



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 1, 2014
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5 Vote Required

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Joseph E. Holland
Director(s) 805-568-2558
Contact Info: Renee Bischof
805-696-8963

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of Competition in purchase of Agilis Ballot Sorting System and Sentio Ballot Printing System and Budget Revision Request

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Purchasing

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Purchasing Agent to procure the Agilis Ballot Sorting System with Signature Recognition component in an amount not to exceed \$255,000 for fiscal year 2013-14 and the Sentio Ballot Printing System in an amount not to exceed \$69,000 for fiscal year 2013-14 from Runbeck Election Services, Inc. (not a local vendor) without being required to conduct a formal bid process.
2. Approve Budget Revision Request No. 0003311 to increase budget appropriations in line item account 8301 for the systems acquisition cost and use of the Elections Voting Equipment Fund Balance, account 9842, as the funding source.

Summary Text:

The County Elections Division (Elections) has used the Automated Signature Recognition (ASR) system since 2006 for processing incoming vote by mail ballots. This system allows us to scan returned ballots and automates the signature verification process. This system has worked well for many years, however the equipment is toward the end of its lifespan and the staff that developed and supported the software

for the system is no longer with the vendor. Following the 2012 General Election, Elections commenced a project to seek replacement of the current system and seek vendors that could provide more integrated and comprehensive solutions to our ballot printing and vote by mail processing needs.

In 2013, Elections visited five print vendors certified in the State of California to print ballots for the tabulation system used in Santa Barbara County. An informal request for information was sent to these vendors to obtain pricing on service and system solutions they could provide. Two of the certified vendors provided full service solutions, however Runbeck Election Services (Runbeck) provided the most comprehensive service and integrated systems for ballot printing and vote by mail processes at competitive pricing. Runbeck has been in business for 42 years and is a reputable vendor providing these types of systems for 8 counties in California, 64 counties in Colorado and across 13 states.

The Runbeck Agilis Ballot Sorting System (Agilis) offers the same capabilities as the current ASR system used by the County, but adds a ballot sorting component and meets our space requirements. The equipment will create greater operating efficiencies by automating the time-consuming manual process of sorting returned vote by mail ballots to sort out spoiled ballots, ballots without signatures, and ballots that have been challenged. Of the various systems researched, the Agilis unit is one of the few systems that is compact enough to meet our space requirements, and the only compact and portable system that has been deployed in other jurisdictions. Additionally, Agilis offers the opportunity for expansion, should Elections be required to sort returned ballots to the precinct level.

Runbeck also provides the Sentio Ballot Printing System (Sentio). This system produces and prints ballots on demand in large batches for ballot shortages at polls and for vote by mail daily processing files, and in single requests for the duplication of damaged ballots. The Sentio system also connects directly to our voter registration system, automatically selecting and printing the correct ballot for ballot requests made by voters at our counter, eliminating human error in issuing the wrong ballot type. The Sentio system allows printing of exact quantities of supplemental ballots needed, reducing printing cost by eliminating ballot overages.

Given the limited number of certified vendors in California that offer the full service/systems solutions the County seeks, and Pursuant to County Code 2-39, the department is requesting your Board to waive the competitive bid process for purchase of the Agilis and Sentio Systems.

Background:

Of the roughly 195,000 registered voters in Santa Barbara County, over 111,000 are registered as vote by mail. Historically in statewide elections 75% to 80% of vote by mail voters return a voted ballot which requires elections staff to process 80,000 to 90,000 vote-by-mail ballots. The current system includes a time-consuming manual workload for processing this high number of returned ballots. The County seeks a more efficient system and process for managing the vote by mail process.

Additionally, the County must prepare to address the impact of legislation that will likely increase the number of ballots required to be issued at the elections office. Assembly Bill 1436, passed in 2012, will allow voters to register and vote in the office of the elections official from the 14th day before an election up through the close of polls on Election Day. Currently, voter registration closes on the 15th day prior to each election. This legislation will be operational the January following the year when the Secretary of State certifies the statewide voter registration database (VoteCal), expected to be no later than 2016. However, there is movement to certify in late 2015, which would make conditional voter registration operational in January of 2016. To prepare for the potential increase in ballots issued at the Election Office as of 2016, the County must install and use the Sentio Ballot Printing System for the 2014 election cycle, as there are no scheduled elections in 2015. The 2014 elections will be the only

opportunity to become familiar with the ballot printing system before conditional voter registration becomes effective in 2016.

Performance Measure:

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

The not to exceed one-time cost of the Agilis Ballot Sorting System is \$255,000, including \$37,000 of one-time licensing, on-site support and contingency costs. On-going annual hardware and software maintenance costs of this system will be \$28,500.

The one-time cost of the Sentio System is \$69,000, including \$10,000 of on-site support and contingency costs. On-going annual hardware and software maintenance costs will be \$9,000, or \$3,000 per unit.

The one-time system costs will be funded with Elections Voting Equipment Fund Balance Account 9842, specifically committed for the purpose of funding voting equipment. On-going system support costs will be funded within the existing Elections operating budget. The County will pursue options for potential cost reimbursements ¹from Proposition 41. Should the County qualify and be granted cost reimbursement from this grant, the reimbursement will be placed in the Elections Fund Balance Account for the acquisition of a new voting system. The current voting system (Accu-Vote) is 14 years old and we are currently waiting on new systems to be approved at the State and Federal level.

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:

Budget Revision

Authored by:

Renee Bischof
Rose Rodarte

cc:

Purchasing
