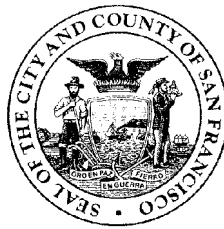


ELECTIONS COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco



Richard P. Matthews, President

Chris Jerdonek, Vice President
Charles Jung
Jill Rowe
Rosabella Safont
Winnie Yu

John Arntz

Director of Elections

Elections Commission Meeting – MINUTES
Wednesday, November 19, 2014
City Hall, Room 408
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

1. President Matthews called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Present: Commissioners Jerdonek, Jung, Rowe, and Safont. Commissioner Yu arrived at 6:05p.m. during Item 2. The Board of Education seat is currently vacant. Also present: Director of Elections John Arntz and Deputy City Attorney Joshua White.

2. Public comment on any issue within the Elections Commission's general jurisdiction:

Former commissioner Gerard Gleason spoke about attending a convention for voting systems, and was impressed by what he saw in Denver's elections department: An off-the-shelf iPad at \$400/unit that operates as a ballot marking device (as opposed to DRE systems), which prints on demand, listing only the voter's choices; this paper is then what is counted as the vote.

3. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting

Commissioner Jerdonek moved and Commissioner Safont seconded that the minutes of the October 15, 2014 Elections Commission Meeting be adopted. Commissioner Rowe and Commissioner Jung moved to amend. On the motion to amend, the Yes votes were: Commissioners Rowe, Jerdonek, Yu, and Jung; No votes were Commissioners Matthews and Safont. The amendment was agreed to, and the minutes were adopted UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Review of November 4, 2014 election

Commissioners Jerdonek and Matthews shared their experiences as Inspectors at polling places on Election Day.

Director Arntz warned that the ballot-counting system is near the breaking point with the number of cards that our ballots require, and that this is only going to get worse in November 2015 with the addition of a fourth language to San Francisco ballots (Filipino). Putting four languages on each card will continually extend the number of cards per ballot—for instance, this past election could well have resulted in a ten-card ballot. The Director said that both the Department's and the United States Postal Service equipment could not have handled that kind of volume. The Department is considering how to make the packets smaller for next year, including the possibility of

bilingual ballots. If that were to occur, the ballot would be in English and the language requested by the voter.

Commissioner Jerdonek asked why the preliminary RCV reports were released only with the final results report of election night and not also with the first. Director Arntz said that is how they recalled doing it the last RCV election, but that they could release it both at the beginning and end if desired.

Commissioner Jerdonek asked about the Incident Report Information System (IRIS) report, and said that on Election Day, he made a call to the Election Center which he thought was significant but which did not get listed on the IRIS. Director Arntz said that if a call to the Election Center requires resources, it gets logged in the IRIS. If the call is a question that the operator can just answer, then it is not logged so as to permit the operator to take calls faster during the periods of higher call volume, namely opening and closing hours.

Commissioner Jung raised the issue of slowness in the Department's website, 75 minutes on Election Night and sluggishness the next day. He pointed out that the mobile app worked well in the evening of Election Day. He observed that the new kiosks are attractive but big, and that his informal survey of pollworkers revealed a plurality who said it was "more difficult." (Commissioner Matthews said that he found that it was almost a pop-up kind of set-up, and fairly easy to install.)

Commissioner Rowe observed that tracking Vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots is not intuitive on the website. Once on the page, she said it was excellent, but that getting to that page was difficult. In her visits to 5-6 polling places, she observed that the majority of pollworkers she asked had found the new kiosks harder, but that some thought it was easy. She raised the issue that one polling place had voters who had left entire cards with no votes; the Insight had rejected the card as programmed, but then the "3 key" would not operate to override/accept the card. She noted that pollworkers like the colored canvas bags.

Commissioner Rowe enjoyed and appreciated her tour of the Department and City Hall operations on Election Night, and was pleased to see warehouse operations on Election Night.

Commissioner Rowe said that if a person is named in the IRIS, then the Department should be careful about releasing that name to the public. Director Arntz said that the IRIS was not really intended to be made public, and that ordinarily they spend more time reviewing and deleting those details, but that Commission President Matthews had specifically asked that the IRIS be provided in its unedited form.

Commissioner Jung requested that Director Arntz investigate the events that President Matthews reported on at his polling site that were referred to the District Attorney's office and to report on his investigation at the next meeting.

Public Comment:

David Cary spoke about the scheduling of the first preliminary ranked choice voting (RCV) results. Previous practice was that the Department would release within an hour of closing, then each day thereafter. "Stop hiding the votes, and stop treating ranked choice votes as second class votes."

Roger Donaldson agreed with David Cary, and said that RCV ballot images should have been posted sooner. He said that the release of RCV votes and ballot images should be put in a policy by the Elections Commission.

5. Commissioners' Reports

None; no public comment.

6. Director's Report

A special parcel tax election was to be held December 1, administered by the Department.

At the warehouse, the 1% tally was in progress and the canvass would finish soon. Then the archive process would begin.

Commissioner Jung asked about the recently acquired new equipment, such as the butterfly machine that opens returned VBM envelopes for faster extraction. Director Arntz said that they worked well and that they want to buy two more.

Public Comment:

David Cary said that the Certification of the Vote should include certification of the vote tally in all RCV contests; in the past, only the first choice was certified.

7. Public Employee Performance Evaluation for Director of Elections John Arntz.

(a) No public comment.

(b) CLOSED SESSION. Closed Session was moved by Commissioner Rowe and seconded by Commissioner Safont, pursuant to Brown Act section 54957(b) and Sunshine Ordinance section 67.10(b) to discuss the performance evaluation of a public employee. Vote was UNANIMOUS to move into closed session.

(c) Moved by Commissioner Rowe and seconded by Commissioner Safont pursuant to Sunshine Ordinance section 67.12(a) that the Elections Commission not disclose any portion of the closed session discussion regarding the public employee performance evaluation. Vote was UNANIMOUS not to disclose.

8. Discussion and possible action regarding items for future agendas.

See attached for written comments submitted by David Cary on this item.

Adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Thank you President Matthews and Commissioners. My name is David Cary.

I recommend that you commit to reviewing, restoring, and enhancing what have already been demonstrated to be viable better practices and policies for doing election night RCV tallies. I encourage you to commit to making these changes in the first half of 2015, well before next November's election. I am preparing to give you as much encouragement and support as you need to get this right.

A diverse group of San Franciscans are calling for this change. I commend these brave people who are speaking out to tell City Hall powers that change is needed. In particular, with this first, small installment, they are petitioning this commission to:

"Stop Hiding Our Votes. Report full tallies for all RCV contests at least twice on election night: once with the initial release of tallies within an hour after polls close and again at the end of election night processing. Always supply ballot data with RCV tallies to allow independent verification."

A painful part of this for me has been listening to those whose voting participation is already suppressed by their low level of confidence in our political and electoral institutions. The failure of San Francisco Elections to provide some of the most basic and visible support for transparent, credible elections on election night tends to confirm some of their worst fears about the system.

They deserve better and I ask you to do your part to institute improvements.

Thank you.