



Date: April 18, 2006
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District (P.O.)
Subject: Polling Place Personnel Resources

A vital element of the democratic process is the polling place. The City Clerk's office is responsible for determining necessary staffing levels, maintaining these levels and providing a training program. Poll workers are recruited and trained each election cycle to ensure that voters are given clear instructions and assistance. Additionally, precinct coordinators, inspectors and poll workers are responsible for addressing unanticipated issues, as well as the security of each ballot. Appropriate staffing and training are imperative to ensure an expeditious and accurate election process.

In the recent municipal election, Long Beach had 311 polling locations with approximately 1400 poll workers. The recruitment of these poll workers was a challenging process. Any potential shortage of poll workers can cause numerous issues during voting and thereafter. It is estimated that the June 6 municipal/county election will require 1500 poll workers. The City currently offers employees the option of acting as poll workers, inspectors and coordinators. The expansion of these efforts, as well as the creation of a reserve of potential city employee poll workers, could greatly assist recruitment efforts. In order to ensure appropriate staffing levels, it would be valuable for the City Clerk to work with the City Manager to address these issues by potentially developing a city employee poll worker program. The goal of a potential program would be to secure additional poll workers, create a poll worker reserve and to work with Los Angeles County to ensure Long Beach voters sufficient staff and assistance at polling locations.

Recommendation: Request the City Manager to work with the City Clerk to develop a City Employee poll worker program and further coordinate with Los Angeles County staff to ensure mutual aid for upcoming municipal/county elections.