

ELECTIONS COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco

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

Roger Donaldson, Chair
Rosabella Safont



John Arntz, Director of Elections

Don Chan, Secretary

MEETING MINUTES (DRAFT)

**Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee (BOPEC)
of the San Francisco Elections Commission**

**Wednesday, March 7, 2018
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

President Donaldson called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. Present: Commissioner Safont. Also present was Director of Elections John Arntz, and Secretary Chan.

2. General Public Comment

None

3. Review of Department's Election Plans

President Donaldson asked Director Arntz for a summary, after which he had specific questions. Director Arntz commented that there are many standard requirements set by state and local law and ordinance, but beyond the basics the department continues to look at ways to improve the voting experience for the public, both in ease of use, accessibility, and credibility of outcomes.

The plan outlines all of the work done and being done to make sure the widest number of voters can participate in the voting process and feel positive about it.

E.g. proactively correcting and updating voters information so there is a current accurate list of registered voters rather than waiting for voters to notify the department.

The theme now is "Your city, Your choice" to personalize the materials and the voting act. The website is renewed and made more user friendly and attractive with great language access.

To give a better idea of what an election demands, examples of various challenges that present themselves are shared on the website.

There was a discussion about the staffing, including 250 'seasonal' employees that are needed to work up to the election, among which bilingual staff to handle the various language needs that exist in SF (Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese) and are mandated by various codes. When a certain language group reaches a threshold number—approx. 3% of the population—then language services for them have to be accounted for (non-European languages). On election day, about 80+ polling deputies are needed, but they are stipended volunteers, not employees.

President Donaldson thought the term LEP should have been expanded immediately after the acronym rather than some pages after, for clarity.

Asked about AB 918 and Vietnamese language, Director Arntz said that it dealt with what traditionally had been called a facsimile ballot, now called a reference ballot. It now provides for expanded provision of these reference ballot materials and making voters aware of them.

Asked which languages the ballots have to be provided in: English, Spanish, Chinese, Filipino.

The department is doing greater outreach to hospitals, convalescent/residential care facilities, pro-actively doing voter registration on-site. There are challenges related to hospitals due to patient movement.

Asked about the remote accessible vote by mail process, Director Arntz said the greatest need is getting the information out to all those who need it. The form of ballot is not like the ballots used in local polling places in SF, so processing them is separate from the local ballots, and needs to be integrated with the local system.

Director Arntz explained briefly how codes placed on the bottom of remade ballots can link them to the original ballot card, so they can comply with their retention policy of tracking the boxes where the original ballot cards are. This applies to the remote vote by mail ballots also.

Those voting at the City Hall vote center will be given vote by mail envelopes for their ballots.

President Donaldson asked about the Observer Panel. Director Arntz said it basically is the same as previously operated, and that they can observe online because the department streams so many of those activities.

There is an Open House held for every election.

Vote by Mail registration is allowed till May 29. By law the cut off is 7 days before the election.

Polling places have been reviewed for accessibility. Department staff went to each polling place to do measurements. There is also an online site for polling place "owners" much like the one for poll workers., so they can understand their responsibilities.

Asked if there will be a problem getting enough poll workers, Director Arntz said that there is a problem with trying to get students, given school schedules (finals, etc.). They may not be able to get many as before. High school students were essential in providing the language assistance needed at the polls. The department is working with the student advisory council to promote and get information out to the students.

Asked about the equipment and machines for election day, Director Arntz said the equipment is 10 yrs. old and all are being inspected and tested. The department has assembled many spare parts in preparation for possible failures on election day. There are also a large number of techs that are on hand in case of equipment failure, as well as replacement equipment.

Asked about RCV reports (ranked choice voting), Director Arntz said they will meet the requirements, expecting to run 2 the night of the election and one each day thereafter. (not all elections jurisdictions do that).

President Donaldson asked in reference to a Commission resolution to make known the availability of accessible voting machines for the disabled. Director Arntz said that scripts have been written and poll workers will be thoroughly briefed on informing all voters of their choices.

Commissioner Safont moved to send this Election Plan to the Commission for approval. President added an amendment to her motion. "to recommend the approval of the plan by the full commission." Upon voice vote the motion carried, 2-0.

Public Comment
None

4. Delivery of Slalom Report

Slalom has completed and circulated the 3rd draft and hope to have the final draft by next Friday for the full Commission. President Donaldson asked if all versions of the report would be available for public view. Director Arntz said he could see no reason why they couldn't

Public Comment
None

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Approval of minutes of Feb 7, 2018 minutes. Commissioner Safont moved to approve, seconded by President Donaldson. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 2-0.

Public Comment
None

6. Agenda items for future meetings

There were no suggested topics for future meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 PM.