



November 6, 2015

Heckrodt Wetland Reserve Board  
Rob Roehrborn, Chairman  
1305 Plank Road  
Menasha, WI 54952

Dear Chairman Roehrborn & Board Members:

In response to your letter of August 12, 2015, I'm sorry to hear the Heckrodt Wetland Reserve Board is denying the City's request to use the facility for voting. Heckrodt has been a City of Menasha polling place since 2002. Over the years we have made modifications to voting procedures as requested by Heckrodt staff.

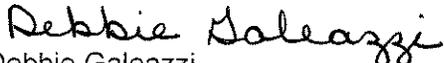
You stated one the reasons you are denying the request is a one day election turns into three days that the facility is not available for use by staff or public. We reserve the room for Election Day (Tuesday). City crews set up the room on the day before the election (Monday), which is a day that Heckrodt is closed to the public. Typically the City Crew is picking up the equipment by 8AM the day after the election (Wednesday). In the past we have honored the request of Heckrodt staff to only use half the large room allowing staff the use of half for their business.

Another reason you stated was during busy elections there are so many people in the building that Heckrodt staff could not move about the facility or use the restrooms. Every four years there is a busy election (Presidential and Mayoral). We have modified some election procedures to accommodate for the busy election. The poll workers have told me with these modifications there are fewer lines and voting moved smoothly with little or no issues.

You also stated Heckrodt staff has been yelled at, spit upon and threatened with canes from angry voters. It has never been reported to me by either Heckrodt staff or my poll workers of issues of voters yelling, spitting or threatening staff.

It saddens me that the residents of Aldermanic District 8 are denied the use of the facility as a polling place. We have secured another facility to use as a polling place.

Sincerely,

  
Debbie Galeazzi  
Menasha City Clerk

Cc: Menasha Common Council

RECEIVED

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CITY OF MENASHA  
BY \_\_\_\_\_ dg



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August 12, 2015

Debbie Galeazzi  
Menasha City Clerk  
140 Main Street  
Menasha, WI 54952-3151

Dear Debbie,

Our Executive Director, Tracey Koenig, recently forwarded me an e-mail from you requesting the use of Heckrodt Wetland Reserve facilities for elections on February 16<sup>th</sup>, April 5<sup>th</sup>, August 9<sup>th</sup>, and November 8<sup>th</sup>. After reviewing your request with Tracey and our board members, we will be respectfully declining your request. I am sure that you and other city employees are unaware of the detriment to our mission and the serious hardship this causes our staff so I thought I would outline these items:

- Elections are not mission-focused and prevent us from carrying out our mission. Each election prevents educational programming for 2 days (day of election and the day after since we don't know when election equipment will be removed from our facility). In 2016 that will be 8 days with 4 elections. In addition, for each election we must make arrangements for someone with elections to pick up a key and learn the security system so they have access of Monday to set up and before/after hours election day. So the total impact for each election is 3 days - a total of 12 days in 2016.
- February elections force us to move a regularly scheduled Turtle Tots program (usually always runs 3rd Tuesday of the month) to another week. This is confusing for participants that are used to coming the same week each month.
- Mayoral and Presidential elections close HWR business completely day of election. We cannot get to the restrooms or move about the Nature Center as usual with so many people in the building.
- When we remain open for election day, HWR staff must deal with election day questions and complaints (not HWR related questions, but election related questions and complaints). Our staff has been yelled at, spat upon, and threatened with canes from angry voters on issues we have no control over.
- Telephone calls - in the days and weeks leading up to the election voters call asking about where they vote and for details about absentee voting. People wishing to absentee vote show up at the Nature Center and are usually not happy when we tell them they have to go to City Hall. On the day of election, the phone rings constantly with voters asking about the length of the voting line, directions to the Nature Center, and to verify if they vote here. We have stopped answering the phone on election day, which means we miss some of our own business calls.
- The August election occurs in our prime visitor season and intimidates nature center visitors so they don't come in, or come in and leave before visiting the center due to voter lines, etc. The election signage often confuses visitors who think the nature center is closed.

Article 22 of our lease states "HWR shall have the exclusive right to manage the leased property so as to promote the educational, charitable, or scientific purposes of the reserve. The City shall have no right to limit **in any fashion** this exclusive right unless specified by this agreement, HWR's bylaws, or state or federal law." It is clear that pursuant to the terms of the lease, HWR has the right to deny the City's request to use HWR's facilities for use as a voting site during elections. For the reasons cited above, HWR is respectfully denying the City's request to use HWR's facilities for voting purposes.

Debbie, we appreciate the long standing positive relationship with the City and we are sure after reflecting on the hardship this causes our organization, other arrangements can be made. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Roehrborn', written in a cursive style.

Rob Roehrborn

[robert.roehrborn@gmail.com](mailto:robert.roehrborn@gmail.com)

**Heckrodt Wetland Reserve**

Chairman