



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Clerk-Recorder-
Assessor
Department No.: 062
For Agenda Of: April 6, 2010
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Joseph E. Holland
Director(s) 805-568-2558
Contact Info: Billie Alvarez
805-568-2203

SUBJECT: Purchasing Bid Waiver Request

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: Purchasing

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

Authorize the County Purchasing Agent to procure the OPEX Mail Matrix System (The Matrix System) from OPEX Corporation (OPEX) for use by Santa Barbara County Elections in processing vote by mail ballots without being required to conduct a formal bid.

Summary Text:

In Santa Barbara County over 98,000 voters vote by mail, this is roughly 51% of the total voter registration. To process vote by mail ballots, the signature on the ballot envelopes must be verified against the signature on the voter's affidavit of registration card on file. To conduct this task, the Election Division has been utilizing an automatic signature recognition system (The ASR System) from Elections Systems and Software, Inc. (ES&S). This system scans the ballot envelope and automatically compares it to the signature on the voter's affidavit of registration.

In addition to signature verification, all mail ballots must also be sorted by precinct in order to comply with a mandated 1% manual tally. To conduct the tally, all vote-by-mail ballots must be sorted by precinct. Sorting of the ballots is currently done by a labor intensive manual process. To create greater

operating efficiencies in processing vote by mail ballots, ES&S partnered with OPEX to develop The Matrix System to automate the sorting process and integrate it with the ASR System.

The Elections Division is requesting a bid waiver to enter into an agreement with OPEX to install The Matrix System for use in the June 8, 2010 Statewide Direct Primary Election and if the system meets all acceptance criteria developed, purchase the equipment. Of the various systems researched, The Matrix System is the only system that met our criteria for space limitations, processing time, and integration with ASR. Other equipment products available did not meet our space limitations and had longer processing times in sorting the ballots. Due to time constraints in processing ballots and reporting on the voting results, it is imperative that we obtain a system with faster processing time. The features of The Matrix System make it the best automation solution to meet our business needs. The department has a long standing business relationship with OPEX and ES&S for equipment leases and purchase of other election systems, and considers them a reputable and competitive vendor of election solutions capable of providing Santa Barbara County Elections with quality business solutions.

Pursuant to County Code 2-39, the department is requesting your board to waive the competitive bid process for purchase of The Matrix System at a cost not to exceed \$295,000, including the maintenance and licensing fees for the first year.

Background:

Over 98,000 voters in Santa Barbara County vote by mail. In statewide elections 70% to 80% of the 98,000 vote by mail voters return a voted ballot which requires elections staff to process almost 80,000 vote-by-mail ballots. Elections Code Section 15360 was amended in 2007 requiring a 1% manual tally of vote-by-mail ballots by precinct. In order to conduct a manual tally, all vote-by-mail ballots must be sorted by precinct. This requires elections staff to manually sort through thousands of counted vote by mail ballots in order to retrieve ballots for the precincts that were randomly selected for tallying. The manual sorting of ballots is a time and resource intensive process. With the continued increase in voting by mail, the number of ballots cast by mail is expected to continue to increase. The use of The Matrix System is expected to absorb a portion of the heavy workload created by the vote by mail process and create greater operating efficiencies for the Elections Division.

Performance Measure:

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund		\$ 25,000.00	
State	\$ 206,250.00		
Federal			
Fees			
Other:	\$ 63,750.00		
Total	\$ 270,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -

Narrative:

The one-time cost for the purchase of The Matrix System is expected not to exceed \$270,000 with roughly \$25,000 in ongoing maintenance and licensing costs. The cost for the purchase of this system is included in the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's Fiscal Year 2009-10 Adopted Budget. This equipment is expected to qualify for funding under the Proposition 41 State Grant available to Santa Barbara County for modernizing voting equipment. This funding requires a 25% County match which will be funded with one-time funding available in the Elections Voting Equipment Designation. The on-going maintenance and licensing costs will be funded within the Election Division operating budget and is included in the Fiscal Year 2010-11 Proposed Budget.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

FTEs:

Special Instructions:

Return a copy of the minute order to Rose Rodarte in the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor Department and to Mark Masoner in Purchasing.

Attachments:

Authored by:

Rose Rodarte

cc: