



Memorandum

To: Elections Commission
From: John Arntz, Director
Date: December 7, 2023
RE: Director's Report: December 12, 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 November 15, 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 community events, providing election resource tables and distributing materials about the upcoming election. Events included On Lok Registration Workshop, providing services to the elderly; 2023 Holiday Bazaar and Demo Day, celebrating student entrepreneurs; Project Homeless Connect, providing services and information to people experiencing homelessness; Mobilization for Adolescent Growth In Our Communities (Mo'MAGIC) Community Meeting, addressing the needs of the children, youth, and their families in the Fillmore and Western Addition communities; and several United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Naturalization Ceremonies.
- B. The Department is preparing to send out several hundred informational packets to its community outreach partners, which include local non-profit organizations as well as city departments and agencies.
 - i. In addition to copies of various outreach materials the Department has developed to inform San Franciscans about their registration and voting options in the upcoming election, each packet will include a letter describing online tools (e.g., Vote Ready Tool, Election Readiness Toolkit) available on the Department's website. The letter will also encourage each recipient to partner with the Department to increase awareness of the upcoming election and extend an invitation to schedule a Department-hosted tabling event or presentation.
 - ii. In January, the Department will send similar packets to the City's shelters, permanent and transitional housing units, social service agencies, single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, local hospitals, nursing homes, and many other care facilities. Each packet will provide tailored information about election-related services available to a) residents experiencing homelessness and b) homebound and hospitalized residents.
- C. The Department selected 13 organizations as grant recipients to assist with its March 2024 election outreach to a) young adult (18 - 29) population, b) people with disabilities, c) AAPI, BIPOC, and Latinx communities, d) limited-English speaking communities, and e) low-income communities.
 - i. Last month, the Department received 14 proposals from local non-profits in response to the 2024 Equitable Voter Participation Outreach: Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in early November. Following evaluation of proposals, the selection panel chose the following 13 non-profits as grantees: [Asian Pacific American Community Center](#), [Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice](#), [Chinese Newcomers Service Center](#),

Coleman Advocates, LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Mission Economic Development Agency, National Coalition of 100 Black Women Inc., One Treasure Island, The Women's Building, San Francisco Shanghai Association, Southeast Asian Community Center, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation, League of Women Voters- San Francisco. One proposal was deemed non-responsive because the applicant organization failed to comply with state registration requirements for non-profits as established by the State Attorney General's Office.

- ii. The Department has been working on executing grant contracts, after which the Department will train all grantees, reviewing outreach messages and materials they will be using over the course of the grant term. Grantees will begin their outreach activities on January 4 and continue through March 5, 2024.
- D. The Department has launched a mixed media campaign designed to increase awareness of registration options among eligible but unregistered residents and to encourage voters to participate in 2024 elections.
- i. While the campaign is aimed at all San Franciscans who fall into either of these categories, its focus will be on reaching adults aged 18-25, Spanish speakers, and members of the Black community. This outreach campaign will continue through March 2024, with messaging transitioning from voter registration to casting a ballot in the weeks immediately preceding the March election.
 - ii. As the first prong of this mixed media strategy, the Department has engaged with on-air Radio personalities to deliver motivating "register to vote" messages on local radio stations popular with young, Black, and Spanish-speaking populations, including KMEL and Que Buena 98.9/99.1 FM.
 - iii. The second prong will involve the Department incorporating its "I Vote for my _____" (community/family/future) messaging, intended to make voting more personal. In the coming weeks, this messaging will appear on bus shelters across the City, near college campuses and in neighborhoods where data indicates high numbers of eligible but unregistered voters are located. Beginning January, this messaging will also appear on a bulletin billboard in Bayview Hunters Point and on MUNI buses. Finally, the Department will post user-generated content (UGC) style videos with this messaging across the Department's social media channels.
- E. Last month, the Department mailed notices to approximately 130,000 voters registered without a party preference, explaining how to request a ballot with a presidential contest. To date, nearly 7,000 voters have submitted their requests.
- i. This week, the Department sent a second round of mailers to the approximately 3,000 new voters who have registered without a qualified party preference since the first mailing.
- F. This month, the Department will send multilingual mail and email notices to the approximately 90,000 local voters who did not vote in any of the five elections conducted in 2021 and 2022.
- i. The encouraging tone of this notice is intended to empower the recipients to vote in 2024 elections, to remind them their vote can make a difference, and to suggest their participation would reflect a commitment to the future of our community. The notice also highlights several convenient voting options for the March election.

- ii. This notice also serves the administrative dual purpose of maintaining an up-to-date voter roll. This secondary purpose is mainly achieved through the response of the USPS. That is, if the information in a voter's file does not indicate a recipient voter has moved, but this mailer is returned as "undeliverable" by the USPS, the Department can use this information to begin correcting the potentially outdated address in the voter's file.

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

- A. The Department has begun hiring and onboarding the approximately 200 temporary employees and 2,000 poll workers necessary to conduct the March 2024 election. As part of its March hiring campaign, the Department will hold an Employment and Volunteer Opportunities Fair on December 8.
 - i. At this Fair, the Department intends to 1) fill certain seasonal positions, 2) recruit poll workers and 3) leverage its equitable hiring outreach efforts to increase awareness of voter registration and election participation. With these goals in mind, the Department developed a [flyer](#) with information about the various opportunities at this event and has been utilizing the flyer to promote the Fair; the flyer will also be offered to all attendees. To date, over 200 individuals have signed up to attend this event.
- B. On December 1, the Ballot Simplification Committee concluded the public meetings in which the Committee drafted a fair and impartial summary of each local ballot measure for publication in the March 5 Voter Information Pamphlet.
- C. The Department continues to facilitate candidate filings for the March 5 election. The nomination period for state and federal offices, Superior Court Judges, and county central committee candidates will close at 5 p.m. on December 8. Shortly after the close of this nomination period, the Department will post the final list of candidates to appear on the March 5 ballot at sf.gov/reports/march-2024/candidates-march-5-2024-presidential-primary-election.
- D. At noon on Thursday, December 14, Department will conclude the intake of proponent and opponent ballot arguments. At noon on Monday, December 18, the Department will conclude the intake of rebuttal and paid arguments. Each of these submission deadlines will be followed by a 10-day public examination period.
- E. The Department has also been facilitating the filing of Declarations of Candidacy for the November 2024 election. A list of the candidates who have completed such filings is available at sf.gov/reports/november-2024/candidates-november-5-2024-consolidated-general-election.
- F. Last month, the California Secretary of State's office announced the availability of state and federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funding for 1) improving polling place accessibility and 2) election security. \$60,380 and \$175,000, respectively, may be allocated to San Francisco through reimbursement-based contracts with the state.
 - i. Before executing any such contracts, the Department will need to prepare and submit to the Board of Supervisors a resolution seeking to authorize the Department to accept and expend the allocated grant funds.
 - ii. The Department intends to use this funding to cover some of the costs related to the expansion of accessible materials and tools, new and pre-existing security costs at the Department's facilities, and costs related to resources necessary to continue secure operations in case of power outage or natural disaster.
- G. On October 31, 2023, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 526-23, urging the Department to report on the implementation of Assembly Bill 57 (AB 57) - Names of Candidates), AB 57 modified the rules for transliterations and candidate names in character-based languages as listed on ballots. Accordingly, the Department provided its

response (please see Appendix A), detailing its current plan to liaise with the City Attorney's office with the goal of amending local law to more clearly align with state law.

- H. The Department is continuing to locate polling places. Since the last report, at which time the Department still needed to locate approximately 60-80 new facilities, the Department's poll locating team has made significant progress, with 482 sites already being secured. The current outstanding number of polling places to be located is 19.
- I. The Department initiated its March poll worker recruitment campaign by mailing availability survey packets to former poll workers. Each availability packet includes information on the Department's new Poll Worker Referral Program. Through this program, former poll workers are encouraged to recruit a friend, neighbor, or family member and receive a small bonus. The Department plans to survey all poll workers after the March 5 election and gather their feedback regarding how to make this new program maximally successful for the November 5 election.
- J. The Department has begun compiling its budget proposals for the FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 cycles.
 - i. This month, the Mayor's Office will issue its budget instructions and priorities, which will further inform the Department's FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 budget proposals. The Department will submit its final proposals to the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office by the February 21, 2024 charter-mandated deadline.
 - ii. The Department will submit its draft budget proposals to the Elections Commission by January 30, 2024. In accordance with San Francisco Administrative Code §3.3, these budget proposals must be reviewed at two public meetings, with the first meeting occurring at least 15 days before the meeting in which the Commission approves the Department's budget proposals.

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

Data on registration rates and outreach events: 1) Total new registrations, 2) New registrations by supervisory districts, 3) Tactics employed (outreach, community engagement, grant funding, etc.) and in which districts, 4) Tactics employed by districts.

- A. Between November 1 – November 30, the Department processed affidavits for 2,248 new registrants, residing in the following supervisorial districts: Supervisorial District (SD) 1 – 174, SD 2 – 251, SD 3 – 227, SD 4 – 159, SD 5 – 249, SD 6 – 242, SD 7 – 199, SD 8 – 234, SD 9 – 199, SD 10 – 164, SD 11 – 149.
- B. Between November 1 – November 30, the Department conducted 12 outreach events; which had approximately 5,170 people in attendance collectively. The number of such events by Supervisorial District was: SD 3 – 3, SD 4 – 1, SD 5 – 4, SD 6 – 7, SD 8 – 2, SD 9 – 5, SD 10 – 2, SD 11 – 1.
- C. With the recent inquiry by the Election Commission as to how commissioners might assist the Department with its outreach, some options are: 1) to distribute election packets containing registration forms, brochures, and poll worker applications through commissioners' chosen platforms; 2) to help place election door hangers on local residences with no currently registered voters and/or election posters on utility infrastructure in neighborhoods with below average historical turnout; or 3) to add links to voter resources available on the Department's website (e.g., the Vote Ready Tool, poll worker application) to commissioners' email signatures.