

SAN FRANCISCO ELECTIONS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT (DRAFTv2)

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024

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1 Purpose

1.1 The San Francisco Election Commission

The Elections Commission was established by San Francisco Charter § 13.103.5 pursuant to a Charter amendment called Proposition E that was passed by voters in the November 6, 2001 Consolidated Municipal Election. The Elections Commission assumed policy-making authority and oversight of all public federal, state, district and municipal elections in the City and County of San Francisco effective January 1, 2002.

1.2 Commission Annual Report

Pursuant to Article XI of the Bylaws of the Elections Commission, the purpose of this report is to preserve and pass on to successive Commissions relevant information so as to make more effective subsequent Commission tenures by providing institutional memory to assist in resolution of recurring Commission problems. This report contains the President's report of the activities of the Commission during 2023 and 2024, as well as other information the President deems significant and of likely assistance to subsequent Commissions.

2 Commission Organizational Description

2.1 Commission Members

The San Francisco Election Commission members are appointed to staggered 5-year terms by the elected office holders as defined in the San Francisco Charter § 13.103.5

The Commissioners, Commission Role, Appointed by, and Terms in 2023 and 2024 were:

Commissioner Name	Commission Role	Appointed by	Terms in 2023 and 2024
Christopher Jerdonek	President	Board of Supervisors	January 2023
Christopher Jerdonek	Vice President	Board of Supervisors	February – December 2023
Robin Stone	Vice President	District Attorney	January 2023
Robin Stone	President	District Attorney	February - December 2023
Robin Stone	President	District Attorney	2024 Full Year

Lucy Bernholz	Commissioner	Treasurer	2023, 2024 Full Years
Cynthia Dai	Commissioner	City Attorney	2023, 2024 Full Years
Renita LiVolsi	Commissioner	Public Defender	2023, 2024 Full Years
Nancy Hayden Crowley	Commissioner	Mayor	2023 – January 2024
Michelle Parker	Commissioner	Board of Education	2023 Full Year
Michelle Parker	Vice President	Board of Education	2024 Full Year
Kelly Wong	Commissioner	Board of Supervisors	February – December 2024
Trevor McNeil	Commissioner	Mayor	December 2024

2.2 Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee (BOPEC) Members

The Commission’s Budget and Oversight of Public Elections Committee reviews Election Plans, Budgets and other matters referred to it by the President or full Commission and provides findings and recommendations for consideration at Commission Meetings. The Committee consisted of the following members:

Commissioner Name	Committee Role	Terms in 2023 and 2024
Christopher Jerdonek	Chair	2023 Full Year
Robin Stone	Commissioner	January 2023
Robin Stone	Chair	January 2024
Nancy Hayden Crowley	Commissioner	April 2023 – December 2023
Renita LiVolsi	Commissioner	April 2023 – January 2024
Michelle Parker	Commissioner	January 2024

2.3 Director of Elections

The Director of Elections is hired by the Election Commission, serves as the executive of the San Francisco Department of Elections, and is a full-time employee of the City and County of San Francisco.

Director Name	Title	Employment in 2023 and 2024
John Arntz	Director of Elections	2023, 2024 Full Years

2.4 Secretary

The Commission Secretary is hired by the Election Commission and serves as the administrative staff to the Commission and is an employee of the City and County of San Francisco

Name	Title	Employment in 2023 and 2024
Marisa Davis	Commission Secretary	April 2023 Through December 2024

2.5 Deputy City Attorney

The deputy City Attorney is assigned to the Elections Commission to advise the body on matters pertaining to its authority.

Name	Title	Employment in 2023 and 2024
Brad Russi	Deputy City Attorney	2023, 2024 Full Years
Ana Flores	Deputy City Attorney	2023, 2024 Full Years
Jamie Huling	Deputy City Attorney	May – December 2023

3 Commission Business

3.1 Elections

The Department of Elections conducted two (2) elections in 2024: The March 5, 2024 Consolidated Presidential Primary Election and the November 5, 2024 Consolidated General Election. The Commission reviewed and approved Election Plans for both elections. The Commission also conducted post-election reviews for both elections and voted to affirm that the elections had been administered in a free, fair, and functional manner.

3.1.1 March 5, 2024 Consolidated Presidential Primary Election

The Commission reviewed and approved the Presidential Primary Election Plan on January 17, 2024, with the Primary Election scheduled for March 5, 2024. The Commission conducted a post-election review and unanimously voted to deem the election free, fair, and functional on April 17, 2024.

3.1.2 November 5, 2024 Consolidated General Election

The Commission reviewed and approved the General Election Plan on September 24, 2024, with the General Election scheduled for November 5, 2024. The Commission conducted a post-election review and unanimously voted to deem the election free, fair, and functional on December 18, 2024.

3.2 Annual Budget Reviews

For each annual budget review, the Elections Commission is required to conduct two public reviews of the Department of Elections' proposed budgets no less than 15 days apart. The Department of Elections operates on a rolling two-year budget; budget submissions thus contain proposed amendments to previously approved, current fiscal year budgets as well as a new budget proposal for the next fiscal year.

3.2.1 Fiscal Year 2023 – 24 and 2024 - 25 Budgets

The Director of Elections submitted its FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 proposed budgets for Commission review on January 27, 2023. BOPEC assessed both budgets on January 31, 2023. The full Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the budgets on February 15, 2023. The Department met its requirement to submit final versions to the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office by the Charter-mandated deadline of February 21, 2023.

3.2.2 Fiscal Year 2024 – 25 and 2025 - 26 Budgets

The Director of Elections submitted its FY 2024 - 25 and FY 2025 – 26 proposed budgets for Commission review on January 26, 2024. BOPEC assessed both budgets on January 29, 2024. The full Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the budgets on February 14, 2024. The Department met its requirement to submit final versions to the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office by the Charter-mandated deadline of February 21, 2024.

3.3 Director's Reappointment and Annual Performance Evaluation

The Commission voted unanimously to reappoint Director of Elections to another five-year term on January 18, 2023. The Elections Commission conducted two performance evaluations for the Director of Elections during 2023 and 2024. The first evaluation began during the January 18, 2023 Elections Commission meeting and continued at each regular meeting until the Elections Commission voted to conclude the process at the July 19, 2023 meeting. During the May 15, 2024 regular meeting, President Stone presented a [new process](#) (including an [evaluation form](#)) for conducting performance evaluations for the Director of Elections. The Elections Commission conducted and voted to conclude its second performance evaluation for the Director of Elections during the July 17, 2024 regular meeting.

3.4 New Commission Secretary

The Commission operated without a Secretary for the January, February, and March 2023 regular meetings. The new Commission Secretary was hired by the April 19, 2023 regular meeting and began responsibilities of managing Commission business, operations, and public engagement through the remainder of 2023 and full 2024 year.

3.5 Other Commission Activities

3.5.1 Institutional & Operational Projects

President Stone proposed and implemented several updates to Commission operations, including a streamlined [Robert's Rules meeting procedure](#) to instill more orderly and efficient meetings; a [process for proposed Department of Elections legislation](#), developed in conjunction with the Director of Elections; policies and priorities for both the Elections Commission and Director of Elections to better focus Commission meetings and set criteria for Director performance evaluations.

3.5.2 Policies and Priorities

The Commission voted to establish three policies and priorities for 2023 – 2024 during the September 20, 2023 meeting: Improvements to digital results reporting for ranked choice ballot contests; [goals for increasing voter registration](#) in the City and County of San Francisco; and [supporting movement toward open source voting systems](#).

3.5.3 Redistricting Initiative

The Elections Commission identified a need to support a review of fair redistricting practices after the San Francisco 2021 – 2022 redistricting cycle drew significant public attention. At the May 17, 2023 regular meeting, Commissioner Cynthia Dai and Commissioner Renita LiVolsi proposed the establishment of a committee to review San Francisco's redistricting process and compare against statewide and other jurisdictional practices. The Commission approved an advisory committee to conduct research and provide the Elections Commission with strategic recommendations for proposed changes to improve San Francisco's independent redistricting process. The Committee named itself the Fierce, Independent, Effective Redistricting Committee, which included Commissioner Cynthia Dai, Commissioner Michelle Parker, and Commissioner Renita LiVolsi. The Committee met six times between May – October 2023. The Committee invited guest speakers from advocacy organizations and previous redistricting task force members to participate in the study and research process. All meetings were held in open session and updates were regularly provided during Elections Commission meetings. The Committee presented its final recommendations to the full Elections Commission during the Commission's regular meeting on November 15, 2023. The report included background on San Francisco's redistricting history, best practices on fair and independent redistricting processes, and potential reforms and improvements for future redistricting cycles in San Francisco. The Commission reviewed and voted to advance the report with proposed amendments to the Board of Supervisors at the December 12, 2023 regular meeting. President Stone submitted the [final report](#) via formal email to the Mayor's Office and the Board of Supervisors in January 2024.

3.5.4 Elections Commission Bylaw Amendments

The Commission discussed proposed [bylaw](#) amendments during the February 15, 2023, March 15, 2023, and April 19, 2023 regular meetings. The proposed amendments included a continuation of the Commission's remote public participation policy and the implementation of a parental leave policy. The Commission voted unanimously to pass both amendments on April 19, 2023.

3.5.5 December 1, 2023 Special Meeting Warehouse Tour and Discussion of Special Projects

The Commission held a special open meeting at the Pier 31 Department of Elections Warehouse. Warehouse Manager Crispin Tirso led the Elections Commission on a tour of the facility and presented an overview of Election Day operations, procedures, logistics, and responsibilities. Following the tour, the Elections Commission convened at the North Beach Public Library for an open session that included an interactive presentation on Election Commission historical facts and guest speaker, Trent Lange, PhD, President and Executive Director of the California Clean Money Campaign, who shared background on open source voting.

3.5.6 Racial Equity Progress Report 2023-2024

The Commission submitted a progress report on its racial equity efforts in 2023 and 2024 to be included in the Department's May 2024 submission to the Office of Racial Equity.

2023 goals and progress included:

- Applying an equity lens for Election Commission meeting agenda items
- Recommended that all appointing authorities consider diversity when there is a Commission vacancy
- Completed redistricting reform initiative
- Augmented existing community partnerships to elevate underrepresented constituent voices in Commission discussions, policies, and priorities.

2024 goals and progress included:

- Established a policy priority for the Commission and Department to increase city-wide voter registration with an emphasis on communities that have been historically marginalized or underrepresented including communities of color, English as a second language, the unhoused, and system-impacted voters, among others.
- Established a policy priority to increase accessibility of results reporting for visually impaired and non-English speaking constituents.
- Routinely prioritize and investigate Commission and Department efforts that impact diverse racial and ethnic groups across the City, for example community partnerships, grants and outreach, and multi-lingual communications, media and press engagement.