day, or 12 miles to town within the 30 days preceding the elections to vote an absentee ballot.

In February, Councilmembers Wes Craske & Jon Stram sponsored an ordinance to allow for two polling places in Thorne Bay. This ordinance was approved by the City Council on February 2, 2021.

Upon requesting two (2) precinct registers for the 2021 General Municipal Elections, from the State Division of Elections two weeks ago, they reached out by phone with concerns that Thorne Bay had created another polling place.

It is imperative that these concerns are addressed immediately, and the Clerk is requesting direction from the Council on how to proceed

SCENARIOS TO CONSIDER:

Comments from the State:

“Just because law may not prohibit something does not necessarily mean it is a good idea.

The state would not have multiple polling places open and assigned for one specific precinct.

The concerns I've listed below are just scenarios you might consider and discuss amongst yourselves as to how they would be addressed”

Two Precinct Registers: If there are duplicate copies of a precinct register (one in each location) how would workers verify an individual did not sign both registers and vote at each location?

Election Night Reporting: How would accountability from both polling locations be done at the end of the night? How would duplicate voting be handled? Could results be reported on Election Night if it was discovered someone voted twice? How would results be reported?

Live Ballots: Once a ballot is voted at the polling place, it is deposited through a scanner or directly into a ballot box and comingled with all other live ballots. If a voter voted at both locations, both ballots are comingled with all the ballots at that location. How would an issue like this be addressed?

Voter Confusion: The state will continue to have one polling place in Thorne Bay and offer the absentee voting in person option on Election Day at the South Thorne Bay location.

WORKABLE SOLUTIONS

Solution #1

Repeal Ordinance 21-02-02-01

- The ordinance was adopted February 2021 creating a second polling place for City Elections at Davidson Landing

Issues or barriers that may come across with this solution?

- Upset residents who have been fighting for the state to establish a second polling place within Thorne Bay.

Solution #2

Adopt an Ordinance designating Davidson Landing as an Absentee Voting Location

- Repeal Ordinance 21-02-02-01 & Adopt a new Ordinance that would Establish Davidson Landing as an Absentee Voting Location on Election Day for Municipal Elections

What are some barriers you might come across with this solution?

- Push back from residents who feel Thorne Bay does not need absentee voting on election day, as it is available for 30 days preceding the election.

Solution #3



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN ELECTION PRECINCT?

ELECTION (DAY) PRECINCTS

- The area served on election day by a single polling place.

POLLING PLACE

- A polling place is the specific location (typically a public building) where voters go to cast their ballots on election day.

A precinct or voting district, in the United States, is the smallest unit into which electoral districts are divided. A larger geographic unit such as a county, township, or city council district is typically subdivided into precincts and each address is assigned to a specific precinct. Each precinct has a specific polling station where its residents go to vote; however, more than one precinct may use the same polling station.