

June 17, 2015

Ardashes Kassakhian, City Clerk  
City Clerk's Office

Dear Mr. Kassakhian,

Enclosed is the Election Defined Procedures report. Internal Audit would like to thank you and your staff for the support and assistance provided to us during the course of completing this work product.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,



Eileen Donahue,  
Internal Audit Manager

Enclosure

CC:

Yasmin Beers, Assistant City Manager  
Robert Elliot, Director of Finance  
Michele Flynn, Assistant Director of Finance  
Scott Ochoa, City Manager  
City Council  
Audit Committee

REPORT #: 2015-12



# **City Clerk's Office Election Defined Procedures Report**

**June 17, 2015**

## **Background**

In accordance with Internal Audit's fiscal year 2014-2015 annual work plan, Internal Audit performed specific procedures as defined and agreed to with management in relation to the City of Glendale Municipal Election held on April 7, 2015.

The City's municipal election occurs every two years and is managed by the City Clerk's Office. The current elections were for two City Council member seats, two seats each for the Glendale Unified School District as well as for the Glendale Community College District, Charter Amendments "C", "D", "E" and Measure "O".

An Election Center location staffed by part time, current and retired employees is established for administering the election activities. The consulting firm, Martin & Chapman Co. is utilized for publishing the election materials, mailing the sample ballots and permanent vote by mail ballots, training individuals on the ballot inspection process, official counting and tallying the ballots, and providing the City with a database of all registered voters from the County of Los Angeles. Having worked on Glendale's City Elections for over 25 years, along with both Pasadena and Burbank, staff of the consulting firm are very familiar with elections law and are an important resource for the City Clerk's staff.

## **Scope, Objective and Methodology**

The scope of this report predominantly focused on the ballot handling and counting process at the Police Community Room which represented the central counting place for the Glendale Municipal Election adjacent to

Election Center. The objectives provided for auditor presence and oversight at stages of the ballot inspection and counting process to confirm the practices where performed as intended in compliance with the California Election Code producing sound results.

The following is a listing of the actions completed to support the results of this report:

- Observed the training provided by Martin & Chapman Co. representatives to the individuals assigned by the City Clerk's office to inspect ballots.
- Observed the sorting of vote by mail ballots and provisional ballots by precinct.
- Observed the preparation of ballots to be machine read which included:
  - opening identification envelopes and removing ballots,
  - inspecting each ballot and identifying those in need of duplication,
  - readying the ballot,
  - duplicating the damaged or defective ballots,
  - manual counting of voted ballots by precinct.
- Reviewed uniform results of system logic and accuracy testing.
- Witnessed the tallying of the ballot count election night and post Election Day.
- Examined the sealing of ballots in official boxes by precinct.
- Viewed a portion of the manual vote tally proceeding.
- Inspected the Official Declaration of Election Results.

## **Results of Test Work**

Test procedures completed focused on the ballot handling and counting process at the central counting place for the April 2015 Election and supported the following:

- The City Clerk's Office has established processes in place to maintain the proper handling and custody of voted ballots. It was noted that the handling of voted ballots is controlled, ballots are secured in a locked area during non business hours accessible to only assigned and vetted individuals and voted ballots are sealed in boxes after being counted.
- The City Clerk's Office designates individuals the responsibilities for overseeing key election processes. It was noted the individuals overseeing the canvassing of ballots at the central counting location were very professional, skilled, conscious and proficient in laws governing elections. Many had worked multiple prior elections.
- Additional personnel are employed to ready the ballots for counting by inspecting each ballot for acceptable and non acceptable ballot markings. It was observed that these employees are trained to handle the voted ballots following defined procedures and acknowledge their obligation for ballot custody by signing a certification.
- Procedures allow for the duplication of damaged or defective ballots identified during inspection which are marked with a unique identifiable number and tracked by precinct. It was noted that any unusual issues found

during the ballot inspection process are discussed at the supervisory level with the direction given supported by the California Election Code.

- Machines used to tally voted ballots are tested for logic and accuracy at multiple intervals of the election timeframe. For the current election period each logic and accuracy test rendered true and correct results.
- The City Clerk's Office conducts a manual tally on one percent of the voted ballots to verify accuracy. It was observed that the manual tally board consisted of four individuals: a reader, a witness, and two talliers. The percentage of discrepancy was less than 0.25% which had no effect on the outcome of the election results and is well within the norm of such tallies according to Martin and Chapman Co. as referenced by the City Clerk's Office.
- The summarized data in the Official Declaration of Election Results provided to City Council agreed to tallied vote totals.

## **Summary**

For the specific test work performed predominately through observation it was confirmed that the City Clerk's Office followed requirements of the California Election Code in conducting the City Municipal Election held on April 7, 2015 which provided for accurate and reliable vote results.