



Legislation Text

File #: 06-1317, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive City Clerk Department status report concerning procurement of a modern central count voting system; and authorize the City Clerk to take necessary actions to: [1] procure Hart InterCivic's "Ballot Now" paper based voting system; and [2] retain the services of K and H Integrated Printing Solutions for mailing services and printing of official ballots, sample ballots and vote-by-mail materials; and direct that the City Clerk report back to City Council on January 9, 2007, relative to final financing and contractual requirements necessary to procure a modern voting system and printing services.

With completion of the 2006 election cycle, the archaic condition of the City's voting system was fully exposed in several ways: lack of precinct level over/under-vote protection, lack of modern tally system, problematic sample ballot printing, and problematic vendor support of absentee mailing in April 2006. If we are to maintain and improve the integrity of the voting process, these shortcomings should no longer be accepted.

On August 22, 2006, the City Council tasked the Elections Oversight Committee (EOC) to discuss voting system alternatives and to conduct voting system demonstrations.

As a part of its deliberations, and in conjunction with vendor demonstrations by Hart InterCivic, Sequoia Voting Systems, Martin and Chapman, Vote Here Inc., and the Los Angeles County Registrar, the EOC considered these five alternatives:

1. Continued use of Martin & Chapman's "Opto-Mark", if the vendor can offer system enhancements, e.g., ballot bar codes and Internet reporting.
2. Purchase of a Modern Central Count System;
3. Lease Use of the RRCC InkA Vote Plus;
4. Purchase of a City Owned Precinct Level Ballot Counting System;
5. Conduct of Citywide mail ballot elections.

As a result of its deliberations during three meetings in September 2006, the EOC concluded that none of the five alternatives could be recommended until a decision was made as to whether the City would move to "odd-calendar year" elections.

On October 24, 2006, the EOC adopted the recommendation of the City Clerk Department that the City Council not move to "odd-calendar year" elections and that the current "even-year" April and June election dates be retained. On the same date, the EOC also directed the City Clerk to provide recommendations relative to the feasibility of procuring a "central count" voting system based on

vendor Request for Information (RFI) responses due to the City on November 17, 2006.

On November 14, 2006, the City Clerk reported the foregoing EOC recommendation to the Charter Amendment Committee.

On November 17, 2006, the City Clerk Department received three proposals to the voting system RFI from:

[1] Hart InterCivic,

[2] Election Systems & Software (ES&S), and

[3] Martin & Chapman Co.

In addition, a proposal for print services was received from K & H Integrated Print Solutions.

Based on a review of these responses, the City Clerk Department is recommending the selection of Hart InterCivic's Ballot Now voting system and the retention of K & H Integrated Print Solutions for printing and mailing services.

In addition, the City Clerk Department recommends the procurement and implementation of the following election administration enhancements: [1] purchase of Vote Here Mail Ballot Tracking Software; [2] purchase of ADA accessible voting booths; [3] rental of modular trailer offices for creation of a election supply distribution center

The benefits of the Ballot Now System, and the proposed administrative enhancements, are as follows:

- Improved ballot counting accuracy via a leading edge State certified voting system;
- Voter friendly "big ballots" (see attached example);
- Enhanced accommodations for disabled and bilingual voters;
- Improved transparency in election night canvass activities and integrated internet reporting;
- Improved transparency in the counting of votes for write-in candidates;
- Provision of an audit trail at the time ballots are examined for certified write-in candidates, questionable markings, and mandatory recounts;
- Improved tracking of outgoing, incoming and processed absentee ballots for voters and election staff via desktop and internet access, as required by Senate Bill 1725.

In order to replace the City's current voting system, for use in an election in the spring of 2007, a vendor contact should be executed prior to January 16, 2006. Use of a new voting system in a 2007 election cycle will provide City Clerk Department staff with an excellent opportunity to operate the system in advance of the April 2008 Primary Nominating election.

Between now and December 22, 2006, City staff will endeavor to: [1] conduct an onsite visit to Hart InterCivic 's Corporate Headquarters to specify (in more detail) system functionality, software and equipment configuration, final system pricing; [2] determine optimal purchase financing options; and [3] prepare necessary contract and financing documents for presentation to and approval by the City Council.

The RFI estimated costs of the Hart InterCivic Ballot Now system is \$840,577 (exclusive of applicable sales tax).

The City Clerk Department will request authorization to apply \$449,350 in additional reimbursement towards the purchase of the Ballot Now voting system and the other election administration enhancements mentioned above.

A preliminary financing estimate shows that a five-year repayment plan would cost an additional \$120,000 per year (assuming a system down payment of \$330,000).

The remaining \$119,350, would be used for the election administration enhancements previously discussed.

As the cost of City elections are shared by the Long Beach Unified School District and the Community College District, a portion of the anticipated costs will be borne by both jurisdictions over four election cycles.

Approve recommendation.

LARRY HERRERA
CITY CLERK