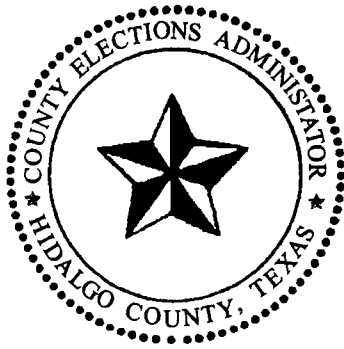


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January 10, 2017



Hidalgo County Elections
Yvonne Ramón, CERA
Elections Administrator

Honorable Judge Garcia and Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to take Hidalgo Voters into the next phase in voting. The decision to recommend Hart InterCivic as our new voting equipment partner has been an ongoing effort of research and diligence. This undertaking began the latter part of 2014, and although we were customers of ES&S at this time, Hart immediately demonstrated exceptional support and professionalism. Please know that every decision I have presented to this court has been made with the principal of what is best for the voters of Hidalgo County and all stakeholders have been involved in the process.

Timeline:

Nov. 2014 – First Meetings
May 8, 2015 – First Public Demonstrations by ES&S and Hart
August 13, 2015 – Second Demonstration
 Morning Session – Public and Poll Workers
 Afternoon Session – Elections Staff
August 25, 2015 – Third Demonstration
May 12, 2015 - Verity Federal Certification
Sept. 21, 2015 – Public Presentation
March 8, 2016 – Dept. Demonstration
April 7, 2016 – Meeting with Chief Budget Officer & Hart – Mr. S. Cruz/F.Liston
April 12, 2016 – Elections Commission Board Meeting
April 27, 2016 – Meeting with
 Purchasing Director – Ms. Martha Salazar
 & Chief Budget Officer – Mr. S. Cruz
June 14, 2016 – Commissioners Court Resolution
June 22, 2016 – Meeting with Hart Supply Chain Mgr Dan Gately
July 19, 2016 – Meeting with Mgr. of Professional Services Rich Geppert
Oct 19, 2016 –
 Meeting with Director of Product Management/Marketing Eddie Perez
Dec. 15, 2016 – Meeting with Project Mgr Simon Saenz & Rich Geppert
Dec. 16, 2016 – Verity Certified – State Level

The state of Texas has strict certification demands. Not all states require passing federal and state certifications. In 2012, this county hired a forensic team to analyze electronic voting, and the results were that electronic voting, coupled with strict election processes, is safe and secure.

Hidalgo County Elections is prepared to enter this new phase in advanced election technology. I stand by my recommendation to approve the purchase of Verity Voting System, and to become partners with Hart InterCivic.

101 S. 10th Ave.

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Respectfully,

Yvonne Ramón
Elections Administrator
Hidalgo County

Replacing An Aging Voting System

Hidalgo County, Texas

January 10, 2017

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InterActive

Replacement of Texas' Old Voting Systems

2002 – 2005: Majority of today's voting systems were put in place

2010: Nationwide, replacing these old systems begins

2013: TX SOS began directing clerks and EAs to advise their courts that new systems would soon need to be procured.

2014: Judges and Commissioners were informed at their annual conference in Lubbock to make plans to refresh their voting systems.

2016: Judges and Commissioners received the same message in Horseshoe Bay

Texas counties are responding:

Counties across the U.S. and 22 Texas counties have already purchased their next voting system (including Lubbock, Matagorda, Brazos, Madison, Jefferson, Chambers and many others).



Traditional Arguments for Paper

1. Electronic voting systems can be "hacked"

No Neither the voting devices nor the workstations are connected to the internet

2. Electronic voting systems can be tampered with in the polling place

No The voting devices do not have the capacity to execute any computer program introduced with a data storage device

Physical security would prevent anyone from connecting a computer to the back of a device in the polling place

A magnet or a hammer could not destroy all of the three redundant records of the votes stored in Verity, since they are all stored in separate locations

Traditional Arguments for Paper

3. Electronic voting systems can be rigged by the county elections office

No Logic and Accuracy tests are run before and after every election, Hash codes verify that software has not been altered
Cast vote records are stored in three separate locations
Audit logs are recorded in the background recording all activity

4. Older voters will not use electronic voting machines

No These same older voters have smart phones and follow their grandchildren on Facebook. After the first try, they are comfortable with the simple touching of the screen.

5. Electronic voting devices do not provide a paper trail

No The Verity electronic system offers a printable cast vote record. The printable cast vote record can be printed for every vote on each voting device, should the County choose.



Certification Status for Verity

Texas requires the federal EAC certification AND a separate Texas state certification for voting systems

Verity Paper

Federally certified – May 2015

Texas SOS certified – February 2016

In use in Virginia, Minnesota, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington

Verity Electronic

Federally certified – April 2016

Texas SOS certified – December 2016

Seven Texas counties have signed Verity 2.0 Agreements since the SOS certification:

- 1) Lubbock Co
 - 2) Eastland Co
 - 3) Chambers Co (previously an ES&S customer)
 - 4) San Patricio Co
 - 5) Medina Co
 - 6) Madison Co
 - 7) Young Co
- San Jacinto Co (an ES&S customer) has an agenda item scheduled for 1/24/17



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Verity provides readiness for Vote Centers

The current election code states:

counties must use electronic poll books and DRE voting systems for Countywide Polling Places or Vote Centers (paper systems are not allowed)

Ten Texas paper ballot counties have already moved from paper to DREs in order to qualify for VCs (Wood, Brown, Matagorda, Upshur, Hopkins, Coryell, Henderson, Kaufman, Tom Green, Medina).

The two trends happening in Texas election systems

- refreshing the 10+ year-old systems
- moving to Vote Centers with the purchase of DREs over paper

Tx Election Code for Vote Centers

Sec. 43.007 COUNTYWIDE POLLING PLACE PROGRAM.

(5) (d) The secretary of state shall select to participate in the program each county that:

(4) uses direct recording electronic voting machines



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Verity Value Proposition

Latest electronic voting system to be certified by the EAC and TX SOS

Faster election night results

All new system, new supply chain

Lightest, most convenient ADA voting device

Lower operating costs/total cost of ownership

Readiness for Vote Centers

Partnership with a Texas vendor who has the highest customer satisfaction rating in the industry

