



Legislation Text

File #: 19-1292, **Version:** 1

Elections Department recommending the Board:

- 1) Approve and authorize the Registrar of Voters to sign agreement 4209 with the Opex Corporation for the purchase of two Opex M72 extractors, printers and envelope catchers, installation and training, and one year of equipment service/maintenance for a total of \$76,858;
- 2) Approve and authorize the addition of the M72 extractors to the Fixed Asset list for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Board approved Recommended Budget; and
- 3) Approve and authorize the Purchasing Agent, or designee, to execute a purchase order for said purchase and further documents relating to agreement 4209, including amendments that do not increase the maximum dollar amount or term of the Agreement, and contingent upon approval by County Counsel and Risk Management.

FUNDING: 75% Funding with Prop 41 - 25% Funding with HAVA 301.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The County of El Dorado Elections Department is responsible for running transparent, open, thorough, and accurate elections for the voters of El Dorado County. A critical component of this responsibility is the efficient, thorough, and auditable receipt of mail ballots from voters.

The department currently mails approximately 98,000 ballots to voters. With the move to vote centers, approved by the board on April 23, 2019 (Legistar 19-0633), all registered voters in the County will be mailed a ballot, which is expected to be close to 124,000 in 2020. The expected return for the Presidential General Election is 75% which would mean approximately 80,600 ballots returned by mail and the remainder at Vote Centers.

The current process in the department is to have one to two staff slice envelopes using a small slitter. After enough envelopes have been slit open, approximately twelve (12) temporary extra help staff begin opening the envelopes and hand extracting ballots. This manual process requires extensive time to properly remove and for each ballot and is extremely labor and time intensive with trays of ballot envelopes being moved to tables within the office to properly perform the task.

The Opex M72 extractors allow for all envelopes to be fed through the opener at a rate of up to 1,500 envelopes per hour where they are sliced on two sides and presented to the operator open, allowing for easier extraction of the ballot. The ballots and envelopes are then placed in mail trays for audit and tabulation. This process, with two machines, is expected to take no more than four (4) extra help staff.

The system was selected by staff of the Elections Department, after discussion with Sacramento County, as well as with other counties, to determine the best solution utilized throughout the state. The staff then visited Sacramento County for a demonstration of the system. Staff selected the system and number of units that was the best fit and most efficient for the size of El Dorado County.

If the purchase of the Opex M72 envelope opening system is approved, the CAO will process the

attached budget transfer (attachment C) to move \$68,590 from Services and Supplies to Fixed Assets in the FY 2019-20 approved Recommended Budget for the Elections Department, and a purchase order will be executed by the Purchasing Agent for this purchase.

This purchase includes equipment installation and training as well as base software and license fees and maintenance/service for the first year. Ongoing maintenance/service will be contracted under a separate maintenance agreement.

Elections Code Section 13001 and 14100 provide that elections officials are not required to use a county purchasing agent when acquiring election materials. Section 3.12.040(B) of the El Dorado County Code of Ordinances provides that, "The purchase of election materials and services shall not be subject to the provisions of this [Procurement] Chapter in accordance with Elections Code Section 13001." In addition, the County of El Dorado Board of Supervisors Policy C-17, Section 4.9 further clarifies that the procurement of elections materials are exempt from competitive bidding.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

N/A

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Information Technologies and Risk Management have both signed off on this purchase and agreement.

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The purchase is funded through Prop 41 and HAVA 301 funds. It is expected that this purchase will result in the reduction of Extra Help cost during future elections ranging from \$5,000 to \$7,800, depending on the size and complexity of the election.

As stated above, if the purchase of the Opex M72 envelope opening system is approved, the CAO will process the attached budget transfer (attachment C) to move \$68,590 from Services and Supplies to Fixed Assets, and adjust related expenses accounts, in the FY 2019-20 approved Recommended Budget for the Elections Department, and a purchase order will be executed by the Purchasing Agent for this purchase.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

N/A

CONTACT

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