



City and County of San Francisco
Department of Elections

John Arntz, Director

Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: September 15, 2016
RE: Director's Report: September 21, 2016, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief statement of the work the Department of Elections (Department) has undertaken in relation to conducting the November 8, 2016, Consolidated General Election in a free, fair, and functional manner.

- I. **To ensure the Department can properly conduct the November 2016 election, the Department continued to identify the necessary resources to procure, personnel to hire, and has begun reviewing various processes.**
 - A. Following the Department of Human Resources' (DHR) procedures, the Department hired and onboarded nearly 130 temporary employees to assist the year-round staff with a variety of functions, including maintaining voter rolls, preparation of ballots and supplies, poll worker recruitment and training, administering voting at the Voting Center, securing of polling places. The Department expects to hire nearly 170 additional temporary employees in the next month to assist with providing support to polling places on Election Day, and conducting post-election canvass.
 - B. To inform voters about possible actions they may take to reactivate or complete their voter registration, the Department expanded its online voter registration lookup tool to allow voters with "Inactive", "Incomplete" or "Cancelled" status and those who have not met federal HAVA ID requirements to review their records and learn about steps that need to be taken in specific situations.
 - C. To provide an avenue for public observation and input on election processes, the Department sent nearly 150 invitations to advocacy groups, the media, the Civil Grand Jury, the League of Women Voters, representatives from political parties, inviting the representatives to join the Official Election Observer Panel for the November 8 election. On October 13, the Department will host an Open House where the public will have an opportunity to observe the operation of the phone bank and the Voting Center, activities of the Poll Worker Recruitment office, the scanning of returned vote-by-mail ballot envelopes in preparation for signature verification, and other processes. For those who would like to observe but cannot do so in person, the Department will broadcast various operations on **SF Elections Live**.
 - D. To facilitate expected larger volume of voter calls and email inquiries during the November 8 election cycle, the Department expanded its phone and email assistance staff to a 20-person team tasked specifically with answering public inquiries through Election Day. To provide equal access to information for voters with limited English proficiency, the Department increased the number of staff on dedicated lines for Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, and Filipino speakers.
 - E. The Department continued its efforts, in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and the Port of San Francisco, to prepare for the relocation of warehouse activities to Pier 31 from the current location on Pier 48. The Pier 31 site offers 16,000 less square footage than does Pier 48, requiring the development of new practices associated with such areas as the storage and archiving of election materials, working areas that can accommodate various types of activities, and traffic flow, and emergency planning.

- II. To provide appropriate services to voters, the Department continued its preparations for many programs such as securing accessible polling places, recruiting and training poll workers, testing voting equipment preparing content for the Official Ballot and the Voter Information Pamphlet, and maintaining voter records.**
- A. In order to provide clear, accurate information to voters, including those who are not proficient in English or those who have disabilities, increase transparency of election processes, and meet statutory requirements, the Department has completed the layout and proofing of the 99 versions of San Francisco's paper ballot; finalized the covers of the Voter Information Pamphlet (the cover image reinforces the Outreach message of "Prepare, Plan, Participate" and encourages voters to use the Ballot Worksheet to mark their choices and save time when voting); continued work on the English and the translated VIPs (the estimated page count of the English pamphlet is 316 pages, possibly the largest ever in San Francisco); participated in informational meeting with audio VIP vendor and representatives of Library for the Blind and Print Disabled.
 - B. The Department has completed the formatting of content for the ballots and on September 16, the Department will begin emailing ballots to overseas and military voters. Hard copy ballots will be mailed to overseas and military voters during the week of September 19. The ballot order and breakdowns according to ballot type and allocation is complete.
 - C. The Department has begun the annual preventive maintenance on the voting equipment and expects to complete this review by next week. Prior to the review the Department purchased 25 additional audio keypads to use when casting an audio ballot using the touchscreen equipment. Additionally, the Department is closely reviewing the operability of the remaining audio keypads.
 - D. Since the June election the Department has relocated 29 polling places, 15 sites were re-located due to cancellations on the part of polling place providers, and 14 were re-located to provide greater accessibility than previous sites. The Department is still seeking to replace five additional precincts that meet accessibility requirements. The Department is also identifying polling sites at which voters who want to initiate curbside voting could use a wireless "doorbell" to notify poll workers of their presence outside of the building.
 - E. The Voting Center in City Hall was expanded to include 28 stations, which is six additional stations than were available to voters during the June election. The Department is finalizing its processing and staffing schedules for vote-by-mail and provisional ballots
 - F. The Department continues to update voter records as well as review over 14,000 records that the statewide database, VoteCal, has identified as possible duplicate records for people who lived or are living in San Francisco as well as people who have lived in multiple counties. The records are known as "Merge Voter Determine Survivor."
 - G. The Department has begun announcing its poll worker recruitment efforts in several mediums: ads placed in 15 neighborhood newspapers during September including five newspapers serving Japanese-, Korean-, Vietnamese-, Spanish-, and Chinese-speaking communities, the San Francisco Examiner, and the SF Weekly; 30-second public service announcement for airing on Comcast Spotlight on which the Department will utilize 570 broadcasts as well as streaming banner ad on Comcast's website, SFGovTV, Roxie Movie Theater (the ad will play prior to every movie during the week of September 26), and 15 digital posters displayed on hand-sanitizing stands at the entrance of each Safeway store in San Francisco. To engage high schools students in volunteering as poll workers, the Department has contacted 39 public, private, and chartered schools, visited 13 schools, and scheduled visits in six schools, attended a San Francisco Youth Commission meeting last week, as well as a School Board meeting in August.
 - H. The Department continues to develop specific class curricula to support training of election volunteers of various experience levels: inspectors, new inspectors, clerks, new clerks, and high school student clerks. Clerk training will begin on Friday, September 30, and inspector training will begin on Sunday, October 30. The Training Manual provided to all poll workers is in production and will include more illustrations to make information clearer to the poll workers.

- I. The Department continues preparations to conduct the Central Market Commercial Business District election and the possible Retirement Board Election for which the nomination period ends on September 21.
- III. **The Department is preparing materials to facilitate the engagement of voters to participate in elections, to provide voters with information regarding the Department's services and information on the upcoming election.**
- A. The Department has developed outreach materials that urge San Franciscans to "Be a Voter!" and to "Prepare, Plan, and Participate". These messages appear on materials presented to voters at community events throughout the City, the Voter Information Pamphlet, outdoor advertising such as bus ads and posters, and direct mailings as well as promotional items such as window signs, pens, and magnets. The Department has distributed over 700 information packets to community organizations, City Departments (including libraries, recreation centers, police and fire stations, members of the Board of Supervisors), San Francisco Unified School District school and administrative sites, and 33 post-secondary school administrators. To assist San Franciscans with making their choices, the Department is alerting voters to benefits of using the ballot worksheet that the Department has included in the Voter Information Pamphlet and posted on its website. The ballot worksheet is a simple tool that voters can use to think through the material and save time when voting.
 - B. The Department will have participated in over 80 outreach events in August and September including presentations at San Francisco Board of Education and San Francisco Youth Commission, Sunday Streets in the Mission and Western Addition, Backpack Giveaway in the Bayview, Rock-the-Vote at Treasure Island hosted by the California Job Corps, Constitution and Citizenship Day at Angel Island, and meeting with Voter Information Network (VIN) representatives to gather their feedback on outreach mechanisms for the November election.
 - C. The Department has mailed nearly 375,000 large-format postcards—one mailed to every San Francisco household— with key election dates, a link to the Ballot Worksheet on sfelections.org, and information about availability of materials in Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino, in addition to English.
 - D. The Department has developed and will make available in September a new educational video in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino regarding ranked-choice voting. Posted on sfelections.org and shown at outreach events, the video will complement the collection of voter-education materials for the November election.
 - E. The Department has initiated its High School Voter Education Ambassador Program for the November election and received 17 applications from interested high school students, an increase from 11 applicants for April program. High School Student Ambassadors will help register people to vote, promote awareness of the upcoming election, and recruit fellow students to serve as poll workers on Election Day.