

EARLY VOTING

2023 Cost and Location Analysis

**PWC Office of Elections
PWC Electoral Board**

Current Ordinance & Related Laws

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Local Ordinances

PRIMARY

March 16, 2021

GENERAL

July 20, 2021

SPECIAL

No ordinance



Satellite Offices

VA Code § 24.2-701.2: “The governing body of any county or city may establish, by ordinance, voter satellite offices to be used in the locality for absentee voting in person.”



Satellite Offices

- Number of locations up to the local governing body without limitation or requirement
- Use public buildings or DMV locations
- No change within 60 days of a general election



Current Locations (Days Open)

PRIMARY

Main Office (45)

Haymarket Library (45)

Ferlazzo Building (45)

GENERAL

Main Office (45)

Haymarket Library (45)

DMV Office (45)

Brentsville Courthouse (14)

Dumfries Comm. Center (14)

SPECIAL

Main Office (45)



Analysis of Early Voting: Costs and Issues

Total Site Days Voting is Open

	Office	Satellite	Total
PRIMARY	34	68	102
GENERAL	34	92	126
SPECIAL	34	0	34

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Costs

Election Officer Pay

- Approximately \$750/day
- Team of 5 officers checking in voters, distributing ballots, etc. working for about 9 hours

Equipment – Largely sunk costs



Staffing Costs by Election (Approx.)

	Total x \$/Day = Total Cost		
PRIMARY	102	\$750	\$76,500
GENERAL	126	\$750	\$94,500
SPECIAL	34	\$750	\$25,500

Voting by Day – General Election 2022

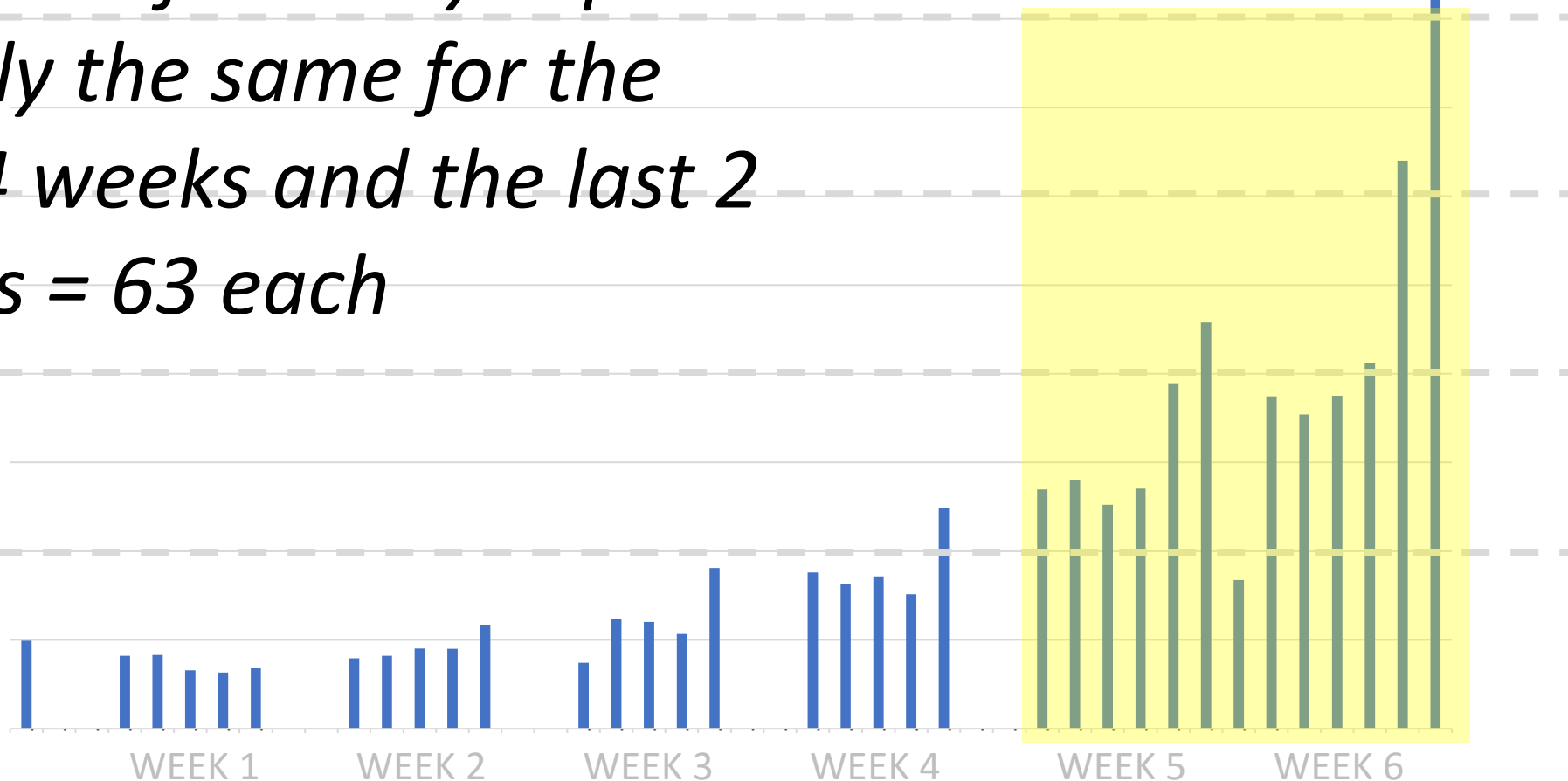


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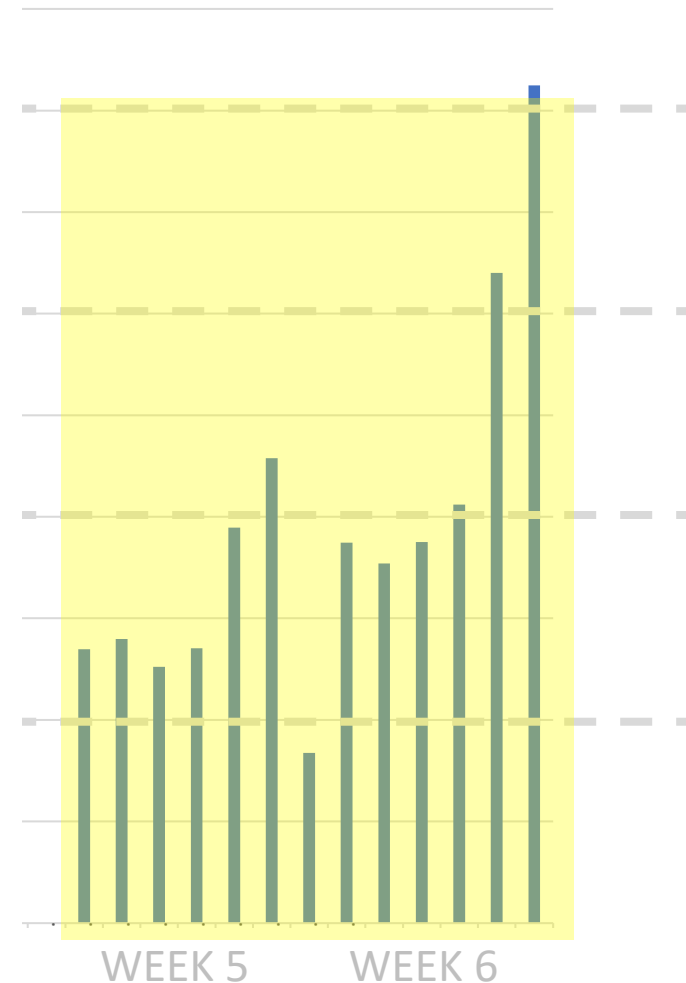
Number of site days open is exactly the same for the first 4 weeks and the last 2 weeks = 63 each

1,000 Voters



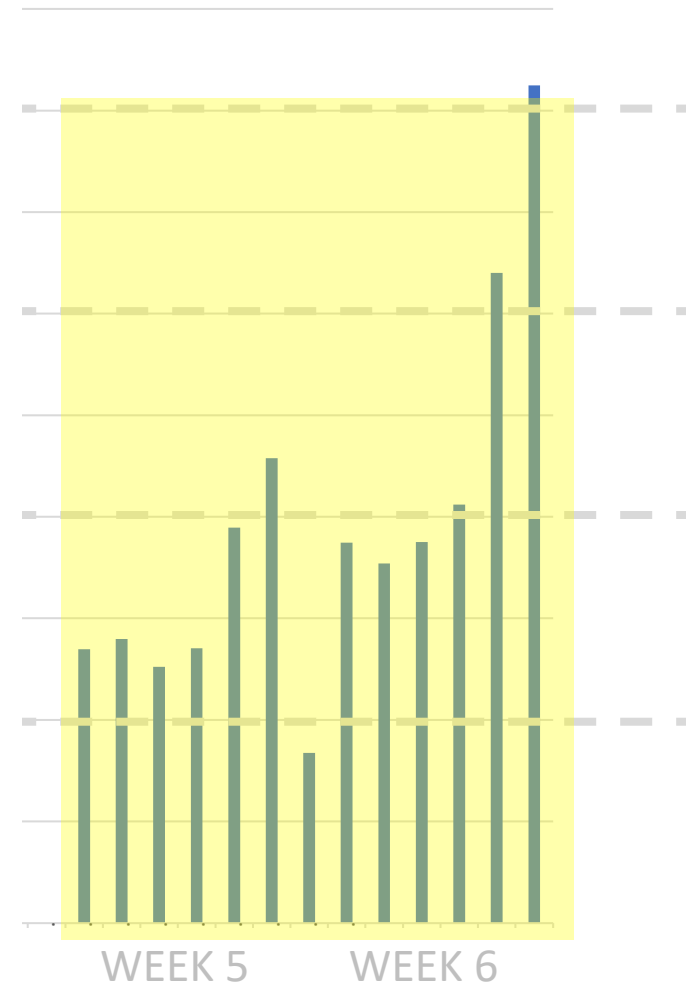
Voting Patterns - General

- 64% of early voting occurs in the last 2 weeks
- Double the number of voters per day per site in the last 2 weeks



Cost Per Voter

- More than double the cost per voter for the first 4 weeks, even higher during a primary election



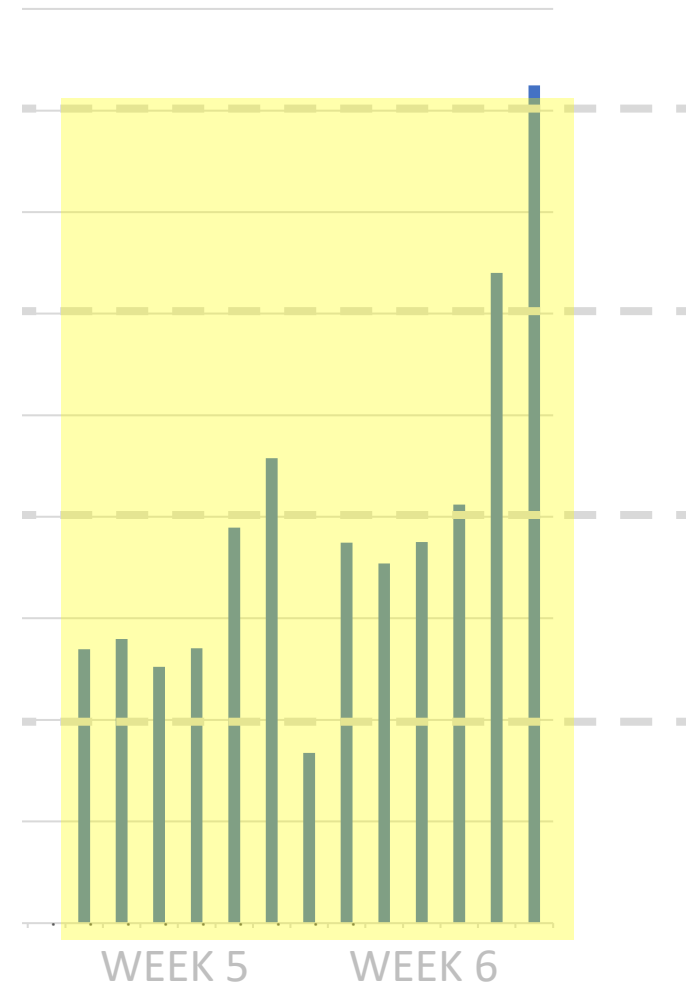
Voting Patterns - Primary

- 73% of early voters voted in the last 2 weeks
- High costs per voter – more than \$20/voter for staffing costs even with minimal staffing



Why the last 2 weeks?

- Voters wait to make a more informed decision
- Media coverage intensifies
- Procrastination is natural



Geography

- Office is on an island in Manassas City
- Primary - Only 17% of county area within 3 miles of an early voting location
- General – Only 33% of county within 3 miles of an early voting location
- 3 of 7 Districts have no EV location at present



Overall Issues with Satellite Locations

- No ordinance for special elections
- Voting is not cost effective
- Majority of county is not close to early voting
- Distribution is not as equitable as it could be
- Locations are not consistent to build behaviors



Potential Solutions

Solution – New Ordinance

- Set locations for all types of elections
- Assign one (and same) location per magisterial district for equal access and to build consistency
- Control for costs by adjusting the time period when satellites open for different election types



Suggested Timing: 1-2-3 System

- 1 week (10 days) before a Primary
- 2 weeks (15 days) before a General
- 3 weeks (22 days) before Presidential General



Comparison of Total Site Days Open

	Current	Proposed
PRIMARY	102	83
GENERAL	126	118
SPECIAL	34	Varies

Suggested Satellite Locations

- Set 1 location for each magisterial district since they are already apportioned by population
- Each Supervisor sets their own location that they feel best serve their constituents
- Less politics to navigate



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Benefits - Public

- 57% of county area would be within 3 miles of an early voting site, nearly double the current system
- Builds consistency in voter expectations



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Benefits - Public

- Reduces costs during slower elections, expands services during busier ones



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Benefits - Administration

- Less administrative burden, costs, and overtime
- Involve more election officers
- Not in county facilities for protracted periods of time
- Less transit of ballots





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