



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: September 15, 2023
RE: Director's Report: September 20, 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 July 19, 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 Sunday Streets Mission, offering entertainment activities and resources to city residents; Western Addition National Night Out, an annual community-building and neighborhood camaraderie event; Black & Beautiful: A Family Reunion at Bayview YMCA, celebrating Black families connected to San Francisco; B-MAGIC Backpack Giveaway in Bayview, celebrating the start of the school year; and the 11th Annual Reentry Conference, Resource, and Job Fair, which facilitates opportunities for local justice-involved and crime-affected individuals and families.
- B. On August 21, the Department opened its "I Voted!" sticker design contest.
- i. The contest's submission period, which is open to all SF residents aged 18 and older, with the exception of city officers and employees, will continue through September 22, 2023. To date, the Department has received over 230 sticker designs. Any interested party can use the map at sf.gov/data/submissions-supervisory-district-i-voted-sticker-design-contest to see a tally of submissions by Supervisorial District.
 - ii. To encourage participation in the contest, the Department created a page at sfelections.org/stickercontest. This page provides detailed information about the sticker design contest, including all terms, conditions, and submission rules. The Department has also been promoting the contest at many voter outreach events, through direct email communications to local voters and outreach community partners, and via press releases to local media.
 - iii. After the submission period closes, a five-member panel will evaluate all designs and nominate nine finalists. Then, between October 10th and 17th, members of the public can choose their favorite design (or select the current sticker). Sticker designs will be displayed at sfelections.org/stickercontest and in a gallery outside Room 48 in City Hall, and anyone can make their choice online or in person.
 - iv. On October 26, the Department will hold an award ceremony. The three top winners will each receive a prize - \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second place, and \$300 for third place. The first-place design will be printed on the sticker issued to all local voters in San Francisco's March and November 2024 elections.

- C. On September 19, the Department, in collaboration with its local voter outreach partners, will be celebrating National Voter Registration Day. Department staff will conduct an array of outreach and registration events throughout the City to encourage eligible residents to register to vote and learn about the March 5, 2024 election.
- i. National Voter Registration Day co-hosts will include: the San Francisco Longevity Walkathon in Chinatown's Portsmouth Square; the Fiesta de las Americas in the Latino Cultural District; the Due South Concert Series at McLaren Park; Sundown Cinema, Film Night at the Ferry Building; Sunday Streets, Western Addition; Glide Memorial Church; the Community Day of Service at Project Homeless Connect at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco County Jail and Five Keys Schools, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services field office; the UCSF Parnassus Hospital; and the University of San Francisco.
 - ii. In addition to organizing in-person events, the Department partnered with the San Francisco Public Library to compile two lists of books about voter registration and civic engagement. The library and the school district worked together to email these lists to library patrons and K-12 families and to distribute topical bookmarks.
 - iii. Following National Voter Registration Day, the Department will continue its efforts to encourage all eligible local residents to register to vote by conducting or co-hosting events during National Voter Registration Week, which will take place between October 2nd through October 6th. Focusing in particular on youth and first-time voters during this period, Department staff will conduct presentations and/or tabling events at San Francisco's Juvenile Hall; Mo' MAGIC Collaboration; Castro Street Fair; Art Walk SF; and many local high schools.
- D. This month, the Department has started planning its biannual High School Ambassador program activities.
- i. Through a paid internship, student Ambassadors help promote civic engagement and voter pre-registration in April and September. The fall Ambassador cohort includes 21 students from 15 high schools, namely Abraham Lincoln, Archbishop Riordan, Balboa, Galileo, Gateway, George Washington, Independence, John O'Connell, Lowell, Phillip and Sala Burton, Raoul Wallenberg, San Francisco Christian, San Francisco University High School, School of the Arts, and SF International.
 - ii. The Department helps all student Ambassadors develop impactful and informed Outreach Plans; during the course of each internship, staff will continue to give each of them individualized support so Ambassadors can be successful with their personal outreach endeavors. Through the program, Ambassadors gain leadership skills and exposure to public service while providing a critical service to the community and helping the Department amplify messaging around voter registration.
- E. The Department continues to partner with San Francisco Juvenile Hall to reach young adults and teenagers.
- i. The Department commenced "office hours" at the facility, providing a direct channel through which young San Francisco residents can learn about the value of civic participation and get help registering to vote.
 - ii. Staff at the Juvenile Hall Probation Department have begun disseminating outreach materials to all teenagers and adults with their release packets. These materials provide registration and voting information

relevant to youth and first-time voters, and invite them to apply to serve as poll workers in upcoming elections.

- F. The Department continues advancing its Go Green! campaign (online access to the Voter Information Pamphlet).
- i. Since April's initiation of the Go Green! Campaign, over 1,950 local voters have chosen to forego paper delivery of the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP) in favor of reading it online. Since July's commencement of the second phase of the Go Green! campaign, the Department's mixed media approach has achieved over 3 million impressions and engaged with hundreds of thousands of social media accounts.
 - ii. Over the summer, the Department broadcast Go Green! ads through website banners, dynamic commercial-style animations, engaging user-generated content videos, and strategic radio advertisements. This extended effort focused on multilingual households, with an emphasis on Chinese and Spanish-speaking communities.
 - iii. The Department's Go Green! animated video was featured on cable television, yielding more than 1,029,246 impressions. Its social media platforms continue to showcase UGC videos in multilingual formats, reaching more than 228,775 social media accounts with more than 1,820,461 impressions. Its static advertisement banners on lifestyle, sports, and entertainment websites, have generated more than 1,315,000 impressions.

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

- A. The Department has begun preparing staffing plans and hiring timelines for hiring as-needed personnel to assist with the March 5, 2024 election. In preparation for the onboarding of hundreds of employees, the Department has been reviewing and revising its onboarding materials with the latest city policies, employee resources, and trainings.
- B. This month, the Department began facilitating candidate filing for the March 2024 election. The submission period for signatures in lieu of filing fee for candidates for Superior Court Judge, and for statewide and federal offices, opened September 14. The nomination period for County Central Committee and County Council will open on September 29.
- C. The Department has also been facilitating the filing of Declarations of Candidacy and related nomination documents for the November 5, 2024 election. The current list of the forty candidates who have filed a Declaration of Candidacy is available at sf.gov/reports/november-2024/candidates-november-5-2024-consolidated-general-election.
- D. Last month, the Department launched its primary-specific voter notification mailing series.
- i. The first notice in this series included the recipient's party preference, information on how party preference, or lack thereof, will impact the presidential contest on the ballot they will receive in February 2024, and options for updating party preference (including crossover options for voters without a party preference).
 - ii. In the weeks following this first mailing, the volume of online registrations and updates received by the Department increased six-fold, likely in response to the mailing.
 - iii. The Department also saw an uptick in the number of requests for paper registration forms as well as an uptick in phone calls and email inquiries from voters seeking to confirm their registration information on file.

- E. The Department has begun revising its poll worker training materials for the presidential election cycle.
 - i. For the March 5, 2024 primary election, the Poll Worker Training Manual will focus on simplifying complex ballot-issuing steps, including how to check a voter's party preference, how to explain ballot options, and how to assist voters who wish to update their party preferences at the polls and get the ballot of their new party.
 - ii. The new poll worker class curriculum will include an interactive learning activity on presidential primary rules. That is, the Department will incorporate examples of hypothetical voters presenting questions and scenarios related to party preference. Department staff will dedicate 20-30 minutes in each class to practice assistance of voters in approximately 30 possible ballot-issuing scenarios that poll workers may encounter on Election Day.
- F. The Department has been updating much of this signage, including the "Vote Here!" sign that is placed in front of each polling place, the Language and Accessible Resources sign that alerts voter to the availability of various translated materials, in-person assistance, and accessible resources, and the poll worker language nametags.
 - i. Following four elections in 2022, much of the existing stock of polling place signage is reaching the end of its usable life, providing an opportune time for the Department to make improvements to the design, content, and usability.
- G. The Department has launched a new Outreach Calendar at https://sfelections.org/tools/outreach_calendar/
 - i. The revised calendar allows users to filter which types of events they would like to learn about by year, month, and community served. (Communities include the general public, individuals with limited English proficiency, justice involved individuals, low income individuals, unhoused individuals, and youth). Users can also filter by type of event (community engagement events, community meetings, presentations, and resource tables).
 - ii. The revised calendar features an updated design and modernized interface. Among the new design features is a carousel of images and photographs of previously conducted events. Another feature is the ability to view pop-up event summaries, which provide the date/time and location of the event (or a link, if virtual); an image or flyer; a description of the event and the co-host(s), as applicable; and social media share buttons.
- H. The Department continues to collaborate with Digital Services to maintain the Department's webpages on sf.gov.
 - i. Digital Services has confirmed that it has built its own archiving product to address some of the challenges encountered with Archive-It. Digital Services is testing the solution and adding final features. The Department will meet again with Digital Services at the end of September to learn more details and steps to finalize the archive of the Department's legacy sites.
- I. The Department will continue its non-citizen registration and voting program for local School Board Elections.
 - i. On August 8, 2023, the California Court of Appeal upheld San Francisco's non-citizen voting program. The Court found the City's program was permissible under the state Constitution and charter city authority; non-

citizen parents of children residing in San Francisco can therefore continue to vote in local School Board Elections.

- ii. The Department posted a notice on its website about the Court's decision and notified its outreach partners.
- iii. Before the next School Board Election, the Department plans to notify all former non-citizen voters about the case and the upcoming School Board Election, and to provide information on how to register to vote.

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

There are no new items to report under this section.