



TO: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*
FROM: Eda Jane Matchak, Director of Elections
DATE: January 31, 2019
RE: Motion of November 13, 2018 by Councilor Leahy
Request City Manager provide a report from Election Department regarding updating all voter equipment

Beverly Anthes, Chairwoman
Zoe Arthur
Joseph W. Mullen
Thomas F. O'Brien

Voting equipment in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is regulated by the Secretary of Commonwealth in compliance with 950 CMR 50 requiring certification of all equipment prior to acquisition and use. Currently, the Commonwealth allows for the use of a handful of electronic tabulation systems including the Optec Eagle, the AccuVote, the DS200 Precinct Tabulator and the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator. The City of Lowell uses AccuVote tabulators that were acquired in 1998. As the replacement of voting equipment must be completed as a complete systematic upgrade opposed to gradual acquisition, an upgrade would require the purchase of thirty-five tabulators.

In the Commonwealth, 117 municipalities, including Lowell and Boston, use AccuVotes to tabulate ballots on Election Day. On May 7, 2014 Secretary of Commonwealth approved the ImageCast Precinct Tabulator and the DS200 Precinct Tabulator and 133 municipalities have since updated their equipment and purchased ImageCast Precinct Tabulators. An additional 37 communities are using the DS200 Precinct Tabulator or the Optec Eagle, including Worcester and Springfield, and 64 communities continue to hand count ballots.

Acquisition of thirty-five tabulators, bases, the required laptop and software as well as three central tabulators for early voting ballots would cost approximately \$ 276,000. Starting in year two, the annual software maintenance cost would be \$1,500. Starting in year three, the annual maintenance cost for ImageCast Precinct Tabulators would be \$9,750.

Although electronic voter check-in is currently only allowed for Early Voting, the certification of Election Day use of electronic voter check-in is underway. Electronic voter check-in would negate the requirement of printing voter check-in books and create an immediate voter list opposed to the timely process of manually updating the voter list within the Voter Information Registration System (VIRS) maintained by the Secretary of Commonwealth's Election Division. Additionally, an electronic check-in allows poll workers to search the entire voter database instead of the precinct level voter lists that are currently being used. Introducing an electronic check-in system citywide would cost \$162,180 with an annual software cost of \$25,500 starting in year two.

Currently the Secretary of Commonwealth's Election Division is working to have voting equipment included on the state purchasing contract to reduce the cost of equipment acquisition for municipalities, a process that I have spoken in support of at City and Town Clerk's Association meetings and an Early Voting Summit last year at MIT. Additionally, the Secretary |

of Commonwealth has received federal funding to bolster election security and it is unknown what funds will be made available to municipalities for equipment upgrades. A survey project has commenced to gather statewide data on current equipment and the data will be used to determine allocation of funds to municipalities although the amounts, timeline and expectations are unknown at this time.