



Your guide to the 2020 election

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What’s on the ballot in Oshkosh?

By Sophia Voight
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Election Day is only five days out, and while media attention swirls around Donald Trump and Joe Biden, Oshkosh residents will also see state and local races on their ballot Nov. 3.

On the state level, you will get to decide between incumbent Glenn Grothman and challenger Democrat Jessica King for U.S. Representative. Several other statewide races are on the ballot.

Among them: the contest for state

senator between Sen. Dan Feyen and recent UW Oshkosh graduate Aaron Wojciechowski, and state assembly representatives Rep. Gordon Hintz and political newcomer Don Herman. On the county level many positions run unopposed, but you’ll still get to vote for your district attorney, county clerk, treasurer and register of deeds.

Whether you are planning to vote absentee, early in person or on election night, here is a guide to the elections and their candidates you’ll see on your ballot if you live in Oshkosh.

6th Congressional Representative



JESSICA J. KING (D)

King previously represented the 18th State Senate district from 2011-2013. Prior to that King served on the Oshkosh Common Council in 2007. She is currently vice president of a company representing hospitals and patients against health insurance companies.

According to her campaign, healthcare is King’s top priority. King is advocating for policies that expand universal healthcare coverage and make prescriptions affordable. Her campaign states she is pushing for a more sustainable future. This includes working to preserve natural public space and waterways as well as incentivizing clean and renewable energy production.



GLENN GROTHMAN
(Republican – Incumbent)

Grothman is serving his third congressional term, having represented the district since 2014. Grothman has two decades of experience in the state legislature. He represented the 20th State Senate district from 2004-2014 and the 58th State Assembly district from 1994-2004.

Grothman is running his campaign on improving economic conditions in the state and protecting manufacturing jobs in the nation. Grothman advocates for cutting business regulations to keep jobs in the nation. His campaign is also prioritizing regulating the immigration system to prevent illegal immigration.

State Senator District 18



AARON WOJCIECHOWSKI
(Democrat)

Wojciechowski graduated from UW Oshkosh in December 2019 with degrees in economics and political science. He also served on the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors for two terms between 2016 and 2020.

Wojciechowski told Vote411 that he will work to make healthcare more accessible, create a sustainable economy and ensure public schools are well-funded. Wojciechowski said one of his top priorities is economic recovery from the pandemic by ensuring unemployment benefits and aid to businesses. His campaign said he wants to work to create affordable and accessible healthcare through expanding Medicaid and lowering the cost of prescription drugs.



DAN FEYEN
(Republican – Incumbent)

Feyen is seeking his second term in the senate district where he serves as the Senate Assistant Majority Leader and chair of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Commerce and Trade. He previously served on Fond du Lac’s Parks Advisory Board for nine years.

Feyen is campaigning around the promise of supporting law enforcement, investing in healthcare and protecting the community. Feyen’s campaign promised to support police officers amid cries of defunding the police, citing how he helped to pass legislation to protect domestic abuse victims and increase penalties for drunk drivers.

54th Assembly Representative



GORDON HINTZ
(Democratic - Incumbent)

Hintz was first elected to the State Assembly in 2006 and has served seven terms. He currently serves as the Assembly minority leader for the Democratic party.

Hintz told the Oshkosh Northwestern that the coronavirus impact is his top priority in this race. His campaign said he wants to keep healthcare costs down, provide coverage for those impacted by COVID-19 and speed up unemployment payments.



DON HERMAN (Republican)

Herman is a local business owner who chose to run for representative to bring a small business and “common sense” voice to the state legislature.

Herman told the Northwestern that his two biggest issues going into this election are eliminating wasteful government spending on welfare programs and reviving the economic downturn caused by the pandemic through supporting small businesses.



County Clerk



SUSAN ERTMER
(Republican – Incumbent)

Winnebago County Clerk Susan Ertmer is also running uncontested this year. Ertmer has served as county clerk since 1998. She also served as deputy county clerk for 15 years prior.

The county clerk wears a number of hats from the recorder of the county to the chief election officer. County clerks are responsible for maintaining records for the county, including birth, death and marriage certificates, resolutions and ordinances on behalf of the County Board of Supervisors. They also issue and distribute licenses as well as provide clerical assistance to the county.

A major role of the county clerk is the administration of elections. The county clerk is in charge of receiving nominations for elections, preparing ballots, procuring and maintaining voting machines, and recruiting and training poll workers.

County District Attorney



CHRISTIAN GOSSETT
(Republican – Incumbent)
Republican Christian Gossett is the only candidate running for the county district attorney. In fact, only six of Wisconsin’s 72 counties have contested races

in November. Lack of opponents for DA is actually a trend in Wisconsin and many other states. A 2018 analysis of DA races by the Appeal found that only 23 Wisconsin counties had contested races in 2016.

A District attorney’s duties typically include reviewing police arrest reports, deciding whether to file criminal charges against people who have been arrested and prosecuting criminal cases in court. Each county has one district attorney who supervises the entire DA’s office. Gossett was elected to the position in 2006 and oversees a staff of 27 employees.

Register of Deeds



NATALIE STROHMEYER
(Republican – Incumbent)

Strohmeyer was elected to the Winnebago County register of deeds in 2016, but prior to that, she served as the Outagamie County register of deeds for 34 years.

Strohmeyer told the Oshkosh Northwestern that she’s seeking reelection to continue providing residents with quality service. Strohmeyer said she is experienced in real-estate records and has worked to optimize office procedures and data accuracy.

The register of deeds office files, records and issues documents for the community. These include things like land contracts, mortgages, military discharges and birth, death and



SETH REID
(Independent)

Reid has two decades of experience working with data security and computer systems and wishes to bring upgraded technology to the office.

Reid chose to run for office after a near-death experience in 2018 inspired him to go after his dream of going into public service. If elected, Reid said he wants to make data systems more user-friendly to the public and upgrade our data security.

marriage certificates. Their role in the county government is to provide archival storage for these documents and provide the public with easy access to them.

County Treasurer

MARY KRUEGER
(Republican – Incumbent)

The county treasurer is another uncontested race on this year’s ballot. Republican Mary Krueger is running for reelection and has been the Winnebago county treasurer for the past 20 years, having served five four-year terms.

County treasurers are in charge of collecting taxes and maintaining financial records. They organize the collection of property tax and pay fees for licenses, fines, and forfeitures to the state. The county’s treasurer’s office is responsible for keeping a detailed account of all money received and all money disbursed for the county. They invest county funds that aren’t needed for any immediate expenditures. The treasurer essentially acts as the county’s banker.

What to know about the OASD referendum

By Sophia Voight
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Oshkosh residents will be asked to decide on \$115 million in funding for the Oshkosh Area School District to build two new schools and maintain educational opportunities for students.

The ballot contains two referendum questions: an operational referendum to renew educational operations, and a capital referendum to build a new elementary and middle school and increase safety and security.

Operational referendum

The first referendum question is asking residents for a renewal of \$7.95 million in annual funds that were already approved in two previous referendums passed back in 2014 and 2016.

The annual funds go toward the OASD’s “Learning Without Limits” plan that involves “retaining educational opportunities, protecting academic programs, providing staff with technology, and security improvements.”

Question No. 1 reads:

“Shall the Oshkosh Area School District, Winnebago County, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$3,950,000 per year for the 2021-2022 school year and the 2022-2023 school year, and by \$7,950,000 per year for the 2023-2024 school year through the 2029-2030 school year

for non-recurring purposes consisting of sustaining educational programming and school district operations?”

The first question will have no impact on city residents’ property tax as it is simply renewing already approved funds. The need for renewal is because the past two referendums, apart of the learning composition plan, are about to expire.

The 2014 learning composition referendum that implemented the “Learning Without Limits” plan approved \$3.95 million in annual funds and expires in 2021. The 2016 learning composition referendum approved \$4 million in annual funds and expires in 2023.

If approved by voters, the operational referendum will streamline two funding sources into one. If residents don’t renew the first referendum question, the school district will need to make budget cuts in the 2021-22 school year and again in the 2022-23 school year that total the \$7.95 million renewal request to make up for lost funds.

Capital referendum

The second referendum question is requesting \$107 million in capital funds to begin the OASD’s long-range facilities plan that includes building a new elementary school at the Webster School site and a new middle school on the Merrill School site.

Question No. 2 reads:

“Shall the Oshkosh Area School District, Winnebago County, Wis-

consin be authorized to issue pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$107,000,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of a district-wide school building and facilities improvement project from its long-range facilities plan consisting of: construction of a new elementary school at the existing Webster K-8 School site and removal of the current building; construction of a new middle school on district-owned land adjacent to the existing Merrill K-8 School and potential removal of the current building; district-wide safety and security, infrastructure and capital maintenance improvements; and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment.”

The capital referendum will include \$8.9 million in safety and security renovations and technology improvements. The referendum also includes \$9.3 million in infrastructure updates. These upgrades include heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, electrical, fire alarms, roofing, and generator replacements.

The new elementary school at the Webster site has a budget of \$35 million, while the new middle school at the Merrill site’s budget is \$53 million.

If approved, taxpayers would spend an extra \$48 in 2021 per \$100,00 home value. The tax hike would jump to an extra \$70 per \$100,000 value in 2022 and then to \$85 per year for 2023 and years



Courtesy of the OASD

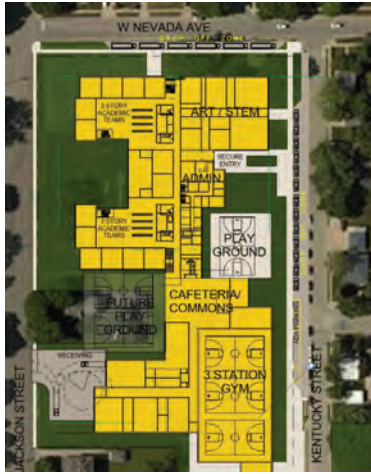
TOP: The new elementary school concept at the Webster school site.
BOTTOM: The new middle school concept plan for the Merrill school site

beyond. Construction on the new schools would take place over a four-year period and financed over the next 20 years.

A “yes” vote on the first school referendum question would be in favor of renewing \$7.95 million in annual funds and would not affect future property taxes.

A “no” vote on the first question would cancel the annual funds for the upcoming years and cause millions in budget cuts, according to the OASD.

A “yes” vote on the second school referendum question would approve \$107 million in funding for



the OASD to begin its long-range facilities plan and increase property taxes over the next years.

A “no” vote on the capital referendum would delay the facilities plan and off-put the construction of the new schools.

County looking for input on money in politics in ballot question

By Sophia Voight
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Winnebago County is looking for residents’ input on support for a constitutional amendment that would reinstate control on campaign spending. The oft-debated topic of campaign contributions in politics has made its way onto hundreds of other ballots around the country before being placed on ours.

The referendum reads:

“Should the state legislature enact propose legislation to support passage of an amendment to the United States Constitution that seeks to reclaim democracy from

the expansion of corporate personhood rights and the corrupting influence of unlimited political contributions and spending?”

The referendum references the ability of corporations and special interest groups to spend an unlimited amount of money on elections.

As it currently stands, independent donors, or groups not clearly affiliated with a candidate, are not given limitations on the amount of money they can spend on their own campaign contributions for or against any one candidate.

The unlimited campaign finance rule comes from a 2010 Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission that

overturned an FEC act that prohibited corporations and unions from broadcasting advertisements mentioning a candidate in any context within 30 days before a primary election or 60 days before the general election, arguing that these limitations on campaign advertisements violated the First Amendment.

The proposed legislation referenced in the Winnebago County referendum is advocating for a constitutional amendment that would basically overturn the 2010 Supreme Court ruling.

The proposal asks that limits on political campaigning be restored for corporations and wealthy do-

nors. It also asks that corporations not be given the same First Amendment protections as citizens in regard to broadcasting political ads and contributing to candidate’s campaigns.

An answer of YES on the ballot question indicates you believe there should be an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would limit political contributions and spending and the expansion of corporate personhood rights.

An answer of NO on the ballot question indicates you believe there should not be a limit to political contributions and spending and the expansion of corporate personhood rights.

The ballot question is merely an advisory referendum for the county board to gain the public’s opinion on the amount of support for and against limiting political contributions and corporate personhood rights.

A vote in favor of these limitations wouldn’t have any impact on local or state statutes. If the referendum gets enough “yes” votes, the county board may sponsor the proposed legislation to the state legislature.

Any legislation would still need to be approved by Congress before limits on political contributions are put in place.

Trump visits Wis. in final bid to retake the state amid COVID spike

By Lexi Langendorf
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President Trump spoke to thousands at a rally held in Waukesha Saturday, where he said it was his third rally of the day and stated that he was planning to do five more in the coming days.

Prior to the event, however, several Wisconsin physicians called for the President to cancel all campaign rallies because of the significant rise in COVID cases throughout the state, according to a press release from the Committee to Protect Medicare. Trump has held three rallies in Wisconsin since Oct. 17, the release noted.

At the event, Trump focused on comparing his own beliefs with a skewed version of those of his opponent, former Vice President Joe Biden.

Trump said, if reelected, he would support law enforcement, protect the second amendment, defend U.S. borders, keep peace in

the Middle East and protect social security and Medicare.

“I gave working class families record tax cuts,” Trump said. “And Sleepy Joe is the only president I’ve seen that’s going to give you the largest tax increase in the history of our country.”

However, according to Joe Biden’s campaign, his plan “won’t ask a single person making under \$400,000 per year to pay a penny more in taxes.”

Throughout the rally, Trump criticized Biden’s alleged support for the Green New Deal, open borders and free healthcare for illegal immigrants.

“You know, we all have a heart, we all wanna take care of people,” Trump said. “But when you say we’re gonna give you free education, free healthcare, free everything, millions of people are gonna come here even if they weren’t thinking about it before and we just can’t do that. We wouldn’t be a country anymore.”

However, Biden has publicly said he does not support the Green New Deal. In fact, his campaign has said Biden supports oil fracking, which has drawn criticism from progressives.

Trump also criticized Biden’s views on race, alleging Biden had allied himself with the far left that aims to defund the police.

However, according to the Biden campaign, the former vice president does not want to defund the police. He does want to reform law enforcement, the campaign noted.

“Our criminal justice system cannot be just unless we root out the racial, gender, and income-based disparities in the system,” the campaign website said.

Trump also picked on Biden for allegedly reducing foreign policy to “friendships” in the first presidential debate.

“Joe Biden has made a corrupt bargain in exchange for his party’s nomination,” Trump said. “Other countries would be happy if Biden

won.”

However, according to the Biden campaign, Biden seeks to work with other democracies in the world to form a coalition to denounce authoritarian nations.

In fact, Biden’s climate policy is quite critical of other nations such as China.

“This includes pressuring China—the world’s largest emitter of carbon—to stop subsidizing coal exports and outsourcing their pollution to other countries,” the website said.

Joe Biden has repeatedly promised that as president, one of his top priorities will be to stop the spread of COVID-19 by increasing testing and enforcing mask mandates.

As soon as COVID-19 became considered a serious threat to the U.S. in early March, many Americans blamed Trump for his failure to act quickly and with greater caution.

At the rally Trump tried to shift the blame to China and again spoke

against virus-related safety measures.

“We gotta get you guys open,” Trump said. “But bottom line, we have to be vigilant, we have to be careful... but we also have to get our lives back and take our country back.”

“The election is a choice between a Trump super-recovery, or a Biden depression,” Trump said. “It’s a choice between a Trump boom and a Biden lockdown.”

However, Biden’s campaign noted the former vice president isn’t looking to lock down the entire country. Rather, his campaign says, Biden wants to place tougher restrictions on areas seeing spikes, not the entire country.

“Biden believes we must spend whatever it takes, without delay, to meet public health needs and deal with the mounting economic consequences,” the website said.

Ultimately, it’s up to the voters to decide between the two men.

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