

**SAN FRANCISCO ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016**

Jill B. Rowe  
President

Approved by the San Francisco Elections Commission on January , 2018

San Francisco Elections Commission  
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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Pursuant to Article XI of the Bylaws of the Elections Commission, the purpose of this report is to preserve and pass on to successive Commissions relevant information so as to make more effective subsequent Commission tenures by providing institutional memory to assist in resolution of recurring Commission problems. This report contains the President's report of the activities of the Commission during 2016, as well as other information the President deems significant and of likely assistance to subsequent Commissions.

## 2. Commission Organizational Description

### 2.1 Commission Members

The Commissioners in 2016 were:

- Jill Rowe, Commission President, appointed by Public Defender
- Christopher Jerdonek, Commission Vice President, appointed by Board of Supervisors
- Roger Donaldson, appointed by City Attorney
- Charles Jung, appointed by Mayor
- Winnie Yu, appointed by District Attorney
- Rosabella Safont, appointed by Treasurer
- Dominic Paris, appointed by Board of Education

All of the Commissioners served the full calendar year 2016.

### 2.2 Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee Members

The Commission had one committee, the Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee, which consisted of the following members:

Christopher Jerdonek and Dominic Paris served on the Committee from January to December, 2016. Rosabella Safont served on the Committee from September to December, 2016. Christopher Jerdonek served as chair for the full calendar year 2016.

### 2.3 Director of Elections

John Arntz served as Director of Elections.

### 2.4 Secretary

Nadya Hewitt served as Commission Secretary from January, 2016 to May, 2016. The Secretary position was vacant for the remainder of 2016.

2.5 Deputy City Attorney

Joshua White served as Deputy City Attorney.

3. Elections

3.1 The Department of Elections conducted two elections, the June 7, 2016 Election and the November 8, 2016 Election.

4. Commission Activities

4.1 June 7, 2016 Election

At its March meeting, the Commission assessed and approved the Department's written election plan for the June 7, 2016 Election. The Commission also approved the City Employee Waiver for the June 7, 2016 Election.

The Commission assessed the June 7, 2016 Election its September meeting. Whereas recent historical practice had been for the Commission to vote on a formal review of the election, the Deputy City Attorney advised that no formal vote was required and that discussion of the Election is sufficient to comply with the Commission's charter. The Commission did not hold a vote regarding approval of the June 7, 2016 Election.

4.2 November 8, 2016 Election

At BOPEC's September meeting, BOPEC assessed the Department's proposed written election plan for the November 8, 2016 Election, and voted unanimously to recommend that the Commission approve the plan.

At the Commission's September meeting, the Commission assessed and approved the Department's written election plan for the November 8, 2016. The Commission also approved the City Employee Waiver.

This Election had the highest number of voters in City history, with approximately 30% voting at the polls, and approximately 70% voting by mail.

4.3 Written Director's Reports

At its January meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to request that the Director provide a written summary of the Director's report prior to Commission meetings to allow the commissioners to have a better assessment of departmental tasks. The Director subsequently provided written reports prior to most meetings. The Commissioners reported that they found the written report helpful and efficient.

#### 4.4 2016 Budget

At BOPEC's February meeting, it reviewed the Director's proposed budget for FY2015-2016 and FY2016-2017, and voted unanimously to recommend that the full Commission approve the proposed budget.

At the Commission's February meeting, it reviewed and unanimously approved the Director's proposed budget for FY2015-2016 and FY2016-2017.

#### 4.5 Quarterly Attendance Reports

At its February meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to submit quarterly electronic attendance reports to all of the Commissioners' appointing authorities.

#### 4.6 Slate Mailer Organization Reports

At its July meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to urge the Director of Elections to meet with the Director of Ethics to request that the designated filing clerk for County slate mailer organization reports be transferred from the Department of Elections to the Ethics Department.

In San Francisco, all campaign reports were previously filed with the Ethics Commission with one exception: slate mailers, which take a position on multiple campaigns. Slate mailers were filed with the Department of Elections, which made them less easily accessible to the public because they were not filed with all other campaign reports at the Ethics Department.

#### 4.7 Open Source Voting

Throughout calendar year 2016, the Commission encouraged and supported the development by the City of San Francisco of an open source voting system. Commissioner Jerdonek met with members of the Board of Supervisors to encourage the Mayor to include funding in the budget for development of an open source voting system. Commissioner Jerdonek also discussed this issue with the press and with various community organizations. Multiple members of the public throughout the year spoke in support of open source voting, and reported that they submitted letters and took other actions in support of open source voting.

The Mayor included \$300,000 in his proposed budget for the initial phase of the open source voting system project. After the Board of Supervisors' Budget Analyst's Office recommended that the Board remove the open source project, Director Arntz appeared at the budget hearings and disagreed with that recommendation. The \$300,000 was subsequently included in the final budget, and the Director began working with the Department of Technology toward hiring a project manager consultant.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill B. Rowe  
2016 President