



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: January 13, 2020
RE: Director's Report: January 15, 2020, 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 report issued in relation to the Elections Commission meeting on December 18, 2019.

- I. **In accordance with state and local law, the Department continues to facilitate candidate and measure filings for the March 3 election.**
 - A. Commencing on January 6 and through February 18, the Department will facilitate the filing period for candidates seeking to run as write-in candidates for judicial offices appearing on the March 3 ballot. Filing activities for the March election will draw to a close on February 18, which is the deadline for any write-in candidates to file their Declarations of Write-in Candidacy and nomination paperwork.

- II. **The Department continues to plan and administer the many processes required to conduct the March 3 election.**
 - A. The Department has secured 582 of the 588 facilities intended to serve as polling places on Election Day and two facilities that will serve as Voting Centers: the San Francisco State University and the Joseph Lee Recreation Center, located in the Bayview neighborhood.
 - B. The Department is working on further expanding the capacity of the City Hall Voting Center in anticipation of a high voter turnout during an early voting period. Facing limited space availability, the Department intends to transform its poll worker recruitment office, Room 43B, to another ballot-issuing area with eight stations. The Department will also rearrange the public area in its front office to include additional eight stations. In all, the Department intends to provide 74 ballot-issuing stations at the City Hall Voting Center and nearly 200 voting booths that will be set up on the ground floor as well as the South Light Court on the first floor of the building.
 - C. The Department has been engaged in recruiting poll workers through various means such as contacting those who have served in prior elections, distributing flyers and applications at outreach events, and advertising the opportunity to become a poll worker in local newspapers, on local radio stations and social media sites. To engage high school students in volunteering as poll workers, the Department has begun conducting in-person outreach at San Francisco schools, attending social studies, civics, and history classes, and circulating applications at high school assemblies.
 - D. The Department is in the final stages of revising its Poll Worker Training Manual, training program, and materials to prepare poll workers to serve voters on Election Day. Both the manual and training program will focus on party preference rules in presidential primary contests, issuing ballots according to voters' party preference, administration of conditional voter registration at polling places, and operating the voting system.

- i. All poll worker classes will include an interactive learning activity featuring hypothetical voters facing real-life questions related to party preference and ballot options. The Department will dedicate 20-30 minutes in each class engaging poll workers in considering how to assist voters in nearly 15 different scenarios that poll workers will likely encounter on Election Day.
 - ii. In consideration of the fact that the City's voting system is still relatively new, poll worker training also continues to focus on operating procedures and assisting voters with messages resulting from irregular marks on voters' ballots, incorporating mandatory one-hour Practice Makes Perfect equipment workshops.
- E. The Department has completed the layout and proofing of all party and language versions of the paper ballot. The ballot will consist of two cards for all voters except those with no party preference who do not request a crossover ballot. The nonpartisan ballot will have one card. Party ballots will include an explanation that the ballot lists the presidential contest of the party in the voters' registration records and information about how to get a different party's ballot if desired. Nonpartisan ballot will provide an explanation as to why the presidential primary contest is not listed on the ballot and include information about how to get a different party's ballot if desired.
 - i. In addition to paper ballots, the Department has been working on producing touchscreen and audio versions of the ballot for the accessible Ballot-Marking Devices used at polling places and Voting Centers, and the accessible version of the ballot that can be accessed online by voters with disabilities and those serving in the military or residing overseas.
 - ii. All ballot formats will be produced by January 18 to meet the statutory deadline of transmitting ballots to voters serving in the military or living overseas.
- F. The Department is in the final stages of producing the Voter Information Pamphlet. The pamphlet will include sample ballots for all political parties holding March presidential primaries as well as sample crossover ballots for voters with No Party Preference (NPP). Pamphlets mailed to NPP voters will have a different version of the vote-by-mail application on the back cover, specifying the ballot options available to these voters and serving as another means for them to request a crossover ballot.
 - i. The Voter Information Pamphlet will include information about primary rules and highlight the availability of online tools that allow voters to check party their registered party preference and request a crossover ballot.
- G. In response to the passage of Senate Bill 72, requiring administration of Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) not only at voting centers, but also at all polling places on Election Day, the Department modified provisional voting procedures conducted at polling places and revised its Provisional Envelope to serve as an affidavit of registration, as authorized under California Elections Code § 2160.
 - i. In anticipation of the increased public interest surrounding the March 3 election contributing to higher voter turnout, coupled with the availability of CVR at every polling place, the Department has been developing plans to ensure that each polling location and voting center has a sufficient number of ballots, including any required bilingual ballots, and a sufficient supply of Provisional Ballot Envelopes.
 - ii. The Department has also been revising its staffing plans commensurate with the increased post-Election Day workload resulting from administration of CVR at the polls.

III. The Department continues to provide information to City residents about primary election rules and ballot options for voters with No Party Preference.

- A. Last month, the Department mailed bilingual postcards with pre-paid return postage to nearly 110,000 voters registered with No Party Preference (NPP) and who vote by mail. These postcards explain ballot options for such

voters, describing the content and availability of nonparty, party, and crossover ballots. The postcards also provide the different ways NPP voters can request crossover ballots: via the Department's Voter Portal at sfelections.org/voterportal, by calling, emailing, sending a fax, or completing and returning the detachable postage-paid section of the postcard.

- B. The Department sent several email reminders to NPP voters with email addresses on file who vote by mail, encouraging voters to submit their requests for a crossover ballot.
- C. The Department added primary election-related information to Voting Instructions that will be enclosed with vote-by-mail ballot packets. These Voting Instructions explain how a voter who has received a ballot that does not include the primary contest in which the voter's preferred presidential candidate is running can request that ballot.
- D. In January, the Department will send a mailer to every household in San Francisco—over 374,446 in all—reminding residents to vote and explaining why voters' political party preference makes a difference in the March 3 election. The mailer also informs NPP voters that they can vote in the presidential primary for any of the three parties allowing crossover.
- E. The homepage of the Department's website hosts a new March 2020 Presidential Primary Ballot tool. The Department developed this new tool to inform voters about steps they may need to take to receive the ballots with their preferred presidential candidates.
 - i. The tool, which provides information and actions that are customized to the individual's political party preference, is available in English, Chinese, Filipino, and Spanish.
 - ii. Voters utilizing the tool are reminded that the voters' registered party preference will determine which presidential candidates will be listed on their March 3 election ballots. On the same screen, voters are encouraged to check their registered party preference using the Department's online Voter Portal, to which a link is provided. With that information confirmed, a voter may enter both their registered party preference and the party of their preferred presidential candidate using two simple dropdown menus. With that information entered, the tool generates a list of options for that particular voter.
- F. The Department's Outreach Team continues to organize and participate in community events throughout the City to provide information on a number of election-related topics, such as key election dates, ways to register and update registration information, voting options, informational resources, and opportunities to get involved, such as serving as a poll worker or engaging in public observation of election processes. In addition, Department staff discuss primary-specific topics such as how primary elections work in California, how party preference impacts ballot options, and ways to request a crossover ballot or reregister to change party preference and receive a particular party ballot and engage the audience in exercises featuring hypothetical City voters with a common question, "What are my [ballot] options?" The schedule of past and upcoming outreach events is available at sfelections.org/outreach/calendar.

IV. The Department continues to identify and procure resources and to hire, onboard, and organize temporary personnel necessary to conduct the March 3 election.

- A. The Department continues hiring of temporary staff to assist the Department with the March election's various processes and activities. Over the next several weeks, the Department expects to hire nearly 150 additional temporary employees.

- B. The Department has been preparing requests for funding necessary to support fixed and variable expenses for services and programs associated with the two elections scheduled during FY2020-21 and FY2021-22 budget period.