



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: March 10, 2023
RE: Director's Report: March 15, 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 February 15, 2023.

I. The Department is in the process of transitioning its website to the *sf.gov* domain.

- A. The Department continues to attend meetings with the City's Digital Services staff, participate in trainings and meetings, and review relevant materials to prepare for transitioning its current website to the new *sf.gov* domain.
- B. The Department is currently in the third of the seven phases required for this transition. This third phase involves participating in twice-weekly writing workshops with Digital Services staff, developing content for most commonly used pages, receiving feedback on this content, and obtaining the training and credentials to use the City's Drupal Content Management System. This phase is expected to continue through the first week of April and will be followed by the fourth phase, *Transition to DOE*, during which the Department will participate in a "handoff" meeting. After that, the Department will enter the fifth phase and assume responsibility for transitioning all remaining pages of its website.
- C. Although the Department's digital voter tools, such as the Voter Portal, are outside of the scope of the website transition to *sf.gov* and will continue to be hosted on *sfelections.org* following the launch of the Department's new site this summer, the Department will still undertake an update of its voter tools. The main goals of this update will be to simplify current content and to add new content specific to the upcoming presidential primary election, giving consideration to the guidance received from Digital Services during the website transition.

II. The Department continues to provide voter outreach and education to communities across the City.

- A. The Department's outreach team continues to participate in neighborhood events, host resource tables, and distribute outreach materials to provide information about local voter registration options. Most recently, Department staff have hosted resource tables at the Black History Month Celebration; the Hope is on the Horizon-Physical and Mental Health Fair; a Veteran and Spouse Job/Resource Fair; a Career and Hiring Event for reentry and justice-involved jobseekers at the Community Assessment and Services Center; the Disability and Aging Services Benefits and Resources Hub, a service center for older adults and people with disabilities; the Latino Task Force, Yosemite in Bayview, which offers supportive service such as public benefits guidance, employment guidance, and housing support; and Glide Memorial Church, which provides meals and services to homeless and insecurely housed individuals and their families.
- B. The Department recently issued its *2023 Vote Restoration Outreach: Request for Proposals* (RFP) with the goal of partnering with local nonprofits to supplement our outreach efforts to actively and formerly justice-involved individuals. Through this RFP, the Department intends to identify outreach partners who can assist in 1) disseminating information about the conditions under which justice-involved people can register to vote and vote (e.g., those on parole) and the

voter registration process following completion of a felony sentence, and 2) facilitating voter registration for eligible justice-involved individuals. The approximate total distribution amount is \$100,000 for all grantees combined, not to exceed \$50,000 per grantee; grant proposals are due Friday, March 17, by 5 p.m. In addition to posting the RFP on [the City's open bidding website](#) as well the Department's website at sfelections.org/RFP2023, the Department also sent this RFP to nearly 50 community-based organizations serving actively or formerly justice-involved individuals.

- C. The Department continues to plan its launch of “*Go paperless! Go green! Review your voter pamphlet on your screen!*” campaign. The Department plans to launch this campaign on Earth Day, April 22 with 1) sending an email to the approximately 300,000 voters with email addresses on file to encourage them to opt in digital delivery of the pamphlet, 2) hosting a resource table at the 53rd Anniversary of Earth Day in Golden Gate Park, 3) issuing a press release, and 4) sending an invitation to community partners to help get the message out. To increase awareness of this campaign, the Department will use also TV, radio, and Muni ads and social media; update its website banner and employee email signatures; revise in-person outreach materials and presentations; place new signage on its 34 ballot drop boxes; and incorporate the message in election notices that will be sent to all local voters this summer.
- D. As a parallel project, the Department is researching the possibility of strengthening its social media presence by purchasing Hootsuite, a social media management tool created to assist with planning and scheduling content, monitoring trends, and the gathering of engagement data across multiple social media networks. Hootsuite has been classified as a “Surveillance Technology” by the Department of Technology and is therefore subject to a mandatory review and approval process administered by the Committee on Information Technology (COIT). The Department is in the process of working with COIT to develop and implement various required documents, including a Surveillance Technology Policy and a Surveillance Impact Report. Simultaneously, the Department has been exploring the use of local City-approved marketers to assist with the reach of the *Go Green* campaign and future elections messaging.
- E. The Department continues to plan for its High School Elections Ambassador Internship Program, which will take place during the upcoming High School Voter Education Weeks period in April. To promote and increase participation and awareness of this program, the Department will partner with Youthworks (administered by the Department of Children, Youth & Their Families). As part of this program, the Department will invite local high school students to learn about electoral processes, voter eligibility requirements, and voter registration processes and Department staff will train ambassadors on how to conduct voter pre-registration and registration drives at their schools.

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

- A. Last month, the Department entered the final drafts of its FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 budget proposals into the City's Budget Formulation and Management System and submitted the necessary budget forms to the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office.
- B. The Office of Racial Equity has recently indicated that the deadline to submit 2022 Racial Equity Progress Reports has been extended to Monday, May 8, 2023 and issued a template all departments must use for those reports. Consequently, the Department has begun preparing its 2022 Racial Equity Progress Report and provided a copy of the template to the Elections Commission. *Should the Commission choose to provide an update on their work to be included with the Department's submission, it must submit that update to the Director by Thursday, May 4, 2023.*

- C. In accordance with its practice of regularly offering voluntary training and professional development opportunities to its personnel, the Department has again partnered with [Learn It](#), a San Francisco based training agency. Through Learn It, the Department will offer online instructor-led workshops dedicated to professional development, personal well-being, inclusion and bias prevention. This year's workshops will be available to all Department employees through July 1 and any employee can attend as many workshops as they find beneficial.
- D. The Department has been reviewing and updating its *Candidate Guide for County Central Councils and Committees*, and its *Guide for Judicial Candidates* which is developed to assist potential candidates preparing for the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election. The Department has also posted the updated calendar for candidate nominations and the filing of local measures in relation to the March 2024 election.
- E. 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.
- F. 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. The Department has launched a voter notification program to inform former San Francisco voters who had become ineligible to vote due to imprisonment about the restoration of their voting rights following release.

- A. Per Senate Bill 504 that was signed into law last year, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) must provide to the Secretary of State (SOS), specified identifying information for persons on parole and for persons released from imprisonment for the conviction of a felony and no longer under CDCR's jurisdiction on a weekly basis. Upon receipt, counties are required to notify the identified persons who have been released from imprisonment or are on parole that their voting rights are restored and that they may register to vote, and also must explain the procedures for registering to vote.
- B. The Department has begun receiving records from SOS on a weekly basis of residents who were recently released from imprisonment for the conviction of a felony and has begun weekly voter notification to these persons, using the contact information provided by the CDCR and any additional contact information found in the voter record stored in the local Election Information Management System. (Until recently, the Department did not systematically receive any lists of formerly incarcerated persons that could be used for voter notification purposes.)
- C. Each resident appearing on a CDCR list will receive a voter registration card in the mail, along with an official notice from the Department of Elections. This notice, translated into Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino, will inform the recipient that their voting rights may have been restored, provide registration and voting information, and encourage participation in elections. The notice will also provide a link to the Department's new tool: *Do you have a criminal conviction? You may still be eligible to vote!* This tool presents a series of yes/no questions to help determine whether a person meets voter eligibility qualifications. For example, if a person using the tool indicates they have been convicted of a felony and are currently on parole, the tool will indicate that the person is eligible to vote and provide a link to an online voter registration.

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

- A. There are no new items to report under this section.