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CITY CLERK

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CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF THE
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ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

October 4, 2010

The Honorable Members of the City Council
c/o City Clerk, City Hall Room 395
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**AFTER-ACTION REPORT FOR THE
2010 NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BOARD ELECTIONS**

Honorable Members:

Pursuant to instruction from the Education and Neighborhoods Committee on January 20, 2010, the City Clerk hereby submits this After-Action Report on the conduct of the 2010 Neighborhood Council (NC) Board Member Elections held between March and June 2010. This report will: 1) review the planning and administration of the 2010 NC Board Member Elections including overall election results and feedback; 2) highlight noteworthy issues which arose during the election process as identified by the City Clerk, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) and the NCs; 3) present the cost analysis for the 2010 NC Election cycle, and 4) discuss the options for conducting NC Elections in the future, including the option of returning the responsibility of conducting NC Board Elections back to the NCs.

1. Review of the planning and administration of the 2010 NC Board Member Elections

In 2007, the City Council authorized the City Clerk to conduct NC Board Elections. In 2008, the City Clerk implemented a systematic and comprehensive process to conduct 22 NC Board Member Elections (pilot). In 2010, the City Clerk, with significant input from the NCs, greatly improved this process and conducted the entire contingent of 89 NC Board Member Elections.¹ The following will provide a brief summary of how this process was structured to plan and conduct the NC Elections as well as overall election results and NC feedback.

Administrative Features of the NC Election Process

Information specific to each election process mentioned below is provided as part of the Attachment A to this report.

¹ The City Clerk conducted 89 of 90 scheduled NC Board Member Elections which were in existence at the time. The election for the Empowerment Congress Southwest Neighborhood Development Council was cancelled due to a lack of candidates.

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- The City Clerk created a regional election model whereby NCs were organized into Geographic Election Regions (Election Regions), each with a specific election timetable and Election Day. For 2010, there were nine NC Election Regions, with nine to eleven NCs assigned to each Region. (See Attachment A: 2010 NC Regional Area Map and Regional Election Timelines.)
- The City Clerk facilitated the formation of the NC Election Development Group (NC EDG), an advisory committee of NC board members and stakeholders that provided the City Clerk with guidance on critical elements of the NC election process. This group met regularly between April and June of 2009 and established many of the policies and procedures implemented in the 2010 NC Election process. (See Attachment A: 2010 NC EDG Flyer and Agenda.)
- The City Clerk developed uniform NC election procedures as directed by the Neighborhood Council Review Commission (NCRC), which served as the primary blueprint for conducting NC elections. Although these election procedures standardized most aspects of the NC election process, unique features of individual NCs such as board structure and candidate and voter qualifications remained intact and within the exclusive control of each NC. Periodically, it was necessary to attune these procedures with supplementary election policies to adapt to emerging circumstances. For 2010, the City Clerk issued 35 election policies. (See Attachment A: 2010 NC Election Procedures Template and the 2010 NC Election Policies Manual.)
- The City Clerk created the 2010 NC Election Procedures Stipulation Language Worksheet (Stipulation Language Worksheet), an instrument designed to have NCs confirm in writing, election-specific bylaw clauses and/or past election practices for the proper development of their 2010 NC Election Procedures. Many times, this worksheet was used to address election requirements not addressed in NC bylaws (e.g., minimum voting age). (See Attachment A: 2010 NC Election Procedures Stipulation Language Worksheet.)
- The City Clerk created default values and standards, such as a minimum voting age, to apply in a given NC election where such values or standards were not fully defined by the NC's Bylaws or Stipulation Language Worksheet. For 2010, these default values were applied in eight NC Board Member Elections. (See Attachment A: 2010 Default Citywide Election Values.)
- The City Clerk recruited 90 polling places and trained poll workers for each NC polling site. This process included recruiting and training volunteer pollworkers as well as developing Election Day operational processes. (See Attachment A: 2010 NC Polling Place Clerk's Handbook and the 2010 NC Volunteer Pollworker Program Flyer and Application.)
- The City Clerk implemented a modified Vote-By-Mail (VBM) program as provided in the NC Election budget allocated to the Clerk, whereby voters who were physically unable to go to the polling place on Election Day due to a disability or religious restriction were eligible to vote by mail. (See Attachment A: City Clerk-Election Division Policy No. 13: VBM Applications in the 2010 NC Election Policies Manual.)
- The City Clerk developed a wide variety of generic election materials such as ballots, maps, signage, and many other election-related forms and documents. NCs had the

option of requesting translated versions of these election materials as well as language assistance at the polls. Most of these materials were made available to the public on the City Clerk's NC Election website. (See Attachment A: Sample 2010 NC Ballot, individual NC maps, and election forms.)

- The City Clerk developed a uniform Candidate and Write-in Candidate Filing Procedure. For efficiency and accuracy, the City Clerk created an automated candidate filing and ballot development system and tally application. (See Attachment A: 2010 NC Candidate Filing Packet.)
- The City Clerk conducted 18 regional Stakeholder-Candidate Informational (SCI) meetings (two per NC Election Region) during which stakeholders were able to register as candidates and gather crucial election information. (See Attachment A: SCI Meeting flyers.)
- The City Clerk developed uniform post-election processes, including the development of an automated ballot tally system and creation of the NC Challenge Review Panel to adjudicate on NC election challenges. (See Attachment A: City Clerk-Election Division Policy No. 29: NC Election Challenge Process in the 2010 NC Election Policies Manual, the 2010 NC Challenge Review Panel Volunteer Program Flyer and Challenge Review Panel Application, and summary of all 13 NC Election Challenges.)

NC Election Results

The following provides statistics for the final results of the 2010 NC Board Member Elections. This information is also contained the 2010 Election Facts and Figures for the 2010 NC Board Member Elections. Facts and figures for each individual NC are available to review in Attachment B of this report.

- A total of 21,623 stakeholders voted in 89 NC board member elections. Of these, a total of 377 were issued VBM ballots of which 328 VBM ballots were returned, resulting in an 87% return rate. A total of 649 provisional ballots were cast of which 183 were eventually counted when the necessary information was received later to confirm the voter's stakeholder status.
- 3,491 stakeholders, or 16.9% of all voters, identified themselves solely as "factual basis" stakeholders, indicating that they did not live, work, or own property within their NC, but nonetheless declared a stake in the neighborhood.
- At the beginning of the 2010 NC Election cycle, there was a total of 1,748 elected and appointed board seats within the NC system. 1,580 of these seats were open for election.
- 1,423 candidates were certified as candidates to appear on the official ballot. 246 people filed and were certified as Write-in candidates. (See Attachment B: Certified List of Candidates and Write-In Candidates for each NC.)
- The City Clerk produced 361 unique ballot types. A majority of NCs required one ballot type whereas others required as many as 21 different ballot types.
- 45 NCs required voters to self-affirm their stakeholder status in order to receive a ballot. 45 NCs required voters to provide documentation in order to establish stakeholder status and vote.

- The City Clerk located and secured 90 polling places based on suggestions solicited from the NCs, further refined by application of standard good practice polling place selection criteria. NCs were asked to provide to the City Clerk five polling place suggestions. In cases where a NC did not suggest a polling place, the City Clerk recruited the polling place independently.
- The number of pollworkers per NC varied across all regions and was based on a variety of factors including previous turnout, the number of candidates, and input from NCs. Some NCs had as few as three pollworkers while others had as many as 18, although these numbers fluctuated based on shifting Election Day requirements. For the highest-turnout NC Board Member Elections - Westwood, Greater Griffith Park, Venice and Historic Cultural (turnouts of 1745, 1516, 1225 and 1195 respectively) - the City Clerk was well-prepared and appropriately staffed.
- A total of 37 stakeholders expressed an interest in serving as volunteer NC pollworkers. However, of these 37, only 15 actually attended training and served as volunteer pollworkers at various elections.
- 13 NC Election challenges were reviewed and resolved by the NC Challenge Review Panel or the City Clerk. The City Clerk did not need to conduct any ballot recounts or re-conduct any NC election. (See Attachment A: the 13 NC Election Challenges.)

Neighborhood Council Feedback

The City Clerk distributed Election Day surveys at all 89 NC Board Member Elections. 3,919 of the 21,623 stakeholders who voted, or 18% of all voters, completed an on-site survey and returned it to the City Clerk. The following is a summary of the most common opinions voiced by NC board members and stakeholders to the City Clerk as part of the survey. (See Attachment C: Survey results.)

- The average rating across all nine NC Election Regions was 7.8 out of 10 (on a scale of 1 to 10).
- Voters considered the polling place staff to be very organized, professional, and helpful. In addition, voters considered the total election process, from arriving at the polling place to casting a ballot, to be very quick and efficient.
- Voters expressed concern about the lack of outreach or publicity for candidates.
- When applicable, voters expressed concerns about having to provide documentation in order to receive a ballot. However, voters also expressed concerns with the Self-Affirmation stakeholder verification method. Specifically, voters were concerned that such a model would provide some stakeholders an opportunity to attempt fraud.
- Voters expressed concerns about aggressive campaign tactics and electioneering.
- Voters expressed concerns about the day of the week the election was held on. (Note: days of election were voted upon by the NCs.)

In addition to the at-poll site surveys, once all 89 NC Board Member Elections were completed, the City Clerk developed and distributed a post-elections mail-in survey for stakeholders to complete. To date, the City Clerk has received 162 surveys. The following is a summary of the survey results. (See Attachment C: Survey results.)

- The average rating was 5.7 out of 10 (on a scale of 1 to 10).
- On rating the endorsement process of election materials, the average rating was 5.8 out of 10.
- On rating the Election Day process, the average rating was 6.2 out of 10.
- On rating the post-election process, the average rating was 6.6 out of 10.
- 87% of the respondents were candidates. Over half the respondents (56%) had voted in a NC Board Member Election.
- 26% of respondents suggested that the City Clerk should continue to conduct NC Board Member Elections in the future. 16% of respondents suggested removing the City Clerk from the NC Election process.
- 24% of respondents suggested that the City Clerk and NCs improve communication and collaborate on election outreach. 18% of respondents suggested that more outreach was necessary to improve the NC election process.
- Nearly half of respondents (49%) felt the election timeline provided enough time to implement all election processes.

Finally, in addition to conducting these written surveys, the City Clerk held a series of Regional Feedback Meetings in July 2010 to further assess the 2010 NC Board Member Election experience. The following is a summary of the most common concerns voiced by NC board members and stakeholders that participated in these assessment meetings. (See Attachment D: Feedback meeting notes.)

- Participants expressed satisfaction with the communication between the City Clerk and NCs, although several participants felt that transparency in the election process, particularly with regard to election challenges, was inadequate. A suggested remedy was to provide NCs and stakeholders access to the Challenge Panel review process.
- Participants expressed concerns over the lack of election outreach conducted by the City Clerk and the NCs. It should be noted that the City Clerk was not responsible for nor did we participate in outreach for the 2010 NC Board Elections pursuant to the limits of the NC Election budget allocated to the Clerk to run these elections.
- Some participants expressed concerns over the limited application of Vote by Mail (VBM). Some NCs expressed no desire to apply VBM in their elections while other NCs noted that stakeholders within their boundaries would have relied heavily upon VBM to participate in their NC Board Member Elections. It should be noted that the City Clerk did not offer comprehensive Vote by Mail for the 2010 NC Board Elections, again pursuant to the limits of the NC Election budget allocated to the Clerk to run these elections.
- Participants continued to express concerns about the definition of a NC stakeholder and how this definition is applied during elections. In particular, they expressed concerns about the inclusion of “factual basis” stakeholders in the NC election process, as proscribed by the City’s Neighborhood Council ordinance.
- Participants expressed concerns over the scope of standardized election processes and requested that the City Clerk modify its processes to integrate the NC’s bylaw provisions

that vary from the standardized model. It should be noted that though the City Clerk by necessity standardized most aspects of the NC election process, unique features of individual NCs such as board structure and candidate and voter qualifications remained intact and within the exclusive control of each NC.

- Participants expressed concerns about the election days selection process. As stated previously, election days were selected by the NCs themselves. Specifically, some participants insisted that NC Board Member Elections not be held concurrently with other non-NC elections, other participants wished the elections to be concurrent. Also, participants requested that the Election Day selection process implement measures to avoid days of the week that conflict with a voter's religious obligations.

2. Noteworthy Election Issues

Based on feedback received by both City Election staff and NCs, the City Clerk addresses the issues identified above, along with possible options to implement in future NC election cycles.

Election Outreach

In original plans for the 2010 NC Elections, the City Clerk intended to distribute two comprehensive promotional mailings to promote the 2010 NC Board Elections. However, these mailings did not occur since the size of the Clerk's NC Election budget was reduced. It was understood by the City Clerk that each NC, with assistance from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), would be responsible for coordinating all election outreach, which included candidate recruitment and election publicity. Unfortunately, based on concerns expressed by voters on Election Day and by NC board members and stakeholders throughout the 2010 NC election cycle, election outreach was considered to be inadequate and insufficient. Although the City Clerk was not given the responsibility of conducting election outreach, we have some suggestions to consider for future NC elections:

- Revisit the promotional mailers that were originally intended by the City Clerk as part of the 2010 NC election. Similar mailers were distributed to stakeholders in 2008 with great success and, as a result, many stakeholders who had not previously been aware of NCs participated in the process, either as a candidate or as a voter.
- Establish region-specific Election Development Committees to collaborate with the City Clerk on improving the NC election process in a specific geographic region. In 2010, NCs in several NC Election Regions collaborated to produce uniform outreach materials, such as flyers and newspaper advertisements, and attempted to institute uniform polling place hours. For example, in Election Region A which consisted of most of the NCs in the northwest San Fernando Valley, the NCs communicated regularly with one another and with the City Clerk and produced uniform outreach materials of impressive quality. The City Clerk believes this type of collaboration was effective in promoting public awareness of NCs and may serve as a model for future NC Election Development Groups, which can be adapted to operate on a regional basis.
- Improve communication between the City Clerk and NCs. In addition to developing new methods of communication between City Clerk staff and NC representatives, the City Clerk will also update and improve access to its NC election website, to the extent our

budget allows.

- Reassess and re-prioritize City Clerk participation in NC events. For 2010, City Clerk staff attended and conducted election-related presentations at over 100 events across the City. However, NC board members and stakeholders indicated to the City Clerk that they would like to see more participation by the City Clerk specifically at NC Board meetings and at candidate filing workshops.

Vote-By-Mail (VBM)

The City Clerk also originally intended to provide a full-scale comprehensive VBM program in the 2010 NC Elections. However, like the promotional mailers mentioned above, the VBM program was dramatically scaled back in our budget to reduce costs. As a result, VBM ballots were only available to voters who were unable to go to the polls on Election Day due to a disability or religious restriction. The following provides some options to consider for future NC elections:

- Voluntary funding of VBM by the NCs. In response to concerns over the lack of VBM, several NCs offered plans to fund VBM program for their board member elections. Unfortunately, because these offers were raised while the 2010 NC Elections were already in full swing, this option was not available for the 2010 NC Board Member Elections. However, this option can be considered for future elections.
- Restore the full-scale VBM program to the NC election process. In 2008, along with the promotional outreach mailers, the City Clerk implemented a full-scale VBM program in 2008 with great success. As a result, many stakeholders, particularly those in NCs that had not previously utilized VBM, were able to participate in their NC Board Member Elections.

Stakeholder Definition and the Stakeholder Verification Process

Pursuant to Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.811(a)(2), NC stakeholders are those who “live, work, or own property in the neighborhood and also ... those who declare a stake in the neighborhood and affirm the factual basis for it.” As in 2008, NC board members and stakeholders in 2010 continue to remain apprehensive about the “factual basis” stakeholder designation and how it affected the candidate filing process and the stakeholder registration process at the polls on Election Day. More importantly, NC board members are concerned with how it could potentially affect the composition of the NC boards. Specifically, NC participants were concerned that interests in a neighborhood declared by “factual basis” stakeholders were too attenuated and fleeting to merit a stakeholder status. In addition, NC participants were concerned that the City Clerk would be unable to verify the validity of a “factual basis” stakeholder’s claim, particularly in scenarios where documentation was not required to receive a ballot. The following provides some options to consider for future NC elections:

- Encourage NCs to clarify in their bylaws the scope of “factual basis” stakeholder participation pursuant to the City’s Neighborhood Council ordinance. All NCs are required to have at least one elected board seat available for all potential “factual basis” stakeholders to run and vote for. Several NCs allow all possible stakeholders to participate in their board member elections while others regulate stakeholder participation

by designating stakeholders and the ballot(s) they receive into a variety of categories. In 2010, there were some instances when these sorts of distinctions were not made clear as the operative set of bylaws had not yet incorporated the new stakeholder definition or were ambiguous as to the scope of a stakeholder's participation. It will be extremely beneficial to NCs and the City Clerk for any bylaw ambiguities to be clarified before the next NC election cycle.

- Allow the City Clerk to enforce the perjury clause that all stakeholders must sign when registering as a candidate or to vote. Currently, the City Clerk requires all stakeholders registering as candidates or to vote to sign the applicable form under the penalty of perjury. However, the City Clerk lacks the authority to enforce this clause, which renders the clause ineffective. If the City Clerk were authorized to issue written oaths to candidates and voters as it is authorized to do so for municipal elections, the City Clerk could request prosecution for egregious cases of perjury.

3. 2010 NC Election Costs

The City Clerk was provided \$1.9 million to conduct the 2010 NC Board Member Elections.² Of this budgeted amount, the City Clerk spent a total of \$1,147,476.98, saving \$757,523.02 or 39.8% (see Attachment E).³ The following will identify the measures taken by the City Clerk that resulted in this cost savings and options on further cost-saving measures for future NC Board Member Elections:

Clerk's Cost Saving Measures

The City Clerk was able to reduce the cost of conducting the 2010 NC Board Elections for the following reasons:

- City Clerk staff reduced overtime costs 76.8% by adjusting staff schedules for hours worked in excess of regular working hours. Also, when overtime was accumulated, staff was compensated in accumulated time off as opposed to a cash payment. In addition, as-needed staff hired to assist in the 2010 NC Board Member Elections also adjusted their schedules to avoid overtime and incorporated furloughs into their regular work schedules.
- The City Clerk hired fewer but higher-experienced as-needed staff than originally anticipated to assist in the 2010 NC election process. Those that were hired provided valuable election expertise not only from experience gathered from municipal elections, but also from the pilot NC Board Member Elections held in 2008. As a result, many tasks such as the canvass of votes and preparation of polling place supplies were completed far more quickly than initially anticipated and within regular work hours, thereby eliminating the need for overtime.

² NC Election costs are biennial so no funding for NC Board Member Elections was required or requested in the 2010-2011 budget cycle.

³ Due to the overlapping regional structure of the 2010 NC Board Member Elections, it is problematic to isolate actual expenditures for each individual NC Election or Election Region, or to project a "per vote" cost.

- The City Clerk saved 94.8% on polling place costs. During the polling place recruiting process, most prospective polling places donated their facilities upon the City Clerk's request.
- The City Clerk purchased new ballot scanning equipment and software licenses to tabulate all NC election ballots. This equipment proved to be extremely accurate and eliminated the need for manual tabulation, which is time-consuming and prone to human error. The City Clerk also developed an integrated electronic system for candidate filing, ballot development, and ballot tabulation which greatly reduced the time needed for each of these functions. The equipment purchase and system development represents a one-time cost that will not need to be repeated for future NC election cycles.
- The City Clerk utilized surplus election supplies from previous municipal elections such as voting booths and supply boxes to reduce the need for new supplies. In addition, generic NC election supplies were reused from election to election and a majority of NC election documents were printed internally, thereby lowering printing costs. Time and resources spent developing NC election documents and tools, such as the candidate filing and ballot layout system, will not need to be repeated for future NC elections.

Projection of City Clerk costs for future NC Board Member Elections

When contemplating future NC election costs, it is important to consider the following factors:

- As stated above, the 2010 NC Board Member Elections contained a number of one-time expenditures of time and resources for the development of new electronic processes and tools. These resources can be utilized for future NC Board Member Elections with minimal additional effort and expense.
- There are other options for reducing the costs for future NC Board Member Elections. These include, but are not limited to, increasing the pool of volunteer pollworkers and minimizing the use of City staff on Election Day, standardizing more components of the NC election process, such as candidate and stakeholder qualifications or the number of ballot types, consolidating the number of Election Regions and Election Days, sharing polling place costs with NCs, and exploring alternative voting methods such as Internet voting or an all-VBM election model as carried out by a contracted vendor.
- Also as stated above, it is uncertain what outreach and VBM components will be part of future NC election cycles. The City Clerk's initial budget request included funds for significant promotional/outreach efforts and a comprehensive Citywide VBM program. However, due to the City's fiscal crisis, it is a decision of the Mayor and Council whether to restore these services.

4. Conducting Neighborhood Council Board Elections in the future

As part of the post-election Regional Feedback meetings held in July 2010, the City Clerk asked participants to weigh in on four options for the future conduct of NC Board Member Elections. The following is a summary of the input garnered for each of these options and the advantages and disadvantages discussed at the Regional Feedback Meetings:

Option 1: NCs to conduct their own NC Elections (without participation by the City Clerk)

This option would provide that NCs would conduct their own Board Elections without assistance from the City Clerk. NCs would be required to develop their own election process, election schedule, and election procedures as well as the processes for candidate filing, ballot development, and Election Day operations and staffing.

Supporters of this option emphasize these possible advantages of NCs conducting their own elections:

- NCs will have more control over the election process. Supporters of this option contend that NCs are functional enough to develop and supervise an election process that best suits their needs.
- NCs may be able to lower election costs.
- NCs may be flexible enough to accommodate important revisions in the election process.

Critics of this option emphasize these possible disadvantages of NCs conducting their own elections:

- Application of any uniform or standardized guidelines and procedures may be inconsistent.
- Elections may consume significant amounts of NC resources and time. NCs may lack adequate resources for Election Day operations, including ballots, pollworkers, and other polling place supplies. This possibility may be exacerbated in high turnout elections.
- Elections may be delayed or cancelled due to logistical or operational difficulties.

Under this new paradigm, it will be necessary for DONE to define its role in the NC Election process and provide a budget for its funding requirements. The City Clerk suggests that the Education and Neighborhoods Committee ask DONE to define how it intends to support NCs under this option.

Option 2: NCs to conduct their own NC Elections with City Clerk staff serving as Independent Election Administrators (IEAs)

This option would provide for a division of labor wherein NCs would use Council-approved Citywide NC Election Procedures to implement their own election processes, and City Clerk staff, in the role of Independent Election Administrators or IEAs, would carry out these procedures. Higher-functioning NCs would be able to take on more of a direct role in conducting their own elections, while new NCs or NCs with functional complications could opt to entrust their election operations entirely to the Clerk using default procedures and values.

In their role as IEAs, City Clerk staff would be responsible for collaborating with NCs on developing their election procedures, supervising candidate filing, processing VBM (if applicable), overseeing ballot development, providing all Election Day supplies, coordinating the recruitment and training of volunteer polling place staff, supervising Election Day operations, tabulating ballots, and issuing election results. In addition to developing an election process, each NC would be responsible for performing outreach and ensuring that a sufficient number of

unbiased volunteers are recruited to staff their polling place on Election Day. DONE would be responsible for assisting the NCs perform their election outreach.

Supporters of this option emphasize these possible advantages of this option:

- NC can develop an election process that best suits their needs, but consume less time and resources implementing the process.
- The City Clerk provides the election process a sense of legitimacy and professionalism.
- The City Clerk can ensure the consistent application of standardized election policies and procedures.
- Overtime and expense costs may be reduced for the City Clerk.

Critics of this option emphasize these possible disadvantages of this option:

- NCs may fail to develop an election process and end up delegating all election authority to City Clerk.
- Elections may be delayed or cancelled due to functional difficulties.

Under this new paradigm, the City Clerk estimates that \$1,243,733 would be required to take on the role of an IEA and assist the NCs with conduct of their NC Board Elections. This takes into consideration a limited VBM program and minimal outreach function; an additional \$310,731 would be required to implement a full VBM program. (See Attachment E).

Option 3: Individual NCs may choose either DONE or the Clerk to run its elections

This option provides that NCs can decide whether to conduct their own elections as described in Option 1 above, or delegate all election authority to the City Clerk who would conduct their election in a manner similar to the 2010 Elections.

Supporters of this option emphasize these possible advantages of this model:

- This option will allow higher functioning NCs to conduct their own elections while allowing NCs with functional complications to entrust election operations to the City Clerk.
- NCs having elections held by the City Clerk may use fewer time and resources on the election process.
- Overtime and expense costs may be reduced for the City Clerk.

Critics of this option emphasize these possible disadvantages of NCs conducting their own elections:

- Elections held by the City Clerk and NCs may be held on divergent schedules which may lead to voter confusion.
- Election standards may be applied inconsistently between NCs and the City Clerk.
- Elections held by NCs may be delayed or cancelled due to functional difficulties.

- Developing a budget for City Clerk may be difficult if NCs do not provide the City Clerk advance notice of their intentions to conduct or not conduct their own elections.

As in Option 1, it will be necessary for DONE to define their role in the NC election process and provide funding requirements. The City Clerk suggests that the Education and Neighborhoods Committee ask DONE how it intends to support NCs that opt out of City Clerk-run elections. For its part, the City Clerk will have to develop new cost estimates for this option, although, under this option, it will be necessary for NCs that choose to conduct their own elections to provide the City an election budget by a given deadline so the City Clerk can proceed with developing a budget for the remaining NCs.

Option 4: City Clerk to continue conduct of NC Elections

This option would provide that the City Clerk continue to administer NC Board Member Elections.

Supporters of this option emphasize these possible advantages of the current model:

- Elections conducted by the City Clerk will be held on a consistent schedule and election standards will be applied consistently between for all NCs.
- Elections are less likely to be delayed or cancelled due to functional difficulties.
- The City Clerk can provide voters with a consistent voting experience across all NCs.
- Experience acquired by the City Clerk from the 2008 and 2010 NC election cycles can be applied to the 2012 NC election cycle.

Critics of this option emphasize these possible disadvantages of the current model:

- NCs will have less administrative control over the election process.
- Elections conducted by the City Clerk may be considered too costly.

The City Clerk will have to develop more precise cost estimates for this option to account for Council-approved modifications to the Clerk's current process. However, to run the NC Elections in 2012 in essentially the same style as 2010, the City Clerk estimates that approximately \$1,343,170 would be required to conduct all NC Board Member Elections with a limited VBM program and minimal outreach (see Attachment E). An additional \$1,650,656 would be required to implement a full VBM program and comprehensive outreach, including election mailers, multimedia advertisements, and public service announcements (see Attachment E).

Option 5: Contract out the conduct of NC Board Elections to an outside vendor or vendors

A fifth option was suggested after discussion at the Regional Feedback meetings. This option would provide that the City Clerk or DONE contract out the conduct of NC Board Member Elections to a company that provides online and/or telephone voting (i.e., no precinct voting). An RFP or RFQ would be required to implement this process. Costs are unknown at this time.

Recommendation for Council Action:

The City Clerk is supportive of all options above except for Option 3 inasmuch as we believe that having some NCs' elections run by DONE and other NCs' elections run by the Clerk would be unwieldy, confusing and likely not cost-effective. It will be necessary for the City Council to make a determination before the 2011-2012 Proposed Budget is developed.

In conclusion, the method for conducting NC Elections in the future is a policy decision of the Council and Mayor. The City Clerk therefore puts forward the following five alternative options:

Option 1: NCs to conduct their own NC Elections

Option 2: NCs to conduct their own NC Elections with City Clerk staff serving as Independent Election Administrators (IEAs)

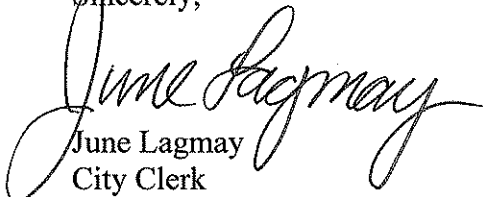
Option 3: Individual NCs may choose either DONE or the Clerk to run its elections

Option 4: City Clerk to continue conduct of NC Elections

Option 5: Contract out the conduct of NC Board Elections to an outside vendor or vendors

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report, please contact me directly at (213) 978-1020, or my Executive Officer Holly Wolcott at (213) 978-1023.

Sincerely,



June Lagmay
City Clerk

Attachments: Attachments A through E