



City and County of San Francisco
Department of Elections

John Arntz, Director

Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: February 14, 2017
RE: Director's Report: February 15, 2017, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief statement of the work in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous Elections Commission meeting on January 18, 2017.

A. In consideration of the City developing its own voting system based on open source software:

1. The Mayor's Office organized a February 3 meeting attended by the Mayor's Budget Director, the Department's budget analyst from the Mayor's Office, the Acting Director of the Committee on Information Technology (COIT), personnel from the Department of Technology, and the Director of Elections.
2. The Department contacted Los Angeles County (LA) regarding that county's development of a voting system. LA will be issuing a Request for Information (RFI) this year regarding software development for LA's voting system project. Information regarding LA's voting system can be found online: <http://vsap.lavote.net/>
3. The Department obtained the Statement of Intent (SOI) and the Request for Proposals (RFP) from Travis County, Texas, issued in October, 2016, regarding that county's efforts to develop an open source software voting system (STAR-Vote), which are attached to this report.
4. The SOI that Travis County issued indicates that Travis County intends to utilize a consortium to undertake and fund the development of STAR-Vote. Travis County has dedicated \$4 million towards the development of STAR-Vote and intends to obtain an additional \$11 million to fund the consortium within five years for a total of \$15 million. The consortium will determine the type of licenses to apply to the system so it is currently unknown if STAR-Vote will utilize a General Public License and copyleft principles.
5. The SOI indicates that if the consortium, before the first phase is completed, does not attract a minimum of \$15 million to fund development over five years, Travis County will abandon the consortium model and seek to develop its STAR-Vote system "alternate means, as yet to be identified."
6. The Mayor's Office requested that the Department begin the process to identify the City's options for voting systems after the contract expires in December, 2018, for the current voting system. The process to identifying the City's options may include the Department preparing and issuing RFIs, RFPs, and obtaining other available information.
7. Simultaneous to identifying options the Department will continue with the assessment regarding the City developing its own voting system, for which the software code is openly available, to provide a report to the Mayor's Office by January, 2018.
8. The Department, in consultation with the Department of Human Resources, will fill a position which will assist the Department in organizing the assessment regarding the City developing its own voting system, including the work of any contractors involved in assessing the open source voting system project.
9. The \$300,000 included in the Department's budget following COIT's consideration of developing a new system will cover costs incurred by the Department to fund the research position and the development of any deliverables such as RFIs, RFPs, etc. If additional funding is needed, the Department will ask for this funding from COIT in the coming two months.
10. The funding for a voting system will be determined following a review and approval by COIT, which will make decisions for the upcoming two budget years by May of this year. Additionally, COIT will revisit funding for Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 by May of 2018.

B. To implement Proposition N which allows certain non-citizens to vote in school board elections, the Department is considering the procedural and operational aspects of conducting elections to include such voters:

1. The Department met with the Deputy City Attorney from the San Francisco City Attorney's Office and the Legislative Aide of District 1 Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer to discuss incorporating non-citizen voting into the present election processes.
2. The Department contacted the San Francisco Unified School District requesting an appropriate District contact to partner with the Department regarding the implementation of the Charter amendment.
3. The Department is considering various election materials that the Department will need to create to implement Proposition N, such as registration forms and voting applications, election publications, voter outreach and education materials, informational materials, ballots, online voter information and tools, and polling place materials.
4. The Department is considering how to best administer records of non-citizen voters in its Election Information Management System (EIMS). The Department is considering obtaining a supplementary EIMS for such records that would generate ballot types, draft eligible voters and polling places into the election, issue vote-by-mail ballots and the Voter Information Pamphlet and Sample Ballot, generate Rosters of Voters for each polling place, verify and process returned vote-by-mail and provisional ballots, and apply voting history for all voters who voted in the election. The Department intends to conduct a mock election to test the functionality of the supplementary EIMS to realize potential issues that may arise since this database will need to be disconnected from the VoteCal statewide voter database.
5. Over the course of Proposition N implementation, the Department expects to realize some non-recurring costs associated with the following:
 - a. Development and production of an outreach video to illustrate the voting process, especially since potential voters may be first-time or hard-to-reach voters, and a poll-worker training video to introduce non-citizen voting to those who will assist these voters at the polls.
 - b. Changes to the programming and set-up of the voting system and equipment, to enable the Insight voting machines and 400-C high-speed scanners to read and tabulate separate ballots at the polls and during vote-by-mail ballot processing, and to ensure the accessible Edge voting machines will be available to provide accessible school-board-only ballots to non-citizen voters as needed.
 - c. Procurement/development of a database to maintain non-citizen voter records, should a supplementary EIMS be unable to function without a connection to the VoteCal statewide voter database.

C. To facilitate the conducting of special and district elections, the Department conducted the special election for a seat on the Retirement Board for the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) and the district election regarding development on Treasure and Yerba Buena Islands:

1. For the Retirement Board Election, the Department received over 16,000 of approximately 63,000 ballots mailed.
2. The Department created a web page on its website with the information and materials related to the Retirement Board Election, including a daily breakdown of the returned ballots: sfgov.org/elections/2017-retirement-board-election.
3. In consideration of transparency of the election process, the Department streamed live on its website page, SF Elections Live, the extraction of ballots from returned envelopes and the tabulation of the ballots. The Department canvassed the ballots cast and certified the election on February 7.
4. The Department scanned the returned ballots cast in the Retirement Board election and, after redacting any marks that might identify individual voters, posted the images of the ballots on the Department's web page cited above to make the images available for public review.

5. For the special district election, the Department counted the votes from the ballots cast during the Board of Supervisors meeting on January 24. Afterwards the Department canvassed the ballots cast and certified the election also on January 24.

D. The Department has taken several steps to prepare for the relocation of its warehouse from Pier 48 to Pier 31:

1. The Department signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Port of San Francisco (Port).
2. The Port indicated that it might be able to extend the deadline from the end of May to the end of June by which the Department must vacate Pier 48.
3. After conversations with the Mayor's Office, the Department reduced the funding on reserve from \$2.5 million to \$2.1 million and has requested the Board of Supervisors' Budget and Finance Committee to agree to the release of the reserve funds during the Committee's March 2 meeting.
4. If the Committee agrees to release the reserve funds, the Department of Public Works will be able to finalize plans and begin the processes required to organize contractors to perform the necessary build out of Pier 31.
5. During a visit to Pier 31 last week, Department personnel confirmed the roof had been replaced and saw no leaks during heavy rains falling at the time of the visit.
6. Personnel from the Department will undertake a site review of Santa Clara County's elections warehouse this week.
7. The Department has been organizing the movement of materials from Pier 48 to Pier 31 with a project manager who is experienced in large-scale shipping and moving jobs involving sensitive equipment and materials

Attachments, from Travis County, Texas:

1. Statement of Intent for the STAR-Vote Entity.
2. Request for Proposals, STAR-Vote™: A New Voting System, RFP # P1609-008-LC, issued October 6, 2016.