

## Shilov, Valeri (REG)

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**From:** Burgos, Sandro (REG)  
**Sent:** Friday, August 21, 2015 4:22 PM  
**To:** Shilov, Valeri (REG)  
**Subject:** FW: San Francisco - Request for Information for New Voting System

**From:** Brent Turner [mailto:turnerbrentm@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 20, 2015 6:44 PM  
**To:** Burgos, Sandro (REG) <sandro.burgos@sfgov.org>  
**Subject:** Fwd: San Francisco - Request for Information for New Voting System

### CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF VOTING OFFICIALS

### RESPONSE TO SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

### OPEN SOURCE VOTING SYSTEMS

The California Association of Voting Officials appreciates the efforts the authors of the current Request For Information have taken to ascertain open source voting system facts and figures. Unfortunately, the "you build it and we'll buy it " vendor model approach of the RFI is not in keeping with basic open source principles.

Though the open source community will be readily available to construct the code upon final direction being granted, and those dedicating many hours must be paid for their labor, the software code itself is " free " and the hardware simply purchased " off the shelf " at a rate dramatically discounted from the vendor model. The team chosen for this work, hopefully with CAVO oversight and participation, will also assist San Francisco County toward State of California certification of the developed system. The vendor aspect will only become necessary upon San Francisco County seeking to procure service related functions for the aforementioned created system.

From a risk management and quality control perspective, CAVO has analyzed the RFI, vetted the election system landscape and determined the following:

1. The Election Management System currently utilized by San Francisco is antiquated and best replaced. The open source community is available for this purpose and should be considered. Retaining the current EMS system is not necessarily fatal to an open source voting system, but does create extra unnecessary work and is therefore not advisable. CAVO will provide references to available providers of EMS systems distributed with an OSI (Open Source Initiative) Approved Open Source License, as needed.

2. Rank Choice Voting is a unique voting system aspect to be addressed for San Francisco County—CAVO believes the best approach is for jurisdictions to pool resources under the CAVO consortium model with Alameda County to address Rank Choice Voting open source software issues. Regardless of Alameda County participation San Francisco County should enlist the service of the open source programmer community to resolve the Rank Choice Voting element of the San Francisco open source voting system. This is an added expense for labor albeit offset by the obvious return on self investment. It should be noted the FairVote group has expressed their advocacy of election systems distributed with an OSI Approved Open Source License. CAVO will provide reference to available providers of open source Rank Choice Voting solutions as needed.

3. Certification is necessary for the new open source voting system. San Francisco should consider enlisting the services of CAVO in conjunction with the open source programming team to address all certification issues. CAVO is available to oversee the progression of the certification process by interfacing with the California Secretary of State until completion.

4. The open source "Dechert Design" Ballot Printing System is a state of the art system demonstrated at SF Linuxworld 2008. A "knock off" version of this design has been slated for debut in Los Angeles County in 2020. The original "Dechert" design has been demonstrated in prototypical form and can be finished with minimal investment. The design has benefits of a perfectly printed paper ballot to eliminate voter intent issues and redundant security features. CAVO can provide references to the designer of the system as needed. If the "Dechert Design" system is distributed with an OSI approved, license, CAVO would recommend, "The 'Dechert Design' Ballot Printing System, distributed with an OSI Approved Open Source License as a state of the art system

5. Regarding licensing issues, The San Francisco County open source voting system is optimally operated with General Public License version 3 (GPLv3) open source software (The GPLv3 is certified by the OSI). There are numerous reasons for the necessity of GPLv3 and this information is available via Open Source Initiative as well as foremost experts. CAVO is available to provide references to experts and information as needed.

6. Disabilities interfaces should be addressed by San Francisco engaging the open source community to develop best methods of accommodating the disabilities community. Recently there have been great advances by the open source community and there is currently good information available on point. CAVO is available to provide references to providers of this disabilities focused technology.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Turner

Secretary

California Association of Voting Officials

[650-726-1133](tel:650-726-1133)

On Thu, Aug 6, 2015 at 1:43 PM, Arntz, John (REG) <[john.arntz@sfgov.org](mailto:john.arntz@sfgov.org)> wrote:

Good afternoon,

The San Francisco Department of Elections (Department) today issued a Request for Information (RFI) regarding the City and County of San Francisco obtaining a new voting system. The deadline to submit a response is August 28, 2015.

The link to the RFI is below.

<http://sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=4892>

Send any questions associated with this RFI to Shane Burgos in this office: [sandro.burgos@sfgov.org](mailto:sandro.burgos@sfgov.org). As indicated in the RFI, the Department intends to post all RFI-related correspondence on its website.

Thanks,

-John.

John Arntz, Director  
San Francisco Department of Elections

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