



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: July 13, 2023
RE: Director's Report: July 19, 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 June 28, 2023.

I. 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 events, providing election resource tables and distributing official materials about voting and registration options. Co-hosts included SF Pride Celebration, organized to celebrate diversity, equality, and love; SF Pathways to Citizenship Initiative Workshop, which provides services to recent immigrants; Glide Memorial Church, which provides meals and services to homeless and housing insecure individuals and their families; Latino Task Force - Mission Hub, which serves Latino populations experiencing challenging times; Curry Senior Center, which provides services to seniors, with a focus on low income or unhoused individuals; and the Department of Motor Vehicles, San Francisco Field Office.
- B. The Department continues to provide outreach about accessing the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP) online.
- i. Since the launch of its Go Green! campaign on April 22, over 1,200 San Francisco voters have opted out of paper delivery of the VIP in favor of reading it online.
 - ii. The Department launched phase two of this campaign on June 26, utilizing an expanded mixed media approach that includes the deployment of ad banners on lifestyle, sports, and entertainment websites and a 30-second commercial-style animated video. In recent weeks, the Department broadcast this commercial-style video both on cable television during San Francisco Giants games and on streaming platforms such as Peacock and Hulu – reaching thousands of San Franciscans.
 - iii. As phase two rolls out, the Department will begin posting UGC (user-generated content) videos on its social media channels. The first of three videos have been posted, and can be viewed here:
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1465946550816698>
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/reel/CuaOERug9eC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SFElections/status/1678424967703334912?s=20>
 - iv. The Department will post two more similar videos in the coming weeks – they will appear as sponsored advertisements in various social media feeds aimed at a target audience of adult San Franciscans.
- C. The Department is preparing to send the first of a series of primary-specific mailers to local voters in early August.

- i. Through this mailer, the Department intends to increase public awareness of the upcoming primary election, encourage those who want to add or change their party preference to do so before ballots are printed, and allow as many voters as possible to timely receive ballots with their preferred presidential candidates.
- ii. The mailer is also intended to aid in the Department's ongoing efforts to maintain an accurate and complete voter roll by expediting the receipt and processing of any responsive USPS address correction information.
- iii. Every mailer will include the recipient's party preference – printed inside the folded notice. All versions of the mailer will also explain how the voter's party preference, or lack thereof, will impact the version of the ballot that they will receive in early February and how to change party preference. In addition, mailers addressed to voters without a party preference will explain how they can submit requests for cross-over ballots.
- iv. Approximately three months following this mailer, shortly after all of the qualified parties have announced whether or not they will allow No Party Preference voters to vote for their presidential candidates, the Department will send notices to such voters and begin gathering their requests for crossover ballots.

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

- A. The Department has been conducting an accessibility audit of the 501 voting sites used in the last election. The main purpose of this audit is to update the data published for each site in the Voter Information Pamphlet, which includes the highest slope measurement along the path to the voting area and a description of the entrance. Staff have also been gathering "approach slope" data for every site, which will be useful when describing a site's general terrain (e.g., when a voter inquires whether a site is located on a hill). Following audit completion, staff will record all of this data in the Election Information Management System.
- B. The Department is finalizing plans to install three new ballot drop boxes at public colleges, bringing the citywide total up to 37 ballot drop boxes. This expansion is due to the provisions of Assembly Bill 2815, which became operative this year, requiring the provision of a ballot box on the main campus of any California State University within the jurisdiction and encouraging the provision of a ballot box on any University of California campus within the jurisdiction.
 - i. When identifying specific locations for the three new ballot drop boxes, the Department considered the same factors considered for other ballot drop box locations, including regulatory compliance factors, each site's accessibility, and proximity to other ballot boxes and public transportation.
 - ii. The Department is now in the process of seeking final approval from college administrators and City agencies for the installation of ballot drop boxes at: 1) San Francisco State University, Mashouf Wellness Center, 755 Font Blvd, 2) University of California, College of Law, entrance to Mary Kay Kane Hall at 200 McAllister St, and 3) University of California, San Francisco, entrance to Millberry Union at 500 Parnassus Ave.
 - iii. Once finalized, the locations will be added to the Department's website and published in the Voter Information Pamphlet, which will be sent to all local voters in February 2024. The Department will also partner with school administrators at each of the three campuses to advertise to students and faculty, and in the case of UCSF, to hospital patients and their families, the availability of new ballot drop boxes.
- C. The Department has submitted an **Ordinance File NO. 230783** to the Board of Supervisors, seeking the approval of the Surveillance Technology Policy for the Department's use of social media monitoring technology. (This ordinance has been assigned to the Rules Committee per the 30-day rule.) Along with the proposed ordinance, the Department

submitted several related documents, including the legislative digest of the ordinance, a memorandum from the Committee of Information Technology (COIT) recommending approval of the ordinance, the Department's Surveillance Technology Policy, and the Surveillance Impact Report regarding social media monitoring technology, all of which can be viewed at: <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6277298&GUID=7CED9134-FC79-4282-BEF6-E660254D0E4B>.

- D. The Department has been planning logistics and timelines for the "I Voted" Sticker contest.
- i. This contest will run from August 21, 2023 through September 22, 2023 and will be open to all city residents aged 18 and older, with the exception of city officers and employees. All contest entries will be blindly reviewed by a 5-member selection panel, comprised of local artists, art educators, and one representative from the Department of Elections. Following the panel's selection of nine finalists, members of the public will have the opportunity to choose their favorite "I Voted" sticker design – the public will either select one of the nine finalists, or choose to keep the current "I Voted" sticker.
 - ii. Each of the selected designs will be displayed both online and in a gallery in front of the Department's office, allowing members of the public to make their choice online or in person. On October 26, 2023, the Department will announce the winners at an award ceremony at which three top winners will receive a prize - \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second place, and \$300 for third place. The winning design of the new "I Voted" sticker will be distributed to all San Francisco voters in the 2024 presidential primary and general elections.
 - iii. To encourage members of the public to participate in the sticker design contest, the Department will 1) feature a new page on its website with detailed information about the contest, including all terms, conditions, and submission rules, and 2) publicize key facts about the contest at upcoming voter outreach events and through direct email communications and press releases to local media and outreach community partners.
- E. The Department recently met with staff from Juvenile Hall to develop plans for providing outreach and election-related services to justice-involved youth in advance of the March 3, 2024 election.
- i. Services to this population will include the hand-delivery of ballots and voter information pamphlets to eligible residents in custody at Juvenile Hall beginning 30 days before Election Day; the setup of ballot drop boxes for voters' use during the early voting period and through 8 p.m. on Election Day; and the provision of same-day registration and voting services for eligible residents who enter custody in the early voting period.
 - ii. In the leadup to both the March and November 2024 elections, the Department will visit Juvenile Hall regularly to provide on-site voter education on election-related topics and facilitate registration.
- F. The Department recently completed the raw count and random 3% signature check procedures for statewide initiative petition #1942 (22-0008) (regarding the expansion of local governmental authority to enact rent control on residential property), and submitted the 3% certification results to the Secretary of State's office on July 5.
- G. On July 11, the Department completed all required canvass activities for a special election to establish the Excelsior Community Benefit District. All of these canvass activities were open to observation, both in person and via live stream on the Department's website and final results were posted at <https://sf.gov/2023-excelsior-community-benefit-district-election>, immediately following the completion of ballot canvassing tasks.

- H. The Department continues to conduct the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Special Board Election and the Retirement Board Special Election. Voting in these elections will close on August 1, 2023, and August 8, 2023, respectively, and the Department will count and certify the results of these elections on those dates.
- I. The Department is currently monitoring several pending legislative bills that would impact future ballots:
- i. If **AB 292 Elections: ballots** passes, it would, among other things, require elections officials to print a notice on any nonpartisan primary ballot listing the parties that allow voters registered with no party preference to vote in their presidential primaries, advising the voter on how they can request a partisan ballot, and directing the voter to various resources (e.g., Voter Information Pamphlet, website, etc.) for additional information.
 - ii. If **AB 1219 Elections: ballots** passes, it would update a number of ballot formatting rules in the current version of the California Elections Code, including some of the formatting rules related to font size, capitalization of ballot headings, and ballot instructions to voters in primary and general elections.
 - iii. Both **AB 884 Elections: language accessibility**, which intended to expand the number of languages in which elections officials produce ballots and voter guides and **AB 544 Voting: county jails**, which sought to require every California jail to serve as a polling location, were held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee; this means these bills will not become law in 2024.
- J. 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.
- K. 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.

III. 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 fall, the Department will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to partner with local nonprofits to provide voter education about presidential primary election rules and other pertinent information to San Francisco residents. The focus populations of this voter outreach will be the City's hard-to-reach and vulnerable residents. The total distribution amount of these grants will be \$100,000, as approved in the Department's FY 2023-24 budget.
- B. *Sole-source contracts for which the Department has requested approval from the Office of Contract Administration (OCA) (including the dollar amount).*
- There are no new items to report under this section.
- 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.*

There are no new items to report under this section.