

# **“Becoming a Vote Center County”**

## **IACC Annual Conference**

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#### **Panel:**

Danielle Coulter, AIC Deputy Director of Government Affairs

Christa Coffey, Tippecanoe County Clerk

Jo Ann Stewart, Wayne County Clerk

Tom Murtaugh, Tippecanoe County Commissioner

#### **What is a Vote Center?**

It is a polling place where any registered voter in the county may vote as long as the voter lives in the district holding the election (for example, the voter must live inside the city limits to vote in a municipal election).

#### **Advantages of Vote Centers:**

- Vote Centers can be made to work with any kind of voting system
- Significant cost savings to the county (due to fewer staff and fewer machines needed)
- Fewer poll workers are required; staffing can be tailored to voter turnout
- Can reduce the number of voting machines necessary to conduct an efficient election
- Voters enjoy the convenience of being able to vote at any location; there are no wrong places to vote
- Precinct polling locations can still be used if designated as “vote centers”
- With the cost savings of vote centers, funding can be used to operate satellite absentee voting locations prior to election day
- Fewer phone calls are made to the election headquarters since everyone has access to the same voter information
- An automatic upload of voter history to the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) after the election is certified saves staff time doing data entry (which normally consists of updating each voter record individually)
- There is no need to print poll books; electronic records are updated in real time
- Updating poll lists electronically eliminates certificates of error

#### **Disadvantages of Vote Centers:**

- Investment of funds in technology and computer equipment; technology is the key to making vote centers work
- Fewer poll workers are required, but they must have computer skills; hands-on training with the electronic poll book is beneficial for poll workers
- Voter education may be difficult during the first year