



## Memorandum

**To:** Elections Commission  
**From:** John Arntz, Director  
**Date:** December 17, 2018  
**RE:** Director's Report: December 19, 2018, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief listing of the work and related information in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous Elections Commission meeting on October 17, 2018.

### I. Update on the City's efforts to develop a highly accessible, open source voting system.

- A. The Department of Technology will onboard two staff who will support the City's efforts associated with developing an open source voting system. One person will be a technical lead focused on system level requirements, security and hardware. The second person will fill the project manager role and focus on community involvement, project planning/scheduling, and communications.
- B. Funding for both positions will be drawn from the programmatic budget set up when COIT initially approved funding for this project in 2017.

### II. The Department concluded the Official Canvass of election materials and certified the November 6, 2018, Consolidated General Election

#### A. Certification of the November 6, 2018, Consolidated General Election

The Department certified the November 6, 2018, election on November 27. 372,848 voters cast their vote in the November election; therefore, 74.49% of San Francisco's 500,516 registered voters participated in the election. 25.55% of registered voters voted at the polls on Election Day, while 48.94% voted by mail or during the 29-day early voting period. The 74.49% turnout represents the highest percentage turnout for a mid-term election in the City since 1938, when nearly 76% of the City's 370,739 registered voters cast ballots. The highest known mid-term turnout in San Francisco occurred in 1914, when 83% of registered voters participated.

#### B. Preliminary and Final Election Results Reports

During the post-election processing and counting of ballots, the Department live-streamed these processes and issued 18 preliminary election results reports. Every preliminary election results report was posted on *sfelections.org* and social media sites, and was accompanied by a press release. The Department applied a SHA-512 cryptographic function to create hash values for all preliminary and final results reports. SHA-512 is an extra measure of assurance that results reports files downloaded from the Department's website are reliable and did not change after being posted.

#### C. Record Retention

The Department organized and secured all voted ballots at its warehouse for the twenty-two-month retention period required under state law.

**III. To support and improve existing processes in anticipation of three imminent elections, the Department is planning for FY2019-20 and FY2020-21**

- A. The Department has begun preparing requests for funding necessary to support fixed and variable operating expenses for services and programs associated with the three elections scheduled during the FY2019-20 and FY2020-21 budget period: November 5, 2019, Consolidated Municipal Election, March 3, 2020, Consolidated Presidential Primary Election, and November 3, 2020, Consolidated General Election.
- B. Departmental personnel are engaged in reviewing their divisional programs, procedures, and materials to identify operational improvements to prepare for the next election cycle, which will begin in March 2019, when the signature-in-lieu period starts for the November 2019 election, and will continue through December 2020. The timing change of the California presidential primary from June to early March 2020 will require the Department to plan for and make various operational changes. Many March primary processes, such as candidate and ballot measure filing, will overlap with final processes of the November 2019 election; therefore, the Department must anticipate the strain this will place on staffing and other resources and make adjustments. In addition, party primaries, which now take place every four years, require additional steps versus other elections, such as specific outreach and follow-up for voters with no party preference, and extra efforts to educate voters about the rules and voting opportunities that relate only to party primary elections. Most of these preparations for the March 2020 primary must be in place before the November 2019 election cycle begins.
- C. Departmental personnel will begin reviewing election-related laws approved by the Legislature in 2018 and will consider possible impacts on operations and materials the Department will need to organize in early 2019 to prepare for the three, large elections conducted close in time and within a twelve month period.
- D. To continuously improve the clarity and relevance of the Department's online information, the Department has begun developing a timeline for enhancing its website to achieve near-term updates, such as revising election-specific content, and longer-term updates associated with the usability of voter online tools, individual sections, and the site as a whole.

**IV. The Department continues to undertake many actions associated with the maintenance of the voter file to achieve accuracy and completeness and remove duplicative and outdated records**

- A. Since mid-October, the Secretary of State's office has been performing a secondary review of Motor Voter records transmitted by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to confirm the accuracy of the information before sending these records to counties for processing. In early December, the Department began receiving Motor Voter registration applications from the SOS that were transmitted by the DMV after the close or registration for the November 2018 election. The Department continues to process these records in a timely matter and provide services and outreach to new voters who become registered through the Motor Voter program.
- B. The Department continues to develop and implement additional methods to validate the voter file and prevent duplication of records. To that end, the Department is currently developing an application that queries the voter file, utilizing partial matching criteria, to identify potential duplicate records that would typically be undetected by the VoteCal, and will be working with the VoteCal team to suggest improvements on a statewide level.
- C. As authorized under California Elections Code, section 2224, the Department is preparing to send a Residence Confirmation Postcard to voters who are currently active but who have not participated in any election in the previous four years or updated their registration information in that time. Voters who receive this postcard will have the opportunity to confirm their residence with the Department and their records will be updated to reflect their current information. The records of voters who do not respond to the confirmation postcard will be placed on the inactive file of voters who do not receive election materials and are not included in calculations of registered voters.