

Caucus Information (Abbreviated)

The caucus is a method used to nominate candidates for Town Offices. For the Town of Lind, those offices are: Chairperson, Supervisor 1, Supervisor 2, Clerk, and Treasurer, to be placed on the Spring Election Ballot. The caucus is open to the public, but only qualified electors of the municipality may nominate and vote for candidates at the caucus. A person is not required to be a registered voter in order to participate in the caucus.

Any person who is a United States citizen, 18 yrs of age or older, who has resided within the municipality for at least 28 days before the caucus, is a qualified elector.

A candidate for a town office must be a qualified elector of the town at the time of taking office. A candidate does not have to be a qualified elector or resident of the town at the time of the caucus. A candidate may be nominated for more than one municipal office. There is no requirement that a candidate be a registered voter in the municipality.

The caucus must be held between January 2 and January 21 with proper public notice at least 5 days before the date of the caucus

The caucus is conducted by the town board chairperson as long as the chairperson is not a candidate at the Spring Election. If the chairperson is a candidate, he or she must call for an election of officials to conduct the caucus. This can be done by either acclamation or ballot. If the town chair is elected by the group to chair the caucus, he or she may still do so. The electors must also select two tellers to canvass the vote for each office to be nominated to the caucus. The municipal clerk serves in an administrative capacity and usually takes the minutes.

Nominations are made separately for each office that will appear on the Spring Election Ballot. The chair of the caucus must have the electors select the method that will be used for nominations; they can either be made orally from the floor or by paper ballot. When made from the floor, each nomination must receive a second. After each nomination is made and seconded, the chair of the caucus must ask, "Are there any more nominations?" and if hearing none for that office, must announce, "Nominations are closed." If nominations are made by paper ballot, the electors will be instructed to write in the name of his or her nominee for the office. The ballots will then be collected and tallied by the tellers. Whichever method is used for making nominations, the names of the persons nominated will be announced by the caucus chairperson. Nominees do not need to be present to be nominated. Only those persons nominated will be voted on at the caucus, if voting is necessary. Incumbents must be nominated at the caucus and follow the same ballot access procedures as any other municipal candidate. A candidate can nominate themselves or second their nomination, but cannot do both.

For those offices where only one person is to be elected and only one or two candidates are nominated, there is no need to conduct a vote. If more than two persons have been nominated, a vote must be conducted at the caucus to reduce the number of candidates to two. If a vote is required, the caucus chairperson will announce the names of all candidates. Each elector at the caucus is entitled to **vote for one** candidate. The **two candidates receiving the highest number of votes** are nominated and certified to the municipal clerk by the caucus chairperson and tellers. If two or more candidates receive an equal number of votes, but not the greatest number of votes, so that only one of the candidates with equal votes may advance to the election, the tie between the candidates with equal votes may be broken either by drawing lots or conducting another vote. The method by which a tie is broken should be agreed upon at the beginning of the caucus.

A qualified elector may be nominated for, and appear on the ballot, for more than one local nonpartisan office at the same election. If that person were to win more than one office, he or she can only accept one office. This would then create a vacancy in any office that was declined. Other losing candidates for those positions would not have any automatic right to those vacant offices. Rather, the new board members and clerk would have to vote to fill the vacancy after the new terms start using the process under Wis. Stat. §17.25.

Any qualified elector can run for office as a registered write-in candidate, even if they were not nominated at the caucus; or were nominated, but not selected at the caucus.

As soon as the nominated candidates are certified by the chairperson and tellers to the municipal clerk, the clerk is responsible for notifying the candidates, in writing, of their nomination. In order to qualify for ballot placement, each candidate nominated at the caucus is required to complete and file the appropriate forms. The candidate must file these forms with the municipal clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 5th day after receiving written notification that he or she has been nominated for office.

The town board or chairperson may reconvene the caucus to correct a procedural error or to nominate a candidate for a position for which no candidate was nominated at the original caucus, or when no candidate nominated at the original caucus qualifies for a position. The reconvened caucus must be held within 10 days of the date of the original caucus, and public notice must be given in the same manner as notice of the original caucus.

The full procedure and caucus information can be found in the Wisconsin Elections Commission's PROCEDURES FOR NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES BY CAUCUS manual which may be accessed at:

<https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/caucus-manual>