



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 8/11/2020

Agenda Placement: 6F

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: John Tuteur - Registrar of Voters
Elections

REPORT BY: John Tuteur, Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk - 253-4459

SUBJECT: Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk ex officio Registrar of Voters requests approval of a budget transfer and contract with Tritex Systems Inc for ballot sorting-signature verification equipment

RECOMMENDATION

Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk ex officio Registrar of Voters requests approval of the following actions regarding preparation for an election during the pandemic:

1. Approval of Budget Transfer No. ASR01 increasing appropriations in the Election Division budget in the amount of \$238,360 with offsetting revenue from HAVA/CARES funding; (4/5 Vote Required)
2. Approval of a contract with Tritex Systems Inc. with a total 10 year cost of \$225,736 plus sales tax to provide voter verification; and
3. Establishment of a fixed asset in the amount of \$160,000 for equipment which sorts return envelopes and checks signatures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 23, 2020 the Board approved a resolution and authorized the Chair to sign a contract for HAVA/CARES funding of election preparation during the pandemic. The notice of allocation of \$238,360 arrived on Monday July 27, 2020 from the Secretary of State for pandemic preparation of \$191,507 and outreach to voters of \$46,853.

The Napa County Election Division is asking approval of a contract with Tritex Systems Inc to purchase a fixed asset that sorts and signature checks 15,000 return ballot envelopes. The fixed asset cost of the equipment is \$160,000 including sales tax; initial software; shipping; installation and training. These costs represents about 75% of Napa County HAVA/CARES allocation of \$191,507 and leaves sufficient funds to cover other COVID 19 preparations such as sneeze guards, personal protective equipment and site cleaning for staff and voters at our central office and vote centers.

FISCAL & STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	No
What is the revenue source?	HAVA/CARES funds of \$191,507 allocated for pandemic preparations for November 3, 2020 Presidential Election and \$46,853 for voter outreach on pandemic preparations.
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	The ballot sorting and automatic signature checking equipment will provide a safe environment for regular staff and contract temporary workers while working the expected 60,000+ ballots during the November 3, 2020 election. The equipment will replace manual sorting and signature checking and not require staff to work in close quarters and handle potentially contaminated materials. We will not be able to predict the amount of offsetting savings in contract temporary workers until after our first experience with the equipment. Voter outreach is necessary to encourage use of vote by mail ballots and reduce in person visits as well as informing voters on what is expected during in person visits.
Is the general fund affected?	No
Future fiscal impact:	An annual software license fee of \$12,875 will be due January 1, 2022; \$13,390 January 1, 2024; \$13,926 January 1, 2026; \$14,483 January 1, 2028 and \$15,062 January 1, 2030. The automated signature checking software license will be renewed in January 2030 for approximately \$28,000 and every 10th year thereafter.
Consequences if not approved:	The Election Division will not be able to conduct the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election in a manner compliant with the pandemic orders of the State and County health authorities.
County Strategic Plan pillar addressed:	Healthy, Safe, and Welcoming Place to Live, Work, and Visit Effective and Open Government
Additional Information:	

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On June 23, 2020 the Board approved a resolution and authorized the Chair to sign a contract for HAVA/CARES funding of election preparation and outreach during the pandemic. The Election Division received notice on Monday

July 27, 2020 from the Secretary of State of reimbursement allocation of \$191,507 for pandemic protection measures and \$46,853 for outreach to voters on pandemic issues. The contract has not yet been received.

The Napa County Election Division is asking approval of:

1. Budget Adjustment No. ASR01 for the following:
 - a. Increase appropriations \$238,360 in the Elections budget to purchase the equipment and outreach materials; and
 - b. Increase revenue in the Elections budget from HAVA/CARES grant by the same amount.
2. Contract with Tritex Systems Inc. for equipment that sorts and signature checks 15,000 return ballot envelopes per hour. The \$160,000 fixed asset cost of the machine includes sales tax; \$40,875 of initial software and installation costs of approximately \$ 8,125 will be covered by funds allocated to Napa County by the Secretary of State under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA)/Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) to allow safe conduct of the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election during the pandemic.
3. Additional expenditures related to this contract include:
 - a. Software license fee of \$12,875 with biennial escalation not to exceed 4% payable only in calendar years in which we hold elections with the first payment in the 2021-2022 fiscal year and subsequent payments in 2023-2024, 2025-2026, 2027-2028 and 2029-2030 fiscal years.
 - b. Renewal of \$28,000 automated signature verification software fee in fiscal year 2029-2030

Automating ballot sorting and signature verification will enable the Election division to maintain social distancing of contract extra help and permanent staff; reduce handling of potentially contaminated return ballot envelopes; speed up processing of return ballot envelopes and signature checking. Four potential vendors were contacted of which only Tritex had stellar recommendations from other election officials and equipment sized for County needs that would fit in the existing space available.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi