Memorandum

To:	Elections Commission
From:	John Arntz, Director
Date:	August 16, 2019
RE:	Director's Report: August 21, 2019, 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 June 19, 2019.

I. **Update on the City's efforts to develop a highly accessible, open source voting system and other matters regarding voting systems.**

   A. Director Gerull and the Department of Technology organized the Open Source Community Meeting on July 31, 2019, to gather input from members of the public on the City developing an open source voting system (Attachment 1).

   B. A summary of the July meeting will be posted on the website launched for the project:
   https://opensourcevoting.sfgov.org/

   C. The Department continues to implement the City's new voting system from Dominion Voting Systems (Dominion). Equipment deliveries have been continuing to the Department's warehouse on Pier 31 even as the build out of the site is ongoing.

   D. The Secretary of State (SOS) will hold a public hearing on September 4, 2019, regarding Dominion's request for approval of version Democracy Suite 5.10, which will affect the City's implementation of its system.

   1. Dominion indicated to the Department that the timing of the expected approval of 5.10 does not support the City using this version for the November 5, 2019, election.

   2. The Department would require more time to install, test, and update procedures and materials to transition to the new version.

   3. The Department will install 5.2 for the November 2019 election and will implement 5.10 for the March 2020 election. Preparations for implementing 5.10 will occur after the November 5, 2019, election is certified.

   4. Version 5.2 will still allow the Department to post the images of the voted ballot cards, which includes appended statements indicating how the system tabulated each vote marking for every contest and measure. However, 5.2 will not support Dominion's complete ballot audit review module, requiring the Department to provide a less robust version on its website. The Department has begun preparations to post the ballot images and consider the most practical methods to provide the images to the public.

   5. Version 5.2 also generates a "cast vote record" in JSON – a language-independent, human-readable text format (Wikipedia) – which is a complete presentation of all votes that the voting system tallied and associated with each card processed. The cast vote record allows members of the public to tally votes using their own applications to compare against the official results, and possibly the images of the voted ballots, all of which will be posted on the Department's website.

6. Version 5.2 will still allow the Department to post the transaction logs of the voting equipment on the Department's website so that the public can view the mechanical and operational processes associated with each piece of equipment during the election cycle.

7. Version 5.2 will support the Department in conducting a post-election, risk-limiting audit (RLA) for the November 2019 election using vote-by-mail ballots (VBMs). The reason the Department will apply an RLA to the VBMs is this category of ballots is more readily identified when producing a ballot manifest required to select cards for auditing. If possible, the Department may apply an RLA to all VBMs as part of the official canvass for the November election; otherwise, the Department will apply an RLA to a smaller set of cards as a pilot case.

8. The Department is considering an RLA method that supports including ranked-choice contests.

E. The Department prepared a draft overview of the processes and methods utilized to protect the integrity of elections (Attachment 2). The Department will provide an updated version of the overview in September.

F. The Department also prepared an overview of voter file maintenance (Attachment 3).

II. **In accordance with state and local law, the Department continues to facilitate candidate and measure filings for the November 5 election.**

A. Commencing on Monday, August 5, the Department facilitated meetings of the Ballot Simplification Committee. The committee concluded its work on Friday, August 9, completing fair and impartial summaries for local ballot measures to be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

B. The Department facilitated the filing of nomination papers for candidates running for the offices of City Attorney, Public Defender, Treasurer, Board of Education, and Community College Board. The nomination deadlines for candidates for offices of District Attorney and Sherriff were extended through Wednesday, August 14, because the incumbents did not file. The Department updated the candidate list on *sfelections.sfgov.org/candidates* to display the names of candidates who have qualified to appear on the November 5 ballot.

C. On Monday, August 12, the Department selected and assigned a letter to identify each of six local measures that will appear on the November 5 ballot. The Department updated the qualified local measures list on *sfelections.sfgov.org/measures* to display the letter designation next to each measure.

D. On Thursday, August 15, the Department will facilitate the submission of proponent and opponent ballot arguments for local ballot measures to be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

III. **The Department continues to plan and administer the many processes required to conduct the November 5 election.**

A. The Department has been engaged in planning and preparations to open a second Voting Center, which will be located in the San Francisco State University (SFSU) Towers Conference Center, at 798 State Drive.

1. SFSU Voting Center will be open to voters on Saturday and Sunday, November 2-3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Monday, November 4, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Tuesday, November 5, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. It will serve all San Francisco residents—including eligible non-citizens—who wish to vote, pick up or drop off a ballot, or obtain a replacement ballot. This Voting Center will also will serve residents who have missed the October 21 voter registration deadline and wish to register to vote conditionally.

2. A ballot drop-off station will be set up outside the SFSU Voting Center and will be available and staffed with two employees during all hours of operation.

4. Recruitment and training of poll workers and preparation of election-specific training materials for the March election will be organized in the November election cycle

5. Identifying polling places for the March election must conclude by January 14, in time for printing the address of polling places on the cover of the Voter Information Pamphlet

6. Voter education and outreach about primary election rules and the importance of party preference will occur concurrently with the November election outreach

VI. **The Department continues to provide information to City residents about the new voting system, new ranked-choice voting (RCV) ballot format, and the two upcoming elections: November 2019 and March 2020**

A. Since early May, the Department has conducted public demonstrations of the new voting equipment and outreach presentations throughout the City. At these events, the Outreach team distributes informational materials and demonstration ballots, and facilitates hands-on practice sessions using the new voting equipment. To date, the Department conducted nearly 100 outreach events and 80 additional events have been scheduled. The schedule of past and upcoming outreach events is available at *sfelections.org/outreach/calendar*

B. The Department produced two educational videos, each describing in detail how to use the new voting machines: the accessible Ballot-Marking Device and the Ballot-Scanning Machine.

1. Both videos are presented as a series of animated slides, each accompanied by a voiceover and closed captioning. The videos are designed with multiple audiences in mind and will be presented to poll workers as part of training, voters at outreach events, members of the media, observers, community partners, etc.

2. Both videos are posted on the homepage of the Department's website, *sfelections.org*

C. The Department launched an online practice RCV ballot with 10 rankings, which identifies and explains common ballot marking errors in real time. Interactive RCV practice ballot, available in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino, can be accessed from the homepage of *sfelections.org,* the sidebar of all landing pages, and at *sfelections.org/practiceRCV*.

1. The practice ballot features a digital sticker that voters can share on Social Media to encourage others to practice.

2. The practice ballot is made available on tablets at outreach events conducted by the Department's Outreach team

D. To supplement its outreach efforts, the Department secured and disbursed grant funding to local organizations to assist in providing information about the new RCV ballot format and the new voting system.

1. In May, the Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP), to which a number of organizations responded. After a review of RFP responses, the Department selected six grant recipients to reach one or more target City populations, including residents of neighborhoods with turnout below the City average, seniors and voters with disabilities, members of the City's main language minorities, and first-time voters.

2. In July and August, the Department worked with various City agencies to execute Grant Agreements with the selected organizations.

3. The Department organized and conducted training sessions on August 14 and 15 to help grantees develop knowledge of the new voting equipment and new ballot format in preparation for their engaging in outreach to

City residents. Additionally, the Department provided grantees with a variety of ready-to-use, multilingual, multi-format outreach materials for dissemination to the public.

4.   Under grant terms, Monday, August 19, marks the beginning of grantees' outreach activities, which will continue through Election Day, November 5.

E.   The Department has begun preliminary outreach for the March election.

1.   In the next several months, the Department will deploy a variety of strategies to advise voters about primary rules and explain why party preference matters and how to update party preference or request cross-over ballots. These strategies will include public transit, radio, and newspaper advertisements, press releases, postcard notices to voters, and direct outreach to voters at events.

2.   The Department will highlight the availability of relevant online tools, which allow voters to check party their preference. The Voter Information Pamphlet for the November 5 election will also include a section featuring information about the March election and primary rules.

3.   The Department has published a new webpage that can be accessed from the homepage and at *sfelections.org/primary*. This page addresses a number of key topics, such as the new schedule for primary elections, why party preference matters, which contests will appear on the ballot depending on a voter's party preference, and how and when a voter with no party preference can request a cross-over party ballot.

3. SFSU Voting Center will offer 25 processing stations, nearly 100 voting booths, and several accessible ballot-marking devices.

4. The Department will inform voters about the opening of SFSU Voting Center in the Voter Information Pamphlet, vote-by-mail ballot inserts, outreach brochures and events, the Department's website, press releases, and social media.

B. The Department has secured 450 of the 453 facilities required to serve as polling places on Election Day.

C. The Department is in the final stages of redesigning its poll worker training program and materials to prepare poll workers for the rollout of the new voting system. The Department intends to introduce a New Poll Worker Training Manual and Practice Makes Perfect workshops – a one-hour equipment practice that will follow traditional training classes for both inspectors and clerks.

D. The Department has been working on finalizing ballot templates and production plans and schedules.

E. The Department completed the relocation of its warehouse from Pier 48 to Pier 31 and is currently planning the supply assembly, staging of the voting equipment, and polling place equipment delivery and retrieval processes from the new warehouse facility.

IV. **The Department continues to identify and procure resources and to hire and onboard temporary personnel necessary to conduct the November 5 election.**

A. Following Department of Human Resources' (DHR) procedures, the Department hired and onboarded nearly 80 temporary employees to aid the full-time staff with candidate filings, maintenance of voter records, preparation of polling places, production of the official ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet, and outreach events. Over the next two months, the Department expects to hire nearly 270 additional temporary employees to assist with signature comparison on vote-by-mail ballot envelopes, poll worker recruitment and training, preparation of supplies, and facilitating voting during the early voting period.

B. In accordance with the City's procurement policies, the Department continues to purchase materials and supplies and procure services required for the upcoming election.

V. **The Department continues to develop plans and schedules to address a number of processes and deadlines for the March 2020 election that will overlap with the November 2019 election cycle.**

A. Nearly all election-specific planning, as well as the production and translation of the official election materials for the March election, will take place during the November election cycle. Schedules for March 2020 logistical tasks related to the procurement of polling places, filing deadlines, recruitment of poll workers and hiring timelines for temporary election staff will all overlap to some degree with the November election cycle.

B. The Department has been organizing its staffing plans and project timelines to keep March 2020 election preparations in all divisions continuing as necessary. Some of the most significant process overlaps follow:

1. Work on ballot templates, ballot production plans, election-related public notices, and the Voter Information Pamphlet for the March election will occur in October and November

2. Ballot Simplification Committee meetings for the March election will be held during the period set for the Official Canvass of the November election

3. Several nomination and filing periods for the March election will be facilitated from late September through December; the submission deadline for local initiative petitions for the March election falls on November 4, the day before Election Day.