

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-04

**AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND RE-CREATE ORDINANCE NUMBER 2014-1
CONCERNING RESIDENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR SEX OFFENDERS**

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Wayne, Washington County, Wisconsin, deems it a priority to act in the interest of public safety within our community, particularly in the interest of our children: and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, there are a record number of convicted sex offenders living in our communities¹; and

WHEREAS, all convicted child sex offenders have proven themselves to be dangerous²; and

WHEREAS, research in this area has established sex offenders are rearrested for sex crimes four times more frequently than non-sex offenders³; and

WHEREAS, the reduction of crime and criminal recidivism are inextricably linked to public safety within our community; and

WHEREAS, the risks posed by sex offenders against children, are nationally recognized in such landmark legislation as the 1994 Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act; 1996 Megan's Laws; and the 2006 Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act; and these risks are also recognized by legislation in every State in the United States of America including Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds that the data concerning child sex offenders is horrific and demonstrates the need for action, including the following⁴:

- "sex crimes are unfortunately fairly common in the United States."
- "It is estimated that one in every five girls and one in every seven boys are sexually abused by the time they reach adulthood."
- "Children are particularly vulnerable. Approximately 67% of all victims of reported sexual assaults are under the age of 18, and more than half of these victims are under the age of 12."
- "Most sexual offenses are committed by someone the victim knows ... or acquaintance."

¹ Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative, July 2015, "This includes offenders returning to the community upon release from incarceration as well as offenders who are serving or who have been discharged from community-based sentences."

² Kester, 2013 WI App 50, ¶ 30.

³ Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative, July 2015, Langan, P., Schmitt, E., & Durose, M. (2003). Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released from Prison in 1994.

⁴Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM) statistics. CSOM is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, the National Institute of Corrections, the State Justice Institute, and the American Probation and Parole Association, and these quoted statistics are from its "Fact Sheet: What You Need to Know about Sex Offenders".

- “No single factor or combination of factors can fully explain why someone offends sexually, though some factors may combine to increase people’s tendency to offend. These factors are ... [physiological, sociocultural, developmental] and situational/circumstantial (e.g. having easy access to victims...)”
- “About 12% to 24% of sex offenders will reoffend.”

WHEREAS, the Town Board also finds these statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice to be shocking and a call to action⁵:

- “Approximately 1.8 million adolescents in the United States have been victims of sexual assault.”
- “An estimated 60% of perpetrators of sexual abuse are known to the child but are not family members, e.g. family friends, babysitters, child care providers, neighbors.”

WHEREAS, in September of 2015 the State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections conducted an extensive study of sex offender recidivism between 1997 and 2010, and found that in total there were 631 instances (4.9% of all releases) of sexual re-offending, and the top two types of re-offense were second degree sexual assault of a child (103 offenses), first degree sexual assault of a child (100 offenses); and within the top 10 re-offenses also were sex with a child ages 16 or older (46 offenses) and repeated sexual assault of the same child (33 offenses); and the study concludes that of all the repeat offenses committed by sex offenders, “sex offenses that specifically reference children represent a greater proportion of the whole;”⁶

WHEREAS, data within the Town of Wayne may not provide a large enough sample size for statistical analysis, however, there is no reason to believe the outcomes would be different in the Town than were demonstrated statewide by the Department of Corrections data;

WHEREAS, the creation of Sex Offender Residency Restrictions and Safety Zones by municipal ordinance around locations where children regularly congregate is a reasonable step toward protecting children and deterring recidivism by reducing the opportunity for new offenses within our community; and

⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, National Sex Offender Public Website “Facts and Statistics”

⁶ Joseph R. Tatar II, Ph.D. and Anthony Streveler, M.S.W., Sex Offender Recidivism After Release from Prison, Office of the Secretary, Research and Policy Unit. State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections (September 2015).

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed many studies and reports concerning recidivism of sex offenders and the effectiveness of sex offender residency restrictions⁷, and has been fully advised in the matter; and

WHEREAS, the literature on the subject includes some studies that support the practice of imposing sex offender residency restrictions and others that are critical of the practice; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds it to be significant that some of the key studies that have concluded that sex offender residency restrictions have limited effectiveness have added significant qualifications to that conclusion; e.g. in "An Evaluation of Sex Offender Residency Restrictions in Michigan and Missouri," (Huebner, et al., 2013), the authors generally do not support sex offender residency restrictions, but nevertheless find that following adoption of sex offender residency restrictions "the rate of recidivism for technical violations significantly decreased for Missouri sex offenders..." (id. at 9) and "the number of sex offense convictions did decline..." in Missouri (id. at 10); and

WHEREAS, in review of the residency restrictions of communities throughout Washington County and its environs, the Town Board finds that many of such communities have an "original domicile restriction," which allows each community to take back its own while not adding an additional burden of more than its own sex offenders to its community; such burdens including neighborhood and citizen concerns and responses, risks of recidivism, and potential property value impacts⁸; and

⁷ These include but are not limited to: Recidivism of sex offenders released from prison in 1994, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, copyright November 2003; The final report of the Commission to Improve Community Safety and Sex Offender Accountability, of the State of Maine, dated January 2004; Sex Offender Recidivism Prediction, Correctional Service of Canada dated October 14, 2004; Recidivism of Sex Offenders, May 2001, Center for Sex Offender Management; Treating Sex Offenders, Wisconsin Lawyer Magazine, October 1994; The Impact of Residency Restrictions on Sex Offenders and Correctional Management Practices: A Literature Review, Marcus Nieto and Professor David Jung, California Research Bureau, California State Library, August 2006; Sex Offenders: You Are Now Free to Move About the Country, and Analysis of Doe v. Miller's Effects on Sex Offender Residential Restrictions, UMKC Law Review, Spring 2005; There Goes the Neighborhood? Estimates of the Impact of Crime Risk on Property Values from Megan's Laws, Linden and Rockoff, National Bureau of Economic Research, May 2006; The Effect of Proximity to a Registered Sex Offender's Residence on Single-Family Housing Selling Price, Goliath Appraisal Journal, July 2003; Sex Offenders, Sexually Violent Predators, Punishment, Residence Restrictions and Monitoring, California Proposition 83, Analysis by the Legislative Analyst; An Evaluation of Sex Offender Residency Restrictions in Michigan and Missouri, Huebner, et al., 2013.

⁸ Property value impacts have been noted in numerous studies, including "The Effect on Proximity to a Registered Sex Offender's Residence on Single-Family House Selling Price," Larsen, J., Lowery, K., & Coleman, J. (2003), *The Appraisal Journal*, 71(3), 253-65; and "Neighborhood Tipping and Sorting Dynamics in Real Estate: Evidence from the Virginia Sex Offender Registry," Wentland, Bain, Brastow, Stoll, Waller, *Social Science Research Network*, April 2013. Property values are only one such impact. Stop it Now, a non-profit organization devoted to sex offender research, offers this advice to those concerned about sex offenders moving into a neighborhood, among others: Create a family safety plan; attend notification meetings; notify the police of suspicious activity; and don't wait to take action for prevention. At a minimum, this heightened awareness and activity burdens the families and neighbors where sex offenders are placed, and collectively this burdens the Town staff and resources, for every Sex Offender placement.

WHEREAS, if the Town of Wayne would not have an original domicile restriction, the Town would have open doors for non-resident sex offender residency when other communities have closed doors, inviting a substantial increase in child sex offender placements, with the related adverse impacts on the health, safety and welfare of the Town and its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes the merits, mentioned in some studies, of individualized consideration of the risks and benefits of residency restrictions on an offender-by-offender basis, and the Town has carefully considered how it can best provide this individualized consideration, and hereby intends to create an Appeals Board with sufficient jurisdiction to consider the original domicile restrictions to ensure that the ordinance does not banish sex offenders from the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes that it cannot eliminate all risk of child sex offender re-offense, and it must balance all of the competing public policies, but intends by these regulations to strike the legislative balance that is appropriate for the circumstances of the Town of Wayne; and

WHEREAS, it is not the intent of this ordinance to banish sex offenders from residing within the Town of Wayne and careful attention has been given to ensure that there are ample locations for sex offenders to reside within the Town of Wayne in compliance with the requirements of this ordinance:

NOW, THEREFORE, the Town Board of the Town of Wayne, Washington County, Wisconsin DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: Ordinance No 2014-1 of the Town of Wayne entitled, "An Ordinance Regulating Child Sex Offender Residency and Protecting Child Safety Zones," is hereby repealed and re-created as depicted in attached Exhibit A, which is incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2: CONTINUATION OF EXISTING PROVISIONS.

The provisions of this ordinance, to the extent that they are substantively the same as those of the ordinances in force immediately prior to the enactment of this ordinance, are intended as a continuation of such ordinances and not as new enactments, and the effectiveness of such provisions shall date from the date of adoption of the prior ordinances. In addition, the adoption of this ordinance shall not affect any action, prosecution or proceeding brought for the enforcement of any right or liability established, accrued or incurred under any legislative provision prior to the effective date of this ordinance for the time that such provision was in effect, and the repeal of any such provisions is stayed pending the final resolution of such actions, including appeals

SECTION 3: SEVERABILITY.

The several sections of this Ordinance are declared to be severable. If any section or provision thereof shall be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unlawful, or unenforceable, such declaration shall apply only to the specific section(s) or portion(s) thereof directly specified in said declaration, and shall not affect the validity of any other provisions, sections, or portions of the Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect. Any other Ordinances whose terms are in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to those terms that conflict.