



Joseph E. Canciamilla
County Clerk-Recorder
and Registrar of Voters

Scott O. Konopasek
Assistant County Registrar

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION

555 Escobar Street, Martinez, CA 94553
(925) 335-7800

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CONTACT: Scott Konopasek, Assistant Registrar of Voters
PHONE: (925) 335-7808

ELECTION OFFICE MOVES FORWARD WITH NEW VOTING SYSTEM

New Dominion Democracy Suite voting system will improve efficiencies while not changing voter experience

The Contra Costa Elections Division is purchasing a new voting system, as the County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously this week to allow county officials to complete a contract with Dominion Voting Systems Inc. to purchase its Democracy Suite voting system.

The Democracy Suite system is a paper-based system that utilizes a fill-in-the-bubble style voting system that is tabulated by digital imaging. Voters and poll workers will not notice any change in the voting process.

The Elections Division is debuting the new equipment for the March East Contra Costa Fire District special election with a full implementation in the June Gubernatorial Primary.

"We're excited to be bringing on this new equipment that will make our operation more cost effective and reliable and ensures a secure, accessible and transparent voting process," said Joe Canciamilla, Contra Costa Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters.

The County's now-former equipment was purchased in 2005 and had exceeded its useful life. It took 3,200 person hours in 2017 to maintain and troubleshoot that equipment.

The Dominion system eliminates the cost of repairing failing equipment, decreases the Election Division's labor costs and time it takes to tabulate results and allows the county to meet accessible voting requirement and provide more meaningful language accommodations, Assistant Registrar Scott Konopasek said.

The February 13th approval to spend up to \$6.75 million on a new voting machine includes equipment and ongoing maintenance for the six-year term of the contract. The Elections Division is able to cover the purchasing costs of the new voting equipment thanks to savings generated by efficiencies over the last four years.

County Elections staff spent hundreds of hours comparing the only two new voting systems that are certified by the California Secretary of State's office, even though the county is not required to go through a competitive bid process to make a purchase. Staff analyzed the desired functionality of a new voting system and evaluated each system based on weighted criteria.

Meanwhile, Sacramento County undertook a similar decision in 2017 for their voting system. County staff's analysis offered a "sufficient competitive touchstone" to the bid process conducted by Sacramento and the "results were in parallel," Konopasek said.

Dominion Voting System's Democracy Suite is currently used in 16 counties in California, including Napa, Monterey and Kern counties. All told, 34 counties of the 58 counties in California are Dominion customers. Dominion products are used in 1300 jurisdictions in 33 states.

For more information about upcoming elections, visit the Contra Costa Elections Division website at www.cocovote.us.

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