SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS INDEX SHEET

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Contract(s):

Continue Date(s): [1] 8/8/06

Index: --Letter of the County Clerk of June 19, 2006

Item: 7. ACCEPTED AND FILED report on **poll** worker recruitment and poll worker stipends, and requested that the County Clerk return on August 8, 2006 with recommended changes to the Personnel Procedures Manual, as recommended by the County Clerk

County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY CLERK / ELECTIONS

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GAIL L. PELLERIN, COUNTY CLERK

June 19,2006

AGENDA: Last Day Report

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

APPROVED AND FILED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DATE: June 22, 2006
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE BOARD
BY Sharon Mitchell DEPUTY

RE: POLL WORKER RECRUITMENT AND POLL WORKER PAY

Dear Members of the Board:

On June 14, 2006 during Budget Hearings for the County Clerk, your Board asked that the County Clerk prepare a report that addressed poll worker recruitment, county workers serving as poll workers, and how Santa Cruz County's poll worker stipends compare to those paid by other California counties.

Santa Cruz County implemented a "Managers as Poll Workers" program at the June 3, 1997 election. The program was a great success and it was expanded in 1998 to include all county workers. Since that time, Santa Cruz County has received exceptional support from other county departments to assist us in staffing the polling sites. When county workers serve in the polls we are confident that they are trained to work effectively with the public, able to follow laws and procedures, and dedicated to ensuring a successfully managed election. In my view, county workers are essential to our ability to staff our polling sites. In fact, we have asked the Board in previous years to not hold Board meetings on Primary, General and Special Statewide Election days in order to allow more county workers to be available to serve voters at the polls.

My staff is now in the process of evaluating poll worker stipends paid by other counties. Our preliminary research shows that Santa Cruz County ranks lower than other counties in poll worker stipends. I believe that raising the poll worker stipends will attract more people to serve in the polls on Election Day and to serve on our Election Night Boards. Also, as the duties of the poll worker have become more complex with new federal and state laws, as well as implementing a new voting system, providing adequate compensation is warranted.

My plan is to return to your Board on August 8, 2006 with a county poll worker stipend comparison report and amendments to Section 165.1 of the Personnel Regulations, which sets the Election workers' reimbursement rates. Any additional county costs to implement these changes in November 2006 will be absorbed by the existing budget for Fiscal Year 2006-07.

6/22/06
#7

As you know, Santa Cruz County is in the process of implementing its new voting system that meets the requirements of the federal Help America Vote Act. As part of this implementation, the County will also implement a Poll Worker Training Program. The training program will include an additional certification class for poll workers managing the Insight Optical Scan ballot card readers that will be at each polling site in November 2006, and a certification class for poll workers managing the touch screen voting unit to be at each polling site in November 2006. While the first-time costs of this training will be covered by federal HAVA funds, funding for necessary training in subsequent years will be the responsibility of the County.

The new voting system also requires more time to count absentee ballots. Therefore, instead of constituting our Logic and Accuracy Board for one day, the new system will require us to constitute this Board for three days. This cost is funded by HAVA funds for the November election, and in subsequent elections, these costs will be borne by the County.

Finally, our preliminary cost comparison with other counties indicates that the County's fee for reimbursing hosts of polling places is not competitive. When I report back to your Board in August, I will propose an increase to the polling place site fee. An increased site fee will assist us in recruiting the most accessible polling locations in our county. These costs, like other costs associated with conducting an election, are shared by jurisdictions that consolidate their elections with regularly scheduled elections.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this report to your Board. I look forward to presenting my recommendations for action on August 8, 2006. If I can provide you with any additional information before then, please do not hesitate to contact me.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report on poll worker recruitment and poll worker stipends, and request that the County Clerk return on August 8,2006 with recommended changes to the Personnel Procedures Manual.

Sincerely,

Gail L. Pellerin
County Clerk

RECOMMENDED:

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
County Administrative Officer

cc: Personnel Director
Auditor/Controller
County Counsel
City Clerks