

Date: September 16, 2023
From: Commissioner Jerdonek

Proposed 2023–2024 Policy Priority for the Elections Commission and Department of Elections: Open Source Voting Systems

Pursuant to SF Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 460-14¹ and other open source voting Board legislation and Elections Commission policy resolutions starting in 2007², the Department should support the movement towards open source voting systems and support and take steps to encourage the creation and certification of an open source voting system that meets San Francisco’s needs—with the goal of adopting an open source voting system as soon as practical.

For example, the Department can—

- a) Conduct outreach far enough in advance of the 2024 budget season to ask voting system organizations what they would need from San Francisco (money, collaboration from the Department, etc.) to develop and certify an open source voting system that meets all of San Francisco’s needs (multi-language support, ranked choice voting, etc.) and how long it would take. This will enable the Department and the Commission to plan and work with the Board and Mayor during the budget process to ensure that sufficient resources are included in the Department’s budget if any are needed.
- b) Conduct a public demo in City Hall before the 2024 general election of one or more open source voting systems and invite our elected officials and the public to attend. This will educate the public and show voting system organizations and the marketplace that San Francisco supports and is interested in adopting open source voting.

¹ Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 460-14 (authored by Scott Wiener; passed 10-0 on Dec. 9, 2014): “Resolution committing the City and County of San Francisco to work with other jurisdictions and organizations to create new voting systems using open source software ...” and “[supporting] the movement toward more open and transparent voting systems and the creation of new voting systems using open source software and inexpensive commodity components.”

<https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1946783&GUID=0725E575-B05E-4137-B771-E8BFD5B98237>

² See, for example, the Sept. 20, 2022 document “Open Source Voting History in SF ‘At a Glance’” for a relatively complete list of open source voting Board of Supervisors Legislation and Elections Commission resolutions: https://sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/Open_Source_Voting_At_Glance.pdf