



CITY OF LONG BEACH

CITY CLERK

C-6

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April 5, 2005

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive, and lay-over to April 12, 2005, a Report to the Elections Oversight Committee, Regarding SB 1730 and the Changing of Statewide Primary Election Dates Beginning in 2006.

DISCUSSION

This report is intended to update the Mayor and City Council regarding the deliberations of the Elections Oversight Committee (EOC).

On March 9, 2005, the EOC considered a report by the City Clerk Department concerning the impacts of SB 1730 and recommending continued discussions with the Los Angeles County Registrar Recorder with a two-pronged aim hoping to: 1) create a City-County team to produce a voter-friendly and successful concurrent election in June 2006; 2) seek a pass thru from the County to the City of federal and state funding for purchase of a modern voting system that could be operated in a concurrent election scenario. A copy of the report considered by the EOC is contained in Exhibit 1. We encourage careful reading of Exhibit 1, so that the remainder of this report is better understood.

After presentation of the City Clerk's report to the EOC on March 9th, Conny McCormack, Registrar Recorder/County Clerk for the County of Los Angeles, advised the EOC that she would be willing to recommend waiver of the County Board of Supervisors' "no consolidation" policy for the City of Long Beach as long as: 1) a concurrent election would remain a "fall back" position; 2) if "we knew of your [the City's] run-off candidates..." by April 13, 2006 (also known as "E minus 54", e.g. E-54); and 3) the Board of Supervisors would find good reason to allow consolidation.

In balancing considerations as to whether to request consolidation of the June 2006 run-off election, City Council should consider the main implications of the Registrar's offer to recommend consolidation using the Ink-A-Vote system which are highlighted as follows:

- Creation of E-54 deadline that is not practically feasible;

- According to the Secretary of State February 11, 2005, report regarding the November 2004 Presidential Election, "Ink-A-Vote had a higher residual vote rate (8.7%) than other systems. It had above average rates for all contests studied. Of particular note is that it had significantly higher over-vote rates for contests for President and U.S. Senate than other vendors."
- A requirement to expand public education aimed at: 1) educating voters on the "Ink-A-Vote" write-in candidate method – writing the candidates name on the inside cover of the gray secrecy envelope; 2) educating voters that the City practice of pre-paid postage for absentee ballots is not a County practice;
- Use of the City voting system in April 2006 and a different County voting system in June 2006;
- Later reporting of City election night results, e.g. 1a.m. or later;
- Clarification of costs potential costs savings (depending on the number of contest going to run-off, costs may range between \$250,000 and \$600,000); and
- Potential voter drop-off at the end of the ballot.

If consolidation were to take place, its chief benefits might be:

- Higher voter turnout and diverse voter demographics;
- Voters use one voting system;
- Potential costs savings, depending on the Registrar-Recorder's official estimate; and
- Avoids pitfalls of concurrent election scenario.

However, from staff's perspective, without allowing City staff at least 10 business days to canvass and certify the results of the April 11, 2006 election, the E-54 requirement proposed by the Registrar-Recorder is not an acceptable condition that would compliment the City's initial interest in seeking consolidated elections.

Given the constraints of the Registrar-Recorder's proposed recommendation, the City City Council's decision whether to consolidate may have to wait until the Registrar can determine whether a 10-day allowance is feasible. Furthermore, City staff has been advised by the Registrar, that a determination on the feasibility of a 10-business day allowance cannot be made until May or June 2005.

A layover of this item until the meeting of April 12, 2005, will allow the Registrar to send a representative to attend the meeting and respond to questions raised by City Council.

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SUGGESTED ACTION:

Receive, and lay-over to April 12, 2005, a Report to the Elections Oversight Committee, Regarding SB 1730 and the Changing of Statewide Primary Election Dates Beginning in 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Herrera', written over a horizontal line.

LARRY HERRERA
CITY CLERK

Attachment:

EXHIBIT 1 – March 8, 2005 Elections Oversight Committee Report Regarding SB 1730