

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

MEETING MINUTES

San Francisco Elections Commission
Wednesday, January 21, 2015
6:00 p.m.
City Hall, Room 408
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

President Matthews called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Commissioners Jerdonek, Jung, Matthews, Rowe, Safont, and Yu. 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 unless otherwise included in an item on this agenda

Mr. David Cary submitted a petition with fifteen signatures asking that RCV contest tallies and ballot data be reported at least twice on election night: once after the closing of the polls and again at the end of the night.

3. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting

Moved by Commissioner Rowe and seconded by Commissioner Safont to approve the Minutes of the December 17, 2014 Elections Commission Meeting. The vote was UNANIMOUS to approve.

4. Commissioners' Reports

President Matthews reported that he had the Department of Human Resources post the job posting for Commission Secretary and designated Commissioner Rowe to receive the resumes. President Matthews reported that he would be forwarding the letters and e-mail correspondence from 2012 and 2013 regarding the legislative issues discussed at the last Commission meeting. He stated that he was still working on the Annual Report and so would be removing agenda item 7 from today's meeting. He also reported that he spoke with his appointing authority the City Attorney regarding the end

of his term and told the Commission that the Charter allows him to serve up to 60 additional days as a holdover.

Commissioner Jung asked how many resumes were submitted for Commission Secretary. Commissioner Rowe replied that over ninety resumes were received and that she would be in touch with the next Commission President regarding the hiring procedure.

5. Director's Report

Director Arntz reported on the completion of the Transbay Transit Center special election at the end of December.

Admin Division: The Admin Division is preparing the budget for the next two fiscal years. Director Arntz stated that he would provide BOPEC with the budget documents in time for the February BOPEC meeting. The Division is preparing for an annual audit by the Controller's Office. The Division is also setting up classes for employees through the Department of Human Resources.

Director Arntz provided an update regarding the Warehouse space. Director Arntz has been in communication with the Port. Director Arntz stated that it doesn't seem like the Port has a single space to offer that can contain the entire Warehouse operations. So if the Department were to remain on Port property, the operations would likely be divided between two Port locations. Director Arntz asked the Commission if anyone has contacts with commercial real estate brokers.

Ballot Distribution: Director Arntz discussed efforts to improve the new program to track vote-by-mail processing, including releasing the information in an open data format. The Ballot Distribution group is also working with the vendor that was selected through the bidding process on the second generation version of the software for the RFID equipment tracking program.

Campaign Services: Director Arntz reported that the calendar for the November 2015 election is posted on the Department website. He also noted that the District 3 Supervisor race would be on the ballot in both November 2015 and November 2016 because of the vacancy that was filled. The filing deadline for both District 3 Supervisor and Mayor is June 9. Other local contests have a later deadline of August 7. Director Arntz said that he would like to start posting election information in formats that allow members of the public to more easily combine information from different sources. They would also like to scan and post the paid arguments in near real-time as they come in.

Outreach: In the November election, the Division contacted 737 organizations and attended 173 outreach events. The Division estimates they had contact with almost 86,000 people before the election. About 4,200 ballots were dropped off at the vote-by-mail stations outside City Hall. Over the course of a month, they also had about 3,000 responses to an online survey regarding the usability of the Department's website. For

the first time, the Division is exploring a joint voter outreach effort with other Bay area counties for the November 2016 election – using uniform materials in addition to San Francisco-specific materials.

Pollworker: The Division is inputting into their database pollworker survey data and also metrics regarding the procedures followed by polling-place inspectors. They also held their first Voting Accessibility Committee meeting of the year (the first of at least four).

Precinct Services: The Division is looking at ways to improve the data being stored in association with the process of assigning polling places. They are also looking at how precincts will be consolidated for the next election, since it is a municipal election. They are also revisiting the process of delivering voting equipment to polling places in conjunction with the RFID tracking system. The group is leading a process that involves contacting and communicating with the Bay area counties of Marin, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara. They will be collecting information for potential improvements in three areas: the 1% manual tally, the canvass, and the delivery of voting equipment.

Publications: With the addition of Filipino as a fourth language, the Division is taking another look at its education materials in addition to translating them to Filipino. The Division is also exploring making the Voting Information Pamphlet available in HTML in addition to PDF, for increased accessibility.

MIS: The MIS group has begun the process of improving the Department website, including simplifying it and increasing its uniformity. This is a process they plan to do every January starting this year. The group did a number of database queries to complete a survey for the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) regarding vote-by-mail voting.

Voter Services: The Voter Services group is mailing the letters to those voters whose ballots were not counted in the last election, including giving the reason that their ballot was not counted. The mailing for vote-by-mail voters was completed, and they will be doing provisional voters next. The Filipino language phone line went live recently, and the Department will soon begin hiring Filipino speakers to staff the line. Yesterday an employee started that will oversee what they are now calling the “Voting Center” in City Hall (previously known as Early Voting).

Warehouse: The Warehouse group is doing clean-up as well as inventory in preparation for the budget.

Commissioner Jung asked about the timeframe for finding a new Warehouse location. Director Arntz explained that the current lease expires at the end of 2015, at which point the Giants will assume control of the properties (which includes the Warehouse, the parking lot, and the shed attached to the Warehouse). There is still a chance, however, that the Department could continue to use the same facilities into 2016. Director Arntz

explained that the new site should ideally be found as soon as possible. Commissioner Rowe said that she knows a number of commercial brokers in her network. Director Arntz explained there is a chance that the new location would need to be outside San Francisco. Commissioner Jerdonek asked if the Department would be able to use the current warehouse for the November 2015 election even if the Department had to move out by January 1, 2016. Director Arntz replied yes.

Commissioner Jerdonek asked about the collaboration effort with other Bay area counties. Director Arntz said the plan is for various Department employees to interact with their peers in other counties to learn from each other, rather than for the effort to be limited to the registrars themselves.

Commissioner Jerdonek asked about the responses to the website usability survey. Director Arntz replied that he hadn't studied the responses yet, but he did note that the most visited part of the website was the page to locate one's polling place, in addition to the election results. The vote-by-mail status page did not seem to be visited much.

Commissioner Jerdonek asked about recent elections legislation at the Board of Supervisors that he read about, namely Supervisor Wiener's proposal around the initiative process and Supervisor Campos's idea to mail all voters a vote-by-mail ballot. Director Arntz replied that Supervisor Wiener's proposal is not expected to impact the Department much. Director Arntz didn't think that Supervisor Campos's proposal had been introduced.

Commissioner Yu asked about Supervisor Wiener's resolution in support of the creation of open source voting systems. Director Arntz replied that the resolution had passed and that it stated that San Francisco shall support the creation of open source voting systems. It also asks that the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) study and issue a report on the feasibility and steps for San Francisco to develop its own open source voting system. Director Arntz spoke with the person at LAFCo that will be preparing the report and will provide the Commission with future updates.

Public comment: Mr. Karl Nicholas asked if it was possible for members of the public to receive a data dump of the choices marked on each individual ballot card. Mr. Nicholas also stated that he works with a group that analyzes campaign contributions.

6. Discussion and possible action regarding items for future agendas

Commissioner Rowe raised the issue of the hiring of a Commission Secretary.

Commissioner Jerdonek raised the issue of possible improvements to ranked-choice voting education materials, given that the education materials are being reviewed with the addition of Filipino. Commissioner Jerdonek also raised the idea of a hearing on what we would like to see in our next voting system.

No public comment.

7. President's Annual Report

President Matthews will be sending Commissioners his draft Annual Report when completed.

8. Commission Officer Elections

President Matthews opened the floor for nominations for Commission President. Commissioner Safont nominated Commissioner Jerdonek, and he accepted. The vote was UNANIMOUS to elect Commissioner Jerdonek as Commission President.

President Matthews opened the floor for nominations for Commission Vice President. Commissioner Jung nominated Commissioner Rowe, and she accepted. The vote was UNANIMOUS to elect Commissioner Rowe as Commission Vice President.

9. 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.

Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.