



City and County of San Francisco
Department of Elections

John Arntz, Director

Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: January 18, 2017
RE: Director's Report: January 18, 2017, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief statement of the work in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous Elections Commission meeting on December 21, 2016.

A. In consideration of the City developing its own voting system based on open source software:

1. The Mayor's Office organized a January 10 meeting attended by the Mayor's Budget Director, the Department's budget analyst from the Mayor's Office, the Acting Director of the Committee on Information Technology (COIT), personnel from the Department of Technology (DT), and the Director of Elections.
2. The Mayor's Office intends to organize similar meetings each month to assess progress and ensure the project is moving forward.
3. The Department of Elections will collaborate with COIT and DT to draft a request for proposal (RFP) intended to identify a technical consultant who will review the feasibility, costs, and time line associated with the City developing its own voting system based on open source software.
4. The study regarding the development of a voting system must be completed by January 2018 to provide time to assess possible budgetary requirements and funding options.
5. DT will provide examples of previously issued RFPs for technical consultants to use as examples for drafting the RFP for the consultant associated with the reviewing the development of the voting system based on open source software.
6. The Department of Elections will work with DT to determine the various requirements associated with issuing the RFP such as review and approval by the Civil Service Commission and other City agencies.
7. The \$300,000 included in the Department's budget following COIT's consideration of developing a new system will cover costs incurred by DT and the Department in developing and issuing the RFP and fund the consultant's work.
8. The \$300,000 allocated to the consultant's efforts will not expire at the conclusion of the current fiscal year.
9. The RFP is expected to be issued within the next two to three months.
10. The City Attorney's Office has advised that the Director of Elections can participate in the drafting of the RFP as well as be involved in selecting the successful candidate since the Director has receive no financial benefit from the process.

B. To provide appropriate services to voters, the Department continues to review and update procedures:

1. Associated with voter registration accuracy and voter list maintenance, the Department has been analyzing the sources from which incomplete or incorrect voter data may be received by the Department (i.e., California online voter registration, VoteCal), and considering methods and timelines for identifying records that require corrective actions and opportunities that exist to resolve data inaccuracy.
2. In taking steps to continuously improve the clarity and relevance of information presented to those who prefer to interact with the Department online, the Department has begun developing a plan and timeline for enhancing its website to achieve near-term updates such as reviewing date-specific and election-specific content for accuracy and longer-term updates associated with the navigability and usability of the site as a whole and individual pages and sections.

3. To ensure all processes occur as required, and in accordance with the San Francisco Charter and instructions provided by the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office, the Department has been formulating its budget proposals for the next two-year cycle -- FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19. The Department plans to submit the proposed draft budget to the Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee by Friday, January 27, 2017.
4. As mandated by the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) reporting requirements under 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-7 and U.S. Election Assistance Commission regulations, the Department prepared and submitted information responsive to a federally mandated survey required to be completed every two years following a federal election. The survey, comprised of 37 pages, focuses on information about ballots cast, voter registration statistics, overseas and military voting, Election Day activities, voting technology, and other election related matters.

C. To facilitate current special and district elections the Department has already undertaken many steps to facilitate the conducting of the election for a seat on the Retirement Board for the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) and the special district election on Treasure and Yerba Buena Islands:

1. For the Retirement Board Election, the Department has mailed approximately 63,000 ballots, and having received nearly 14,000 as of January 17, 2017.
2. The Department created a web page on its website with the information and materials related to the Retirement Board Election, including a daily breakdown of the returned ballots.
3. The Department has prepared personnel and resources for the opening of ballot envelopes and the tabulation of the ballots after the voting period ends on February 3, 2017. Ballot Tabulation is currently scheduled for Monday, February 6, 2017.
4. For the special district election, the Department has coordinated with the Clerk of the Board's Office and the City Attorney's Office to determine the voters eligible for the election and that the required election-related processes are being followed.
5. The election will occur during the Board of Supervisors' meeting on January 24.

D. The Department continues to undertake many actions associated with the engagement of voters in the elections process:

1. The Department attended two USCIS ceremonies serving approximately 1,000 new citizens at each ceremony to provide registration information and forms and to respond to election-related questions.
2. The Department has been preparing for attending a Youth Commission meeting to provide information regarding registration and elections, including pre-registration process for those under 18 authorized under Senate Bill 113.
3. The Department has begun planning for expanding its educational video library. Beginning in February the Department intends to produce a few short videos each month, from 30 second to three minutes, regarding the range of activities performed by the Department and within its divisions and will continue such production through 2017.