

ELECTIONS COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco

**BUDGET AND OVERSIGHT OF PUBLIC
ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (BOPEC)**

Jill Rowe, Chairperson
Christopher Jerdonek
Dominic Paris



John Arntz, Director of Elections
Nadya Hewitt, Secretary

MEETING MINUTES

Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee (BOPEC)

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

6:00 p.m.

City Hall, Room 421

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

San Francisco, California 94102

Order of Business

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chairperson Rowe called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and took roll call. Present: Commissioners Rowe and Jerdonek. Also present: Director of Elections John Arntz. Secretary Nadya Hewitt was absent. Commissioner Paris joined the meeting at 6:10 pm during Item 4.

2. General Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Commissioner Jerdonek moved to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2015 BOPEC meeting. Commissioner Rowe seconded. No public comment. The vote was UNANIMOUS to APPROVE (Commissioners Rowe and Jerdonek voting).

4. Review of November 3rd 2015 Election

Director Arntz provided a report and answered questions regarding the November 3, 2015 Election and whether it complied with the Plan approved by the Commission prior to the election: The Department complied with the Election Plan except for the item on page 11, Letter I (poll locating application). The Department was unable to comply with this item because the anticipated web based application was not fully developed prior to the election. With President Jerdonek's approval, the Director did not provide copies of emails sent by the public to the Department because of the considerable time involved in redacting the emails, but the Director offered to do this if the Commission wants it. There were more equipment issues than expected, and the Department is looking into them. There was a higher than usual amount of votes cast by provisional ballot. This may have been partly a result of campaigns and news organizations having mistakenly informed the public that they could vote at any polling place. Most of the provisional ballots were voted by people who had received VBM ballots but went to the polling place without them. 86% of provisional ballots were accepted, which is right at the expected level. The unaccepted provisional ballots were mostly because the voters were not registered. There were more signature mis-compare than in prior elections. For this election, the Department had provided additional training on how to compare signatures, and had added additional steps to the comparison process including an extra level of supervisor or manager review. When a ballot is rejected due to signature mismatch, a notice is sent to the voter so that the voter can update their signature for future elections (although their vote cannot be counted for this election). The Director commended the post office for postmarking 99% of VBM ballots. In the past, the post office delivered many VBM ballots without postmarks, but because of the changes (VBM ballots are now accepted if post-marked by election day so long as they are received by the Department within three days of the election), the Department worked with the Post Office to ensure that ballots would be postmarked. Voter turn-out was 45-46%, and the Department has consistently expected a 42% turn-out. The election was certified by November 19.

Commissioners Rowe, Jerdonek and Paris questioned the Director regarding the signature mismatches and the possible reasons for the higher mismatch rate this election. The mismatch rate was somewhat higher in District 3, for which the District Attorney is looking into reports that VBM ballots had been collected and returned by persons other than the intended voters.

Commissioner Jerdonek commended the Department for its RCV reporting. He asked questions regarding the one percent manual tally. The Director responded that they are still encountering problems with capturing the VBM ballots and are continuing to work on these issues.

Commissioner Rowe moved to forward this matter to the full Commission with a recommendation to approve the election as having substantially complied with the Election Plan. Commissioner Jerdonek seconded.

Public Comment: David Carey stated that it was good to have RCV-specific information in the certification letter. He also liked having one vote total per candidate, and liked that the certification letter was posted on the Department's website. He stated that as to educational improvements, he liked the posters and the live-streaming of election activities which allowed him to observe multiple activities at a time. At City Hall, he watched the voting wait times from about noon to 7pm, and said they were good. The longest he saw was about 14 minutes, and the wait was usually less than 10 minutes. This was a good improvement from 2012 when he saw wait times as long as an hour.

The vote was UNANIMOUS to APPROVE (Commissioners Rowe, Jerdonek and Paris voting).

Adjourned at 6:47 p.m.