

TO: The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Sharon Sweeney

November 7, 2014

I am writing this message for myself, as an individual, and not on behalf of the Santa Clara County Citizens' Advisory Commission on Elections.

Having witnessed the non-existent updating of election results beginning a few minutes after 8 p.m. on November 4, 2014, until approximately 11 p.m. that evening when the first elections updates showed up on the ROV's website, I'm concerned about the progression of past issues that may have contributed to the technical problems that resulted in the county's lag in posting results.

As you know, there have been numerous troubles this year:

a. June 2014 Primary election: Failure to include the Argument against City of San Jose Measure B in the sample ballot pamphlet, ultimately resulting in \$256,000 in extra costs.

b. November 2014 General election: Failure to provide correct candidate ballot data for Gavilan College Board of Trustees and the Santa Clara School Board. This failure resulted in district-wide voters receiving ballots that did not include all candidates. Cost is unknown to me.

These issues point to the "point of entry" (the Candidate and Public Services Division of the ROV), that receives candidate information and relays it to the ROV division that sets up the computer programs that ultimately supply information to the vendors who print the informational ballot pamphlets and other things.

Blaming the problems that occurred on Election Night on outdated systems, vendors, 3-page ballots, lack of polling place scanning and counting machines and other excuses could be leading the Board of Supervisors in the wrong investigative direction. The Board should pinpoint the real issues so that they can be resolved, such as why Joe Le, a long-time employee, resigned on the day of the election.

Thus, it is my suggestion that before casting a wide net of blame on everything else but the kitchen sink, the Board should look into the who, what, when and how CAPS information is transmitted to those who program the written material for ballots, pamphlets and any other items that are provided to voters. Accuracy of that information should also be overseen by top management. In other words, investigate the entire chain of events and chain of command for the entire year or more.

The Board should also re-instate a stand-alone Training and Staff Development structured program. This would ensure that there is a high-level training and staff development specialist, separate from poll training and outreach, to provide a structured program to ensure that all employees are properly trained about constantly changing and complex rules and regulations. He/she would also maintain records on who has been trained for what, who has completed certain outside development courses, and who knows what. In the long run, it would save money and avoid costly mistakes with no costs to implement.

Thank you,

Sharon Sweeney