



Proposed Changes to Election-Related Ordinances

Presentation to City Council
October 9, 2007



Background

- The bad news: California Elections Code is outdated
- The state will reform the code, but it is unclear when this will happen
- The good news: as a charter city, Long Beach can act now to improve its election administration



Proposal #1—Clarify LBMC

- Current language of LBMC Section 1.21.020 is confusing
- City Clerk Department suggests Municipal Code be amended to make explicit that (1) any recount that aims to affect the official results must examine all ballots and (2) any member of the public can request a partial examination of ballots that will not affect the official results
- This reflects current law; change is simply to bring greater transparency to process



Proposal #2—Coordinate Filings

- Two reporting schedules for proposition committees: City and State
- These are uncoordinated, leading to unnecessarily burdensome schedule (*e.g.*, City: report 3/19 for period 2/26/07 to 3/10/07; State: report 3/22 for period 1/2/07 to 3/17/07)
- Proposal is to allow City Clerk to consolidate the reporting deadlines when they are within seven days of each other and to adjust the reporting periods accordingly



Ballot Waste Problem (related to Proposal #3)





Proposal #3—Reduce Ballot Waste

- Current Elections Code was generated before widespread absentee voting
- City Clerk Department is now required to print and throw away many more polling place ballots than it can use due to widespread absentee voting
- Recommend to lower number of polling place ballots to at least 40% of registered voters to reflect current rates of absentee voting
- Change would have saved \$42,096 in May '07
- City Clerk will still print enough ballots to accommodate all who want to vote at polls



Proposals #4 and #5—Ensure Timely Sample Ballots

- Any voter can protest incorrect voters materials or candidate statements
- In the past, late protests have threatened election administration due to time consumed by litigation
- EOC recommendation is to allow 8 business days to protest in primary election and 5 business days to protest in general election



Summary

- City Clerk Department aims to be proactive, not reactive, in improving election administration
- We welcome any input on these or other ideas from the City Council or the public