

Glendale Closed Polls – Tuesday, July 12, 2011 – Glendale, WI

Submitted by: Tanya Lohr-Kougl, West Bend

What we did:

28 different volunteers stood outside four of the closed polls in Glendale on July 12th. Their purpose was to inform any voters who showed up at the closed polls that the poll was closed and that the single, open poll was at City Hall. The volunteers also offered voters a map from the closed poll to the open poll and encouragement to go to that poll to vote.

Why we did it:

We were very concerned that people in Glendale were going to be denied their right to vote on July 12th because of the closed polls. Tanya Lohr, the organizer of the effort, called the Glendale City Hall to ask what was going to be done to inform Glendale residents of the change. They would not give her specifics, but she was assured that voters would know about the change and that few people would show up at the closed polls. However, it became increasingly obvious that this was not the case, so we decided to stand at the closed polls in order to protect people's right to vote.

What we found:

We were anticipating 3-4 voters per 2-hour shift to show up at the closed polls. What we found instead was an average of 21 voters who showed up at each closed poll per 2-hour shift, which includes the last shift where less than 10 people showed up per location. A minimum of 505 voters came to the closed polls on July 12th fully expecting to be able to vote there. Our conclusion was that Glendale voters had NOT been properly informed of the change.

How we think the closed polls negatively effected voter turn out:

1. Even with our presence, the closed polls kept numerous Glendale residents from voting on July 12th. They showed up at the closed poll on their way to work and did not have time to go back to City Hall. We encouraged them to vote after work, but many of them weren't going to be back in time.
2. Due to the one, open poll, the lines at that polling place became very long. In fact, there were times when the wait was over one hour long. Numerous people left the line because they didn't have time to wait that long to vote. Had the other polls been open, there wouldn't have been that long of a wait.
3. Several of the people who came to the closed polls were so angry about it that they said they weren't going to vote anymore. They stated that it was obvious that their vote doesn't matter anymore so to hell with the whole system.
4. One woman walked over a mile to the closed poll with her daughter. They could not walk an additional 6 miles to the one, open poll.
5. One woman unloaded her four young children before our volunteers could get to her to inform her that the poll was closed. She gave an exasperated sigh and said there was no way she was going to pack, unpack and pack her kids all up again to vote in another location. She did not vote that day.
6. In general, voters left the closed polls angry, frustrated, and in many cases, feeling undervalued. That's not what voting should be about. Voting should be about people feeling empowered about their ability to have a voice in their government and feeling proud that they were able to use that voice.

In general, 20% of the voters in Glendale that day showed up at a closed poll first. It was obvious to us that either the City of Glendale did not actually follow the recommended method of informing voters of changes to polling places OR the recommended method is in need of revision in order to reach more voters.

Total Numbers –Glendale Closed Polls – Tuesday, July 12, 2011 – Glendale, WI

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Location	7-9 am	9-11	11-1	1-3 pm	4-6	6-8
Parkway School 5910 N. Milwaukee River Parkway	1. Tom 2. Leslie 35 voters	1. Tom 2. Leslie 14 voters	1. Kevin Killeen 2. Patrick Williams 23 voters	1. Tanya Lohr 2. Heather Brown 36 voters	1. Mark Bailey 2. Anna Lardeny 14 voters	1. Pat Murphy 2. Marie Murphy 9 voters
Nicolet High School 6701 N. Jean Nicolet Road	1. Shirley Klamm 2. Phil Beitz 24 voters	1. Shirley Klamm 18 voters	1. Shirley Klamm 2. Flo Moran 24 voters	1. Camille Faherty 2. Linda 24 voters	1. Jim Engel 2. Karen Engel 24 voters	1. Jim Engel 2. Karen Engel 8 voters
Good Hope School 2315 W. Good Hope Road	1. Ann Savagian 2. Mark 24 voters	1. Ann Savagian 26 voters	1. Kay Panicucci 2. Dennis Panicucci 23 voters	1. Larry Krueger 2. Sylvia Krueger 26 voters	1. Carol Biersach 2. Cindy Cuthbert 24 voters	1. Guy Graff 2. Cindy Cuthbert 8 voters
Glen Hills Middle School 2600 W. Mill Road	1. Diane Lee 2. Peggy Gonwa-Marquardt	All day shift = 121 voters				There is a question as to whether their 121 included the last 2 hours.

Minimum total of voters who showed up at closed polls: 505

Total Voters in Glendale on July 12th: approximately 2,500

Percent of Voters who went to the closed polls first (and therefore, did not know about the change): 20%