



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

**Department:** ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-  
RECORDER-ELECTIONS  
**File #:** 18-235

Board Meeting Date: 3/27/2018

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** 4/5<sup>ths</sup>

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Mark Church, Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder  
**Subject:** California Voter's Choice Act - Final Election Administration Plan (EAP)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept report from the Chief Elections Officer regarding the California Voter's Choice Act Final Election Administration Plan and adopt a resolution authorizing:

- A) The Chief Elections Officer & Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder to waive the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to execute an agreement with Runbeck Election Services Inc. for the purchase of On-Demand Ballot Printers and one (1) year of license and support fees, in an amount not to exceed \$415,000, with a projected four-year additional cost of \$290,000 to renew annual license and support fees (total cost \$705,000); and
- B) An appropriation transfer request recognizing unanticipated revenue of \$1,057,000 from the Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Elections (ACRE; the "Department") Elections System Trust Fund and making corresponding appropriations of \$605,000 to Services and Supplies for laptops and other equipment used at Vote Centers, and \$452,000 to Fixed Assets for a new Olympus printer and Runbeck's On-Demand Ballot Printers.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The California Voter's Choice Act (VCA), also known as Senate Bill 450, was signed into law on September 29, 2016, authorizing 14 counties, including San Mateo County, to conduct any election as an All-Mailed Ballot/Vote Center election commencing in 2018. The legislation was part of a broad collection of election reforms designed to increase voter participation, enlist public engagement, and expand voting options for all voters.

On September 12, 2017, this Board authorized the Chief Elections Officer to proceed with the implementation of the VCA and conduct the June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election as the first election held under the new law.

On March 19, 2018, the Chief Elections Officer formally adopted the County's Final Election

Administration Plan (the “Final EAP”) in accordance with the requirements of the VCA. (A copy of the Final EAP is attached hereto as **Attachment 1** and can be found online at [www.smcacre.org](http://www.smcacre.org).) With the adoption of the Final EAP, the Registration and Elections Division will begin the procurement process to acquire equipment, supplies and services for the conduct of the June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Adoption of Final Election Administration Plan (EAP)**

The VCA requires the County’s Chief Elections Officer to prepare an Election Administration Plan (EAP) for the administration of elections conducted under the new law. The EAP is required to address a variety of factors and describe, in specific detail, the implementation of the VCA within the County.

The Final EAP was developed in consultation with the general public and members of the County’s Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) and Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC).

Additionally, the Final EAP incorporated comments received during the course of three public hearings required by the Act. All of the comments received during the public review process, along with those that have been incorporated into the Final EAP, may be found in the section of the Final EAP entitled “Public Comments to Draft EAP and Responses.”

On March 19, 2018, the Chief Elections Officer forwarded the County’s Final EAP and Voter Education and Outreach Plan to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has 14 days to approve the County’s Voter Education and Outreach Plan. Upon approval of the County’s Voter Education and Outreach Plan by the Secretary of State, the County’s Final EAP is authorized for implementation. No additional approval or other formal action is required by the Board.

### **Voter’s Choice Act - June 5, 2018 Election Implementation Requirements**

The implementation of the VCA essentially transforms the manner in which elections will be conducted in San Mateo County. The VCA will change the traditional polling place election model. The new All-Mailed Ballot/Vote Center election model will require fundamental changes to the County’s Elections Infrastructure.

The Elections Infrastructure is comprised of two major categories: Elections Systems Technology and Operational Assets. Elections Systems Technology consists of voting, tabulation and reporting systems hardware, software, cybersecurity and maintenance. Operational Assets include human resources, facilities, policies, procedures, tools, supplies, equipment and physical plant security.

The statutory requirements of the VCA will necessitate upgrades to the County’s Elections Infrastructure to effectively conduct the June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election. The Registration and Elections Division has identified the following operational requirements and procurement requests for new equipment and services necessary for the June 5, 2018 Statewide Direct Primary Election.

### ***Laptops for Vote Centers - \$315,000***

Laptops will be needed at each Vote Center for real time access to the voter registration system, a

requirement of the law. Four laptops will be used at each Vote Center with an additional 50 purchased for use as replacements and for training. Additional associated costs for the laptops include Dymo label printers, carrying cases for laptops, Peplinks for network connections and software licenses. The Department plans on using these laptops through the 2022 election cycle.

### ***Olympus Mail Sorter Printer - \$37,000***

The printer on the envelope sorting / signature image capture machine, which is a component of the Olympus from Pitney Bowes, has reached the end of its life and will no longer be supported by the vendor. To continue using the Olympus, the Department must purchase a replacement printer for the June and November 2018 elections.

### ***On-Demand Ballot Printing System for Vote Centers - \$705,000***

Under the VCA, voters are no longer required to appear at their designated polling location. Instead, a voter can go to any Vote Center convenient to them.

On-Demand Ballot Printers allow Vote Centers to issue and print the precinct specific ballots for voters as needed. This system will save on the cost of acquiring pre-printed stockpiles of each ballot style at each Vote Center as well as a reduction in paper waste from unused ballots.

Staff's market research resulted in finding only one State-certified system and vendor that meets our specifications and is experienced in California elections operations. That system is the On-Demand Ballot Printing System from Runbeck Election Services, Inc.

Accordingly, we are therefore recommending a waiver of the RFP process.

Further, the term of the proposed contract with Runbeck Election Services, Inc. is five (5) years, which exceeds the standard three (3) year term for County contracts. As explained below, the proposed contract includes not only necessary equipment/supplies such as laptops and printers for Vote Centers, but also a licensing agreement and technical support for the entire five (5) year period, which is expected to cover the anticipated lifetime of the equipment/supplies and will allow the County to properly utilize such equipment/supplies for three (3) full statewide election cycles (i.e., 2018, 2020, and 2022).

### ***Cost Breakdown by Expenditure Object***

#### Services and Supplies

Laptops for Vote Centers	\$240,000
Laptop cases	\$14,500
DYMO Label Printers	\$16,500
Kace Licensing	\$14,000
Peplinks for Network Connections	\$30,000
Runbeck Printer License and Support	\$290,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$605,000</b>

#### Fixed Assets

Runbeck On-Demand Ballot Printers	\$415,000
Olympus Mail Sorter Printer	\$37,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$452,000</b>

Each department within the County is required to balance its budget at the object level within each respective budget unit. Because of this fiscal year's projected overrun in fixed assets and supplies & services object levels, it is necessary to transfer funds that exist in the Department's Election Software System Trust Fund to these departmental accounts that will exceed their original appropriation.

### ***Voter Education and Outreach***

An essential component of the Voter's Choice Act is the requirement that all participating counties institute a comprehensive Voter Education and Outreach Plan to increase voter participation and accessibility to the electoral process. The Department presently has \$221,000 allocated in this year's budget for this purpose. During the November 7, 2015 All-Mailed Ballot Election authorized under AB2028, the Department allocated and spent approximately \$340,000 on Voter Education and Outreach.

As proposed by the Board during the Department's September 12, 2017 VCA presentation, Voter Education and Outreach efforts will require an additional budget allocation of \$250,000. The plan is to fund these costs out of fiscal year-end Department budget savings.

A portion of the Voter Education and Outreach expenditures (\$58,000) may be reimbursed to the County under the provisions of Senate Bill (SB) 117. This law requires the Secretary of State to provide funds to each county conducting an election under the VCA for certain costs incurred for Voter Education and Outreach, for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Counties must seek reimbursement for these expenditures.

### ***Voter Information File***

The conversion to an All-Mailed Ballot/Vote Center model will increase requests for information about whether registered voters have returned a vote-by-mail ballot during the period leading up to Election Day. This information is kept in a Voter Information File, and is often requested during each election cycle by campaigns and other entities to contact voters about the upcoming election. With the implementation of the VCA model, the index will also note voters who have done any of the following at a Vote Center:

- Registered to vote or updated their registration
- Received and voted a provisional or replacement ballot
- Voted a ballot using equipment at the Vote Center

Beginning no later than 10 days before the election, the Chief Election Officer shall maintain this information in an accessible electronic format. This information will be available pursuant to the VCA.

### ***Additional Security Requirements***

As the Registration & Elections Division implements the changes brought about by the VCA and other legislation, it faces escalating election security risks at the local, national and international level. The strengthening of our election technology infrastructure with new voting systems and facility security upgrades is essential. These capital projects are planned for next fiscal year and will be the subject of future Board reports.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

### **SHARED VISION 2025:**

Acceptance of the report from the Chief Elections Officer regarding California Voter's Choice Act Final Election Administration Plan and adoption of this Resolution contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 of a Collaborative Community, as the successful implementation of the VCA All-Mailed Ballot/Vote Center model affords voters more opportunities to make decisions that impact their communities, thereby strengthening the democratic process.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

Measures	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2018 Projected
Number of Registered Voters	354,994	390,000
Percent of Registered Voters who Voted	27.45%	35%

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no Net County Cost for voting system equipment purchases. Funds are available in the Department's Elections Software System Trust Fund for this purpose.

At this time, the Department believes it can fund the voter education and outreach costs, as well as the elections security expenditures, with FY 2017-18 year-end budget savings.