



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: June 23, 2023
RE: Director's Report: June 28, 2023, 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 May 17, 2023.

- I. The Department continues to facilitate review and final approval of its budgets for the next two fiscal years.**
 - A. Following the release of the Mayor's proposed budget on May 31, 2023, the Board of Supervisors' Budget and Appropriation Committee has held hearings to review the departments' budgets approved by the Mayor.
 - B. Over the last several weeks, the Department collaborated with the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) of the Board of Supervisors, aiding in the review of the Department's budget. This review yielded cuts to the Department's budget totaling \$70,763 and \$60,337 in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25, respectively; the Department agreed to those cuts.
 - C. On June 14th and 21st, the Department presented its budget proposals to the Budget and Appropriation Committee. At the first of these meetings, the Department also introduced an [Ordinance File NO. 230663](#), which would amend the City's Municipal Elections Code to opt out of a state law allowing elections officials to list the names of supporters and opponents for local ballot measures on the ballots. The Budget and Appropriation Committee forwarded the ordinance with positive recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for consideration at its July 18th meeting.
 - D. At its July 11th, 18th, and 25th meetings, the Board of Supervisors will hear and vote on the amended FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Appropriation Ordinance and FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Salary Ordinance. The Mayor must sign the final budget by Monday, July 31, 2023, and the budget will be officially adopted.
- II. The Department continues to provide voter outreach and education to communities across the City.**
 - A. This month, the Department's Outreach Team co-hosted a wide array of local community outreach events, generally providing election resource tables and distributing official materials about voting and registration options. Co-hosts included the Mission Food Hub, which procures and distributes groceries to families in the Mission District; the 45th Annual Carnival, organized to celebrate the diverse Latin American, Caribbean and African Diasporic roots of the Mission District; the Juvenile Probation Department, which provides support, services, and supervision to youth and their families during their involvement with the juvenile justice system; the Curry Senior Center, which provides services to seniors, with a focus on low income or unhoused individuals; and the Juneteenth SF Freedom Celebration, organized to celebrate African American culture, strength, and resilience.
 - B. This month, the Department executed outreach grant agreements with the six local non-profit organizations selected to conduct supplemental voter outreach to actively and formerly justice-involved individuals: The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, Chinese Newcomers Service Center, Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties (Goodwill Bay), Humanmade, Open Door Legal, and San Francisco Rising.

- i. As part of each of these grant agreements, grantees will conduct and report on outreach activities up through November 1, 2023. Following contract execution, the Department began training grantee staff members and supplied them with various official, multilingual educational materials, including flyers with specific information for justice-involved individuals, flyers with general information about voter registration, a digital presentation about voting with a criminal history, and an interactive voter eligibility banner tool.
- C. This month, the Department partnered with the CORO Northern California, Youth Fellows Exploring Leadership Program to solicit youth leadership feedback. After organizing an interview panel comprised of Department employees, the Department met with the CORO fellows who presented questions to the panel about the Department's operations, structure, and community relationships. The Department then participated in the fellows' in-person presentation at City Hall during which CORO fellows shared their findings and recommendations to the Department based on their interviews and unique perspective as youth leaders.
- D. Since the launch of its Go Green! campaign on April 22, over 1,100 San Francisco voters have opted out paper delivery of the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP) in favor of reading it online. The Department will launch the second phase of this outreach campaign on Monday, June 26; this phase will run through September 2023.
 - i. Campaign content will continue to highlight the choice each voter has about how to read the VIP, provide data on how much paper is used in the preparation and mailing of VIPs, and encourage voters who live in multifamily households to consider sharing one paper VIP. The campaign will utilize social media, cable, streaming, radio, and many websites, and include clickable digital banners on lifestyle, sports, and entertainment websites; a thirty-second audio advertisement on local Chinese radio; a series of three UGC (user-generated content) videos for the Department's social media channels; and a 30-second animated video to be run as commercial-style content via cable television, streaming platforms, and video on demand.

III. The Department continues to work on numerous short, mid, and long-term administrative projects.

- A. On June 7, 2023, the Department received the collected local signature forms for statewide petition #1942, related to rent control on residential property. The Department has begun processing these forms:
 - i. In accordance with state law, the Department timely conducted a raw signature count for this petition and submitted its raw count number of 20,661 signatures to the Secretary of State (SOS) on June 14, 2023.
 - ii. On June 20, the SOS issued a memorandum advising that the petitions' statewide raw count exceeded 100% of the number of signatures required to qualify the initiative measure, and that the next step for all counties would therefore be to verify the greater of 500 random signatures or 3% of the number of signatures filed. The Department has 30 days to comply with the SOS' latest directive.
 - iii. After counties review their signature samples, the SOS will either a) certify sufficiency of the petition, b) certify insufficiency of the petition, or c) direct counties to review 100% of the petition signatures.

- B. The Department is adapting its online Voter Portal (Portal) for use by voters during the March 2024 primary cycle:
- i. The Portal will provide notice to voters without a party preference that they may begin requesting crossover ballots as early as October 2023. (By law, all qualified political parties in California must notify the Secretary of State's office no later than 135 days before a presidential primary election whether they will hold a *closed presidential primary*, i.e., issuing party primary ballots only to those voters registered with their party, or a *modified-closed presidential primary*, i.e., also issuing them to voters without a party preference by request.)
 - ii. The Department expects to receive notification from the Secretary of State office's on how each of the state's six qualified parties will conduct their primaries by October 22, 2023, and plans to publicize this list and begin accepting requests for crossover ballots from local voters the following day.
 - iii. In early November, the Department will also mail a notice about this topic to all local voters without a party preference. This notice will include a postage-paid crossover request form as well as an invitation to use the Portal or to request a crossover ballot by contacting the Department via phone, email, or personal letter.
 - iv. The Department is updating the Portal's advice to voters to check their party preference as well as their home and mailing addresses well in advance of the primary with the goal of ensuring that as many voters as possible promptly receive the type of primary ballot they want at the most convenient address.
 - v. To help as many voters as possible understand all of the educational material and voter-facing instructions in the Portal, the Department is now working to simplify all of its pages to a 5th grade reading level.
- C. The Department is now expanding its partnership with Juvenile Hall in an effort to provide registration and ballot delivery services for the justice-involved individuals who will be housed there in the 2024 elections.
- i. The Department has, for many years, provided services to eligible people incarcerated in local jails through its partnership with the Sheriff's Department, but Juvenile Hall is run by the Juvenile Probation Department.
 - ii. Until recently, young people detained under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court would be transferred to adult facilities at age 19, but as of 2021, most people whose cases originated in juvenile court are now required to remain in a county juvenile facility during their term of commitment until they turn 25 years of age.
 - iii. For the 2024 elections, the Department is exploring ways to expand registration and ballot delivery services at Juvenile Hall, in light of the shifting age demographics of those incarcerated at the facility.
 - iv. Earlier this month, Department staff visited Juvenile Hall to tour areas of the facility potentially suitable for hosting ballot drop-off boxes and to conduct a presentation about registration and voting options.
- D. The Department continues to engage in the mandatory review and approval process administered by the Committee on Information Technology (COIT) concerning its intent to purchase and use Social Media Monitoring Technology. Last month, COIT approved the Department's Surveillance Impact Report and Surveillance Technology Report.
- i. Although COIT has introduced most proposed surveillance policies on behalf of City departments in the past, the Department has been advised to work with the City Attorney's office and to introduce its

surveillance policies directly to the BOS going forward. (Nevertheless, COIT staff will provide a recommendation letter and attend any future BOS hearings on this topic.) The Department therefore worked with the City Attorney's office to draft an ordinance regarding the use of its Surveillance Technology.

- E. As part of the Department's efforts to advance equity in its hiring practices and to make employment and volunteer opportunities and resources accessible to more people throughout the City, the Department has begun developing off-site Job Fair plans for the upcoming March 5, 2024 election. To that end, the Department recently met with the Department of Human Services' Diversity and Recruitment team to learn about their best practices for conducting citywide job fairs. Next, the Department will finalize its divisional staffing and logistical plans and identify ideal dates and locations for the upcoming Job Fairs.
- F. Since its launch on April 21, the Department's new home page has had 19,068 views and 9,797 unique visitors. The Department continues to collaborate with Digital Services (DS) to improve the usability of its archived website. DS recently informed the Department it can expect an update on their improved web archival processes in mid-July.
- G. The Department continues to carry out voter file maintenance, including the processing of online and paper affidavits of registration and the sending of notices on a weekly basis to voters who have recently registered or re-registered.
- H. The Department continues to provide routine services to members of the public who visit the Department's office in person as well as those who contact the Department via email or phone.

IV. Responses to the Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report.

- A. *Upcoming or outstanding Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from the Department (including the dollar amount or range).*

This summer, the Department intends to issue a Request for Proposals to identify a contractor who could help develop and implement a series of multilingual, multiformat outreach campaigns for the next six elections. The contract duration would be for five years, November 2023 – November 2028, and would not exceed \$2M.

- B. *Sole-source contracts for which the Department has requested approval from the Office of Contract Administration (OCA) (including the dollar amount).*

The Department has requested approval for a two-year renewal (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025) of its sole-source contract with Democracy Live (DL) for the use of the Accessible Vote-By-Mail (AVBM) system. The Department's last such contract recently expired and DL's OmniBallot Secure Select system remains the only AVBM system certified in California with a single link to access and mark a ballot (with no additional user actions required). The total cost of the agreement is \$98,000.

- C. *Proposed projects, local legislation, or proposed positions on state legislation within San Francisco government that are related to elections and that have come to the Director's attention, especially those related to topics the Commission has adopted a policy position on, like open-source voting and internet voting.*

Please see subsection I.B above.