

Elections Commission
City and County of San Francisco

Roger Donaldson, Commissioner and Chair
Jill Rowe, Commissioner
Lucy Bernholz, Commissioner



John Arntz, Director of Elections

Meeting Notes - DRAFT

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

Special Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2020

6:00 p.m.

City Hall, Room 421

**1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Meeting was called to order 6:02 pm

Commissioners Bernholz, Rowe, and Donaldson in attendance.

Director Arntz in attendance.

2. General Public Comment

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present

3. Budget proposal FY 20-21, FY 21-22

Commissioner Bernholz asked about the reassignment of personnel described on page 13 of the memo. The accurate reading is for a 1095 classification to replace a 1042 position.

Commissioner Bernholz asked about budget needs for security contingency planning. Contingency planning for election problems get handled in supplemental budget requests.

Commissioner Bernholz asked about any budget costs for open source projects. Director Arntz replied that those are program costs that are being carried by the Department of Technology.

Commissioner Rowe asked for clarification of the public meeting requirement. This meeting of the BOPEC meets the public meeting requirement.

Commissioner Rowe expressed gratitude for the clarity in the budget memo itself and the Budget forms explaining changes, as well as for highlighting the redistributing process.

Commissioner Rowe asked about the state grant to cover equipment costs. Director Arntz clarified that the grant request is a reimbursement for partial costs. The Counties are getting a higher reimbursement rate.

Commissioner Donaldson asked clarification that the state monies in the grant require the Board of Supervisors approval. Director Arntz does not anticipate any difficulties with this process.

Commissioner Rowe asked for clarification about the changes at the Assistant Deputy Director position. The Department has two budgeted spots for 2 Deputy Directors although only one has been filled, Director Arntz prefers to fill these positions from within via promotion. There is currently an Assistant Deputy Director, one Deputy Director and one vacant Deputy Director position.

Commissioner Donaldson asked where the State grants come into the budget (p 3 of the budget memo, page 3 of 21 of budget worksheets) The memo notes that there is \$4.5 million in grant funds but the budget summary doesn't add up to 4.5 million. This is because some of these expenses were incurred in 2018-2019 and the remainder is allocated across upcoming Fiscal Years. (See page 10)

Commissioner Donaldson asked about the consultants for redistricting processes. Director Arntz noted that there are very few qualified individuals; and the budget request is partially influenced by the competitive nature of the market for these individuals. He is confident that this will help ensure the work is done within the legal timeline and accurately. Commissioner Donaldson asked follow up about the full budget request for redistricting – it includes the consultant, staff time to support the consultant for running community meetings, computer software, new maps, meeting supplies, etc.

Commissioner Rowe noted the length of the redistricting process, thanked Director Arntz for the detailed budget, and noted the importance of taking this up quickly at the Commission.

Commissioner Donaldson asked about the location of the fourth voting center. No area has yet been determined, criteria is based on those areas that have lower than city average turnout. Voting centers are supplemental to polling places and are intended to help increase turnout. Voting centers have higher costs than polling places in counties with vote by mail.

Commissioner Donaldson clarified that \$1.4 million in costs (as noted in budget) is for all the voting centers.

Commissioner Donaldson asked about continuing the nonprofit grants for outreach. Director Arntz department believes the nonprofit grant program for outreach is worth the costs. The outreach/education program is tied to RCV elections, which is not the case in March 2020 but does apply to November 3, 2020 election. Progress reports and information on the effectiveness of these outreach grants can be acquired from the Department of Elections.

Commissioner Donaldson commended the efforts to increase efficiencies in the department – especially through the self-service tools on the Department's website - and asked if there was anything needed from the Commission. Director Arntz thanked him and said that the Department has been successful in holding down costs through these efficiencies given the ongoing, cyclical nature of elections.

Commissioner Donaldson asked if there is any concerns related to the budget given the Department's strategic plan. Director Arntz expressed confidence that the budget will cover the Department's increased workload.

Commissioner Donaldson asked about the purchase of the servers; when will the others be replaced? Director Arntz noted that the replacements will be folded in 2 per year for the next few fiscal years to ensure that the costs can be contained and the equipment is in good working order.

Director Arntz noted that the budget is prepared for a large turnout election, as is predicted for November 2020.

Commissioner Rowe made a motion that the Commission approve the proposed budget for fiscal years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. Commissioner Donaldson seconded the motion.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present

Commissioners Rowe, Donaldson and Bernholz voted yes.

The motion passed.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meetings

Commissioner Rowe moved to approve the minutes for September 4, 2019. Commissioner Bernholz seconded.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present

Commissioners Rowe, Donaldson and Bernholz voted yes.

The motion passed

Minutes from the December meeting are still in process.

5. Agenda Items for future meeting

Schedule a meeting for election review after the March 3 2020 election. BOPEC is suggesting that the election review should happen at the full commission meeting. This is an agenda item for the full commission.

Commissioner Rowe suggested BOPEC be used for budget purposes and that election review and review of election plans to the full commission.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.