

## Reflections of a Newly Minted Special Voting Deputy

Scott Liddicoat

In both February and April, I had the privilege of officially facilitating the voting process in several Green Bay senior care centers. For those who don't know, this is done every election for citizens who've requested a ballot but cannot easily leave a care facility to vote. Through City Hall, two SVD's follow specific guidelines to make sure the process is conducted fairly and impartially.

I do it for three reasons. One, it's a way to contribute to the fair administration of elections. Two, I'm supporting those who've led a full life and want to continue voting. It is, after all, the most hallowed of our country's rights. And three? I've got what it takes. A little bit of time. Some patience. And I have the mindset to perform this task not as a Democrat or Republican. But as a fair-minded American.

There were some sad moments during these visits. And to be sure, there were disappointments. But there were plenty of fun, inspiring incidents, too.

Like the nun who engaged me for a few moments after voting. Somehow she'd divined that I attended a Catholic elementary school. With a mischievous smile, she explained how she knew I had to have been a troublemaker during those years. Despite my best efforts and my own playful smile, there was no convincing her otherwise.

### Responsible

There were ordinary, but inspiring occurrences. Residents who wanted to vote in the worst way. But they were better motivated to vote responsibly. Over and over again, voting residents asked if it was acceptable to not vote for anyone in a race. This was a common question from voters new to a facility who didn't know local candidates yet. But they felt they were being negligent if

they didn't vote the entire ballot. They were looking for reassurance that it was

permissible to make the

responsible choice to skip a race. This in the belief they shouldn't vote for candidates they didn't know at all.

### Informed

On the flip side of this was a woman who brought with her a folder that was filled one-half inch full of papers. On top was a sample ballot she'd completed. The papers below? Computer printouts from each candidate's website, annotated and highlighted. She eagerly told us about her preparations before declaring she was here to VOTE! As we reviewed the necessary instructions, her impatience was clear. I've always thought of myself as an informed voter. But compared to her, I was thoroughly outclassed.

### Devoted

Then there was the veteran who had to be wheelchair to the activities room to vote. Upon arrival at the door, he insisted on wheeling himself in the rest of the way. He'd been helped into his Sunday best outfit, was clean shaven, and wearing his lieutenant's garrison cap. He had trouble speaking, but there was no mistaking the upright posture he took on and the salute he offered. Not having served, I felt a hint of embarrassment saluting back. But I was happy—and inspired—to give him his voting instructions. Then I gave

Meeting Change  
The Depot, Green Bay  
12:00 noon



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him the space he needed to confidentially perform his very sacred right.

**Responsible. Informed. Devoted.** We should all be such good Americans!

However, in the April 7<sup>th</sup> spring election not so many were. Wisconsin is currently home to 4.8 million adults of voting age. Among them, only 1.5 million, or 31%, voted.

That means 2.1 million registered Wisconsin voters didn't bother to show up. Add to them the 1.2 million unregistered voters who abandoned their right to vote. That's 3.3 million Wisconsin adults of voting age who turned their backs on the most sacred of our American institutions, the right—the responsibility—to vote.

No one should need this reminder. If we are to maintain the freedoms inherently ours in this great American Experiment, we citizens need to vote. Responsible citizens. Informed citizens. Devoted citizens. It's a requirement for free and self-governing people to participate in the political life of their nation. Either that, or lose it to political, bureaucratic, and judicial tyranny. Participation is the only way a government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed can survive.

There are very few excuses among the 3.3 million excuses for failing to vote that would satisfy the residents I assisted at care facilities in April. If you're among the 3.3 million, try coming up with one. Good luck. You'd be cut off mid-sentence and given a stern lecture instead. It might sound as simple as this:

Do your job.

*Scott*



**Ron Heuer talks to BCTA in regards to Wisconsin Election Integrity**

## February Meeting Notes

Today's speaker was Ron Heuer, President of the Wisconsin Voter Alliance. He shared his varied background, including serving as President and Exec VP of Sales for Universal Studios Travel Co. in Orlando, FL, leading several wholesale tour companies, and managing a large hotel operation in Canada. In 2010, he became involved in local politics as a Kewaunee County board member, later Board Chair, and then County Republican Party Chair. He helped form the Wisconsin Voter Alliance (WVA), a 501-C3, in 2020.

The organization's initial project was battling outside money impacting local elections in the form of "Zuckerbucks" which were private donations used by municipalities to run elections. Ultimately the WI Legislature agreed and ended the practice of outside money being used to operate elections. The organization's Vision is to "facilitate and coordinate restoration of voting integrity in the State of WI", and their Mission is "to effect change in laws and policies through public education and legal action to restore voter confidence."

The WVA was part of a landmark victory in the US Supreme Court in the case of *Bost v. IL State Board of Elections* where they sought to prevent the counting of absentee ballots received up to 14 days after the election. The case held that candidates can

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## Wisconsin's Shifting Energy Landscape: The Data Center Strain

Brian K Verheyden

Wisconsin is entering a period of significant utility instability. For the past decade, the state's electrical grid has operated under a predictable, steady-state model, but the introduction of massive data center projects is poised to break this equilibrium. To understand the risks ahead, we must examine how the state's stagnant generation capacity will collide with a sudden, overwhelming surge in annual demand.

### A Decade of Stagnation (2015–2025)

Between 2015 and 2025, Wisconsin's annual energy production was characterized by inertia rather than growth. In 2015, the state's total output sat at 66,389 thousand Megawatt-hours; by 2025, that figure had barely moved, reaching 67,136 thousand Megawatt-hours. While this lack of growth was manageable during a period of low demand, it has left the state with very little "breathing room" for new, energy-intensive industries.

During this period, the internal composition of the grid underwent a volatile shift. The state engaged in a forced trade-off between coal and natural gas. In 2015, coal was the primary reliable anchor, providing 56% of the state's power. By 2025, coal's share was slashed to 35%, replaced largely by natural gas, which climbed from 20% to 35%. This transition has made the state more dependent on gas pipelines and subject to the price fluctuations of a single fuel source.

### The Solar Trade-off

The rise of solar power has further complicated the grid's reliability. In 2015, solar was a minor, decentralized contributor, with small-scale rooftop installations making up 95% of the total solar output. Today, the landscape is dominated by utility-scale solar farms, which now account for 90% of Wisconsin's solar generation.

While this expansion has been used to justify the decommissioning of coal and gas plants, it introduces

the "intermittency problem." Unlike the fossil fuel plants they replace, solar farms cannot provide power on demand during peak winter evenings or cloudy stretches. This shift has effectively reduced the state's "firm" power—the energy that is guaranteed to be available regardless of weather conditions—at a time when annual demand is entering an unprecedented vertical climb.

### The Data Center Burden

This fragile balance is now being tested by the construction of two massive data centers. These facilities are projected to trigger an initial 20% annual increase in the state's total energy need. Even more concerning is the long-term forecast: as these facilities reach full capacity and secondary infrastructure follows, that annual demand is expected to balloon to a 50% increase over current levels. This is a staggering requirement for a grid that has seen less than 2% growth over the last ten years.

The arrival of these data centers presents several critical concerns for Wisconsin residents:

**Resource Competition:** Data centers operate 24/7, pulling massive amounts of "baseload" power. This forces utilities to keep aging fossil fuel plants online longer than planned or build expensive new gas infrastructure to ensure the lights stay on for the data centers when the sun isn't shining.

**Infrastructure Costs:** Supporting a 50% jump in annual load requires an aggressive overhaul of high-voltage transmission lines. The billions of dollars required for these upgrades are often passed down to residential ratepayers, potentially raising monthly bills to subsidize the operations of tech giants.

**Environmental Conflicts:** The sheer physical footprint of utility-scale solar required to offset even a fraction of a data center's massive annual consumption is enormous, often leading to the loss of valuable agricultural land.

Ultimately, Wisconsin's energy picture is moving from a decade of stability into a period of forced, expensive expansion. The state must now figure out how to satisfy the immense annual appetite of these digital warehouses without compromising the reliability of the grid or the wallets of local taxpayers.

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**February Meeting Notes**

hold officials accountable for failing to follow election law. Another issue WVA is dealing with concerns access to “Notices of Voting Eligibility” forms. WVA research suggests as many as 20,000 people adjudicated as incompetent to vote may still be registered to vote in WI and shared some local nursing home examples. WVA argues that these forms are public record and are needed to ensure court orders restricting voting rights are honored. Another is the Watson Case in Mississippi where they argue that no pre-election duties, including the receipt of ballots should be performed after election day. They have also filed suit in WI’s 7th District where the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) refused to adjudicate a “Help America Vote Act” complaint because WEC ruled they cannot adjudicate a claim against themselves, thereby rendering citizens no administrative remedy. WVA argues the integrity of the electoral process is harmed when states refuse to provide mandated administrative adjudication, leaving candidates and voters no recourse. These cases are meant to secure a legal standing to fight to ensure every state follows the federal election day mandate to require the fair and accurate counting of valid votes.

Business items: President Heidel reminded members interested in submissions to the Tax Times to get them to Directors Sladek or Goldhahn. Next month’s speaker will be State Representative David Steffen speaking on Data Center siting. The group discussed several options for future speakers or subject matter, with the focus being on subject matter. The next Executive Committee meeting will be April 8th. Due to extenuating circumstances, future meetings will remain at 1:00pm at the Village Grill until further notice. President Heidel provided an update to the group concerning an agreement with Director Verheyden to provide contract services to improve the appearance and use of our website. Director Sladek reported that our resolution concerning withholding legislative pay during government shutdowns had been received by our federal legislators, but none had replied by the

requested date. President Heidel will author a follow-up email to them inquiring about the status of their responses.

Reports: President Heidel suggested a letter to local school districts requesting tying school referendums to test results. He’ll provide additional details later. Director Schwalbach reported there were 1035 bills considered by the WI legislature, with 87 signed into law and 25 vetoes. There were also two joint resolutions that will be on a future ballot for Constitutional Amendments. One deals with preventing discrimination in state agencies, and the other with restricting governor line-item vetoes from creating new taxes or fees. He also attended a recent hearing on regulations for Data Centers which prompted a healthy discussion. The NEW Patriots have an upcoming forum on School Choice. Cale Pulczynski, Green Bay School District, shared information concerning budget issues and an upcoming operational referendum planned for the fall.

Notes submitted by Rod Goldhahn, Secretary

## **March Meeting Notes**

Vice President Dillenburg called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Visitors/candidates were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves. WI Secretary of State candidate Brayden Myer introduced himself and shared details of his campaign.

Today’s speaker was 4th Assembly District Representative David Steffen speaking on Data Center (DC) siting in Wisconsin. Representative Steffen is in his 12th year in the legislature and is Chair of the Energy & Utilities Committee. His committee is involved the DC siting issue because of their tremendous energy needs. With the explosion of AI, DC’s are being proposed across the US. Based on experiences in other states, WI is trying to set more public policy guardrails relative to DC’s. There are three main requirements: 1) the DC must pay for any additional energy supply needs up front, including any infrastructure needs, 2) DC’s must have closed loop cooling systems

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**Rep. David Steffen speaking on Data Center**

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to minimize new water use, and 3) if the DC has a renewable energy component, the supply must be on or adjacent to the DC property.

Energy generation is also a major challenge. WI is already not energy independent. We use six times the energy we produce in the state. A DC project in Racine is on hold as it would require as much energy as all of Dane County. The Port Washington DC, one of the three largest in North America, will require as much energy as the city of Los Angeles. Even if a DC is not in WI, we will feel the impact in regional competition for energy. Because of their size, DC's also require huge acreages of land, competing with agriculture and other users. With the energy capacity needs, there is growing interest in nuclear power, primarily in the form of small modular reactors (SMR's) that can be combined to supply varying levels of capacity. There are over 50 companies across the country developing this technology. A company called "Energy Solutions" based in Utah is the leading contender for WI. They are already purchasing land adja-

cent to previous nuclear sites to be close to cooling capability and access to the electrical grid infrastructure. The legislature is working on removing regulatory barriers to this technology, including adding a nuclear engineer to the Public Service Commission. Representative Steffens also responded to several questions and comments from the attendees.

Business items: VP Dillenburg reminded members interested in submissions to the Tax Times to get them to Directors Sladek or Goldhahn. Members were encouraged to submit suggestions for meeting speakers to President Heidel. The next Executive Committee meeting will be April 8th. Director Sladek reported that we have still had little response from our federal legislators concerning our resolution requiring withholding legislative pay during government shutdowns. President Heidel has authored a follow-up email to them inquiring about the status of their responses.

Reports: Director Schwalbach reported that the legislature has provided temporary funding to continue the operation of "Wisconsin Eye" to provide televised/video coverage of legislative and judicial events. Voters will see a constitutional amendment question in the November election to restrict the Governor's partial veto power from creating new taxes or fees. He also shared he has testified at several hearings concerning Data Centers and local government control of wind and solar power projects. Both legislative houses have closed their current sessions. Prior to closing they did pass legislation restricting the use of SNAP funds to purchase unhealthy foods. Secretary Goldhahn shared we will have a meeting with the Green Bay School District prior to their fall referendum.

Notes submitted by Rod Goldhahn, Secretary

**Monthly Meetings @ The Depot**

Monthly meetings are held at **The Depot**, corner of **Dousman and Donald Driver Way, Green Bay**. The location has no stairs or steps, convenient parking, and a room to better accommodate speakers and conversation. There will be three selections from which to choose lunch - each one will be priced at **\$15 (includes tax and tip)**. Lunch is at 12:00 noon with monthly speakers presenting.

**SUPPORT THE BCTA**

**New Members Welcome**

**www.BCTaxpayers.com**

The Brown County Taxpayers Association is a local group working to bring information and awareness to issues that affect tax policy or impose regulatory burdens.

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**Meeting Location**  
**The Depot, Green Bay**

**12:00 pm Meeting**

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## **BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.**

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**Thursday - May 21, 2026** BCTA Monthly Meeting.  
**12:00pm** at The Depot, Green Bay  
Guest Speaker: Jeff Ings, WRA Election Integrity

**Thursday - Jun 18, 2025** BCTA Monthly Meeting.  
**12:00pm** at The Depot, Green Bay

**BCTA monthly meetings are held the Third Thursday of each month, 12:00 pm, at , at The Depot, Green Bay.**

**Meetings are open to the public. BCTA Members, their guests and other interested parties are cordially invited to attend and participate in our open discussions.**

**COST: \$15.00, Payable at meeting. Includes lunch, tax & tip.  
Call Tom Sladek – 499-7701 for information or to leave message.**

**May - Jun 2026**

**New Location**  
**New Time**

**Noon at The Depot**



[www.BCTAxpayers.com](http://www.BCTAxpayers.com)