

**Many County and Municipal Political Races are Uncontested**

<b>Election</b>	<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>Contested Races</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Spring 1998</b>	<b>38 *</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10.5%</b>
<b>Fall 1998</b>	<b>7 **</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28.6%</b>
<b>Spring 2000</b>	<b>38 *</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
<b>Fall 2000</b>	<b>7 **</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28.6%</b>
<b>Spring 2002</b>	<b>28 *</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26.3%</b>
<b>Fall 2002</b>	<b>7 **</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28.6%</b>

\* County supervisor elections  
 \*\* Countywide candidate elections

**Key Facts**

- Political races are considered contested when voting choices consist of more than one declared candidate.
- In the 2002 spring race, there were 12 local and school board races. Of these, 4 races or 33% were contested.
- Only 2 of the 7 county elected official positions that were up for the 2002 fall election were contested. There were no local or school board races in that election.

**Why is this Information Important?**

A healthy civic agenda depends upon the willingness of local citizens to run for county and municipal offices. When there are no declared candidates for races and many candidates are unopposed, the quality of life of democracy is called into question.

**Contested Political Races**

Citizens who feel a sense of belonging and ownership for their community will create a superior civic environment. One way to foster belonging and ownership in a community is to promote citizen involvement through service in a public office. Public offices include county board supervisors, county and city clerks, mayor, alderperson, city council members, and members of the school boards. The requirements and guidelines that must be followed in order to run for public offices may vary by municipality.

When there are many contested races in a community, the political process works as it was intended. Contested races foster debate over important issues and raise different viewpoints and solutions to problems. On the other hand, a community with many uncontested races may be a sign of political apathy and an unhealthy democratic environment.

*Sources: Wood County Clerk; Wis. Rapids / Marshfield City Clerks*