



Electronic Petitions

Boulder City Council

March 3, 2020

Purpose for the Agenda Item



To provide council with an update regarding online petitioning and seek council direction.

2018 Changes to Petition Requirements



Charter Section	Charter Requirement	Number	Proposed amendment	Number
38A Initiative	5% of registered electors in the city (15% to call a special election)	4,166* (2018)	10% of the average of the number of registered electors of the city who voted in the previous two municipal candidate elections	3,066**
44 Referendum	10% of the registered electors of the city	8,332* (2018)	Same as above	3,066**
56 Recall	25% of the last preceding vote cast within the city for all candidates for governor	12,257	Same as above	3,066**

*Based on 83,316 registered City of Boulder electors on April 3, 2018

**Based on 29,552 ballots returned in 2015 and 31,765 ballots returned in 2017

Process



- December 19, 2017 – Council directed the creation of an elections working group.
- September 4, 2018 – Council approved Measure 2G for the November ballot.
- November 6, 2018 – Ballot Measure 2G passed.

Implementation



- December 11, 2018 Study Session – Staff presented workplan to implement eSign first and then follow with full electronic petitions.
- February 19, 2019 – First reading of Ordinance 8318 allowing for the implementation of eSign.
- March 5, 2019 – Second reading of Ordinance 8318. Council rejected the ordinance and directed staff to implement full electronic petitioning.
- April 23, 2019 Study Session – Council update – Staff presented a workplan for an RFP process – “Council agreed that if the program was not adequately ready by April 1, 2020 that it should be carried over to the next election cycle in 2021.”

Implementation



- May 14, 2019 – Staff met with Maplight – offered a free, open-source system. Staff decided to proceed with procurement as planned. Maplight was invited to participate.
- July 8, 2019 – Staff issued the RFP.
- August 16, 2019 – Nine companies submitted proposals. Staff selected three finalists.
- December 13, 2019 – The city entered into a contract with Runbeck Election Services.



RFP



- Called for a robust, secure and easy to use system for electronic petitioning.
- Required two-factor identification using a telephone number.
- Did not require a system that would allow paper and electronic petitioning.
- Did not require an open source system.

Open Source

- Source code is available to other developers and users without charge.
- Generally no ongoing support from the developer.

Proprietary

- Source code is owned by the developer.
- Ongoing maintenance and support is possible.



Paper and Electronic



- Challenge is deduplication between two petition types.
- The charter has different requirements for paper and electronic.
- Doing both for the same petition would require a more complex and detailed process.
- Not clear if there will be a demand to do both.
- Staff recommendation is to implement a system and see whether there is a need to build a more complex system.

Postcards

- Labor intensive.
- Less secure.

Credit Cards

- Would require a purchase.
- Not tied to election data.
- Regulations for handling credit card information.



Voter Registration Information



- Available from the Secretary of State or the County.
- Secretary of State has never provided it to a city.
- Has concerns about security.
- City needs to work with the County.
- County Clerk and Recorder also has concerns.
- Staff is finalizing an MOU with the County for the receipt of a daily voter registration file.

Why not just accept Maplight's offer?



- Integrity of the procurement process is important.
- If Runbeck is not the right vendor, it would be best to issue a new RFP.
- Lobbying is not appropriate in the procurement context.

Arizona



- Statewide system.
- Access to motor vehicle and voter registration records.
- Residents are identified through voter registration number, driver's license number or state non-driver identification number.
- Rigorous testing before implementation. The system cannot fail once implemented.
- Two years for development, testing and implementation.

Questions for Council



- Does council support staff's approach?
- Is there council interest in redoing the RFP process?