



City and County of San Francisco  
**Department of Elections**

John Arntz, Director

## Memorandum

**To:** Elections Commission  
**From:** John Arntz, Director  
**Date:** March 13, 2017  
**RE:** Director's Report: March 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 February 15, 2017.

**A. In consideration of the City developing its own highly accessible voting system whose software is open source:**

1. The Mayor's Office organized a February 7 meeting attended by the Mayor's Budget Director, the Department's budget analyst from the Mayor's Office, the Director of the Committee on Information Technology (COIT), the Interim Chief Information Officer and Executive Director of the Department of Technology, and the Director of Elections.
2. The Mayor's Office clarified its request for the Department to issue a request for proposal (RFP) to identify and hire a contractor who will prepare a business case by January, 2018, for developing the new system. The Department intends to issue the RFP by the end of March, 2017.
3. The Department continued working with the Mayor's Office and the Department's personnel analyst from the Department of Human Resources to add a new position to the Department under a project category to assist in managing the contractor and to assist in developing the new system.
4. On March 8, the Mayor's Office approved an 1823 Senior Administrative Analyst position for the Department. The final job description had not been posted as of March 13, but does include elements describing the current development plan for the new system:
  - a. Developed under version 3 of the GNU General Public License where possible, otherwise preferring similar licenses with copyleft characteristics.
  - b. Incorporates the highest levels of accessibility and usability in consideration of concepts associated with Universal Design, User-Centered Design, and Design-for-All.
  - c. Developed in consideration of the highest possible levels of accuracy, transparency, security, and auditability.
  - d. Developed in multiple phases using an agile, modular approach. Phase 1, the assessment of the steps necessary to develop and implement the new system, began in February, 2017.
  - e. Phase 2 will begin development of the first components and will include issuing RFPs to identify contractors qualified to develop discrete components of the new system, establish the principles and features regarding accessibility and usability to incorporate into the system, and may include the selection of hardware to use with the new system. Phase 2 will commence no later than January, 2018.
  - f. Phase 3 will include issuing RFPs to develop any remaining components, obtain services and resources, and to integrate the already-developed components. During Phase 3, the Department will undertake system testing and user-acceptance testing.
  - g. Phase 4 will include the Department, on behalf of the City, submitting an application to the Secretary of State's Office seeking approval of the new system for use initially under a pilot project in several precincts during the November, 2019, election, and also as a complete system beginning with the June, 2020, Consolidated Presidential Primary Election.

- h. Under the current project plans, the software developed for the new system will be posted as it is written, and the Department will regularly post updates regarding the project's progress.
  5. The \$300,000 included in the Department's budget following COIT's consideration of developing a new system will cover the compensation for the contractor and the 1823 position and any costs incurred by the contractor and the Department associated with the development of any deliverables such as RFIs, RFPs, etc. If additional funding is needed, the Department will ask for this funding from COIT. The Department did include \$4 million in its budget projections to COIT for FY 2018/2019 to prepare for the development of components in Phase 2.
- 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 continued to participate in meetings with the Deputy City Attorney from the San Francisco City Attorney's Office, District 1 Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer and personnel from her office, and community activists to discuss incorporating noncitizen voting for school board elections into current election processes.
  2. The Department is drafting policy options for the City to consider regarding registration, voting procedures (at polling place, at the City Hall Voting Center, and by mail), election and voting materials, and outreach campaigns to enable the noncitizen residents to vote for members of the San Francisco Board of Education.
  3. Through collaboration with the City Attorney's Office, the Board of Supervisors, and community activists, the Department is considering outreach messages and mechanisms for implementing an outreach campaign, including possible voter education materials, for School Board-only voters.
- C. In an effort to improve the customer experience and make services more accessible for all, the Department has launched a redesign of its website to better meet user needs:**
  1. The Department formed a working group comprised of staff subject matter experts with the goal of easing navigation to desired services and information, simplifying content, improving usability for desktop and mobile users, and expanding access for limited-English speakers.
  2. The working group devised a plan for the redesign of the website, consisting of three phases:
    - a. Phase 1: Review various informational resources that discuss user feedback, best practices and guidelines for website development and presentation of information; from this research, identify key recommendations and develop an implementation plan and timelines.
    - b. Phase 2: Develop and translate website content and implement new design, applying recommendations identified in Phase 1
    - c. Phase 3: Test new website to ensure proper functionality for both desktop and mobile users, and launch new website; establish best practices for subsequent website reviews and maintenance
    - d. The Department intends to complete the website redesign by June of this year.
- D. The Department has taken several steps to prepare for the relocation of its warehouse from Pier 48 to Pier 31:**
  1. The Board of Supervisors' Budget and Finance Sub-Committee agreed to the release of \$2.1 million of reserve funds during the Sub-Committee's March 2 meeting.
  2. The Department of Public Works indicated that it will finalize the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department regarding the build-out of Pier 31.