

Resolution

Commending the Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee and its Legal Counsel who served for the November 4, 2008 Consolidated General Election

WHEREAS, elections in San Francisco include a large number of ballot measures, the exact legal text of which can be complex and confusing; and

WHEREAS, the Voter Information Pamphlet must contain summaries of these numerous ballot measures that are clear, understandable, fair, and accurate; and

WHEREAS, the Ballot Simplification Committee and its legal counsel have a very limited amount of time in which to complete their work, bounded by the deadlines for qualifying measures for the ballot and the printing requirements of the Voter Information Pamphlet and ballot cards, and thus work almost daily, and sometimes in full-day sessions, for more than two consecutive weeks; and

WHEREAS, the Deputy City Attorney prepares a draft of 300 words or less when possible, which is then reviewed by members of the Ballot Simplification Committee, whose members have expertise in the use of the English language, and who hold public hearings which citizens and campaign supporters routinely attend in an effort to edit the language, often to their own advantage;

WHEREAS, the Ballot Simplification Committee and its legal counsel consistently provide excellent, reliable, fair summaries of these ballot measures;

NOW THEREFORE, the Elections Commission of the City and County of San Francisco recognizes, by this resolution, the outstanding contribution to the citizens of San Francisco made by the members of the Ballot Simplification Committee for the San Francisco General Election of 2008;

The Elections Commission presents this commendation to Ballot Simplification Committeepersons Betty Packard, Darla Chisnell, June M. Fraps, Ann Jorgenson, and Adele Fasick; Department of Elections' Publications Division Manager Barbara Carr; and Deputy City Attorney Mollie Lee, with our thanks for their excellent work for the voters of San Francisco under strenuous and difficult circumstances.

Done this 15th day of October 2008

Gerard Gleason

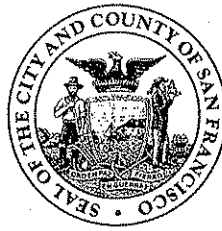
President, San Francisco Elections Commission

I so attest:

Shirley Rodriques

Secretary, San Francisco Elections Commission

ELECTIONS COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco



Gerard Gleason, President
Richard P. Matthews
Joseph B. Phair
Rosabella Safont
Arnold Townsend
Malcolm Yeung
Winnie Yu

John Arntz
Director of Elections

Shirley Rodrigues
Commission Secretary

City and County of San Francisco
Elections Commission

Approved:

Minutes of the Meeting held
City Hall, Room 408
October 1, 2008

1. President Gleason called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.
2. **COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Commissioners, Gerard Gleason, Richard P. Matthews, Winnie Yu, Rosabella Safont, Malcolm Yeung, Joseph B. Phair. Commissioner Arnold Townsend arrived at 6:20 pm, Deputy City Attorney Mollie Lee and Director John Arntz.
3. **Introduction of new member to the Elections Commission.** President Gleason introduced the new Board of Education Appointee to the Elections Commission, Malcolm Yeung.

Commissioner Yeung gave a brief history of his background which includes working as a civil right attorney, primarily representing low-income immigrants and San Francisco citizens of color for the past five years, working on voter identification requirements, language access compliance, and multi-lingual exit polling with a statewide coalition.

4. **Announcements.** President Gleason informed the public and Commission that he has spoken with Commissioner appointing authorities regarding the need to fill vacancies on the Elections Commission. He said that recently these authorities have been cooperative and responsive. He reminded the members that a new Commission President will be elected in the upcoming weeks and said that he hoped that person would take the initiative and continue to work with the authorities when vacancies occur.

Public Comment. *Brent Turner* gave us an article regarding the Secretary of State and open source software. He asked the Commission Secretary to forward it to all members. Additionally he said that he hoped the City and the Commission would work forward with having an Open Source Taskforce.

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5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Preparations for November 4, 2008 General Election. Director Arntz reported that the voters' guide (VIP) is on line and that most of the ballots have been printed. The mailing of the VIPs has begun, over 5600 overseas ballots have been sent (this is the more than ever before), early voting begins this coming Monday, the Logic and Accuracy Testing has begun for the new equipment and software (although certification has not yet been approved), the phone bank began last week and receives several hundred inquiries daily, there will be an Open House on October 15 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, there will be a candidate training workshop on the same day from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm regarding electioneering, the pollworker manual is now on line, polling sites have been confirmed and there have been 38 location changes from the last election. Regarding the polling sites, fifteen have been upgraded due to accessibility or size issues. Routes are being organized for delivery of voting equipment, 3000 pollworkers have been scheduled for training, clerk classes have begun, language assistance goals for the polling sites have been met (800 Chinese and 250 Spanish speaking workers).

Commissioner Phair asked for an update of the voting equipment certification process. Director Arntz replied that the hearing lasted only 30 minutes, there were no speakers against the proposed equipment and one person spoke in favor of certification of the equipment for use through out the state. The Secretary of State (SoS) could grant an conditional certification for the equipment to be used in San Francisco as early as this Friday. It is expected that this will happen because the system has performed well. The Director added that the vendor, Sequoia Voting Systems was more responsive during the certification process than the previous vendor, Election Systems & Software (ES&S).

Commissioner Phair asked the Director what was the subject of the calls that the phone bank has been receiving. Director Arntz replied that most of the calls were inquiries about voter registration status. He said that the Department plans to train high school student volunteers to look up this information, and polling site locations for callers on election day.

Commissioner Matthews asked if the number of new registrations was increasing. Director Arntz answered that the numbers have been steady but he expects them to increase as election day draws closer, and reminded the Commission that there are twenty more days before the deadline to register. Director Arntz reported that the Department is currently getting about 1000 registrations a week. Currently the number of registered San Francisco voters is approximately 433,000, which is about 6000 more than those for last June's election.

President Gleason asked if registrations postmarked on October 20th will be registered. Director Arntz said that they would be registered. President Gleason asked if the registrations received at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) on October 20th and then sent to Sacramento would be honored. Director Arntz

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responded that if the Department receives notification from the state after the deadline, that a registration was received before the deadline, then it will be processed as such by the Department, even after the election.

Director Arntz outlined the Department's outreach efforts: staff attend community meetings and events; special ethnic media outlets like radio, television and print are contacted; public service announcements and interviews are given; bus shelter ads are posted and community colleges are contacted. He said that low voter turnout areas are also being targeted. Something new for this election will be "Registration Weeks" – in which press releases will announce that staff will be at certain locations/points in the City on predetermined and announced dates and times with the focus being registration information. This will begin next week. Director Arntz said that the Department has been working successfully with the Housing Authority in these efforts. The Ex-offender information has been the most requested of all materials available for outreach.

Precinct Services/ADA is preparing a large print VIP which will be on the Department's website by Friday. This took a lot of work to reformat the VIP from its current format into the larger print.

Commissioner Yeung commended the Department on its great outreach efforts and asked if Elections has worked with TV Channel 26 which, he said, has a large audience. Director Arntz said that the Department has worked with that station when it has asked for interviews, however the print media has been more active during elections.

Commissioner Townsend reported that he attended the NAACP General Membership meeting on Sunday, and Charlie McNulty from the Elections Department, was on the program and gave an outstanding, in depth explanation of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). The Commissioner suggested that the Department and Commission consider the subject of "getting out the vote" at a meeting after the November 4, 2008 election.

Commissioner Phair asked what materials does the Department have to explain RCV. Director Arntz said that the Department has found that the subject is difficult to understand on the first explanation. For this election a mailer will be sent to those voters who have to make an RCV selection on their ballot, the Department's website offers a flash media demonstration on RCV and a PSA that was produced a few years ago may be used as well. The Director said that he was surprised that the people who work on the campaigns don't understand RCV as much as they should so that they can explain it to potential voters. Commissioner Phair said that the concept of RCV must be explained and understood as well as the physical act of voting.

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6. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Discussion and possible action to approve the Minutes of the September 17, 2008 Commission Meeting.** Commissioner Gleason MOVED and Commissioner Safont SECONDED this item. The Roll Call Vote was UNANIMOUS to approve the minutes.
- b. **Discussion and possible action regarding Commission response to communications from members of the public. [Gleason]**
President Gleason called the members' attention to a series of communications from "info@localparty.org" in tonight's meeting packet. Commissioners acknowledged that they had read all the communications and agreed with the response President Gleason sent. The group "info@localparty.org" did not agree with the response and restated their case. The Commission response remains the same.

Commissioner Phair MOVED and Commissioner Matthews SECONDED that the following be policy for handling communications from members of the public:

That the Commission Secretary should handle all correspondence addressed to the Commission as follows: (1) Forward the correspondence to all members of the Commission, unless the material is "spam" or a communication that clearly should be directed to the Department of Elections; (2) Respond to sender by acknowledging receipt of the communication and informing the sender that the communication has been sent to the Commissioners. The reply should also inform the correspondent of the next meeting of the Commission, complete with the date, time and location, and advise the correspondent that they are welcomed to attend the meeting as a member of the public and discuss the matter further with the Commission during public comment.

The Roll Call Vote was UNANIMOUS to institute this policy.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **Discussion and possible action regarding preparations for the November 4, 2008 General Election.** This item is a standing item until the election and there was no discussion. CARRIED OVER until the next meeting.
- b. **Discussion and possible action regarding Commission member activities and observations regarding November 4, 2008 General Election.** President Gleason reminded members that they should not drop in on pollworker training classes but should schedule their

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attendance for the classes. At the October 15, 2008 Commission meeting there will be discussion about what Commissioners want to observe for the November 4 election in preparation for the Commission's evaluation of that election. The Commission Secretary will be giving out the observer badges for Commissioners.

Commissioner Matthews asked Director Arntz if restricted areas will permit badged Commissioners entry. Director Arntz said that he will make a decision whether an additional badge from the Department will be needed.

Public Comment. *Brent Turner* said that things like the Logic and Accuracy Test and the Audit of the election are not as open as he would like them to be to the public, and he certainly would like these areas completely open to the Commissioners. *Chandra Friese* invited the Commissioners to an October 26th event that will be informative regarding observations on election day. Ms. Friese will forward information to the Commission Secretary.

- c. **Discussion and possible action regarding criteria for Commission post-election evaluation of election plans and conduct of election.** [Phair] Commissioner Phair said that he prepared a short outline of the criteria for evaluation of the plan and the conduct of the election. He will provide the material for the packets for the October 15, 2006 meeting for discussion at that time.

This item is CARRIED OVER until the October 15, 2006 meeting.

8. **Discussion regarding items for future agendas.** Commissioner Matthews suggested a resolution thanking the Ballot Simplification Committee and The Deputy City Attorney for their work on the November 4, 2008 General election. Commissioner Matthews is to draft the resolution.

Commissioner Townsend suggested that after the November election the Commission should have a discussion regarding an outreach committee and an effort to get out the vote.

ADJOURNMENT was at 7:23 pm.

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San Francisco Elections Commission

BOPEC Materials for Discussion
Possible Areas for Election Reviews
July 21, 2008 Draft

Election reviews should focus on subjects and issues that relate to confirming that the subject election is Free, Fair and Functional. Following are some suggestions for areas of inquiry or review following elections:

Department of Elections post-election results:

1. Specific difficulties encountered in the election
2. Number of hand counts and remakes of ballots required and results (number validated, invalidated and reasons therefore)
3. Voter complaints received and actions taken or responses
4. Limitations of DoE facilities, including precincts, pre-election staging areas (for equipment, ballots or other materials), training facilities, ballot processing facilities etc.
5. Fiscal limitations encountered including necessary variations from DoE budgets
6. Number of vote by mail ballots, number invalidated and reasons therefore
7. Number of provisional ballots received and disposition data.

Election Plan

1. [Markers from the Election Plan – need specifics]
2. Deviations from the Election Plan and reasons therefore

Equipment

1. Voting equipment problems, failures or difficulties associated with use