

Shasta County

VVPAT Retrofit - Change to Approved Project Documentation Plan Staff Report

Summary

Shasta County	Amounts
Original VMB Award	
VMB Approved Allocation Amount Received by Shasta County	\$1,156,557.13
Documented County 3:1 Matching Amount	\$ 502,478.83
Original Total System Cost	\$1,659,035.96
Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Costs	
County Estimate for VVPAT Cost	\$255,050.98
Prop. 41 Allowable VVPAT Refund Amount of Original VMB Award	\$253,464.71
New Estimated Total System Cost	\$1,914,086.94
VVPAT Retrofit Request For Funding	
Staff Recommended VVPAT Retrofit Funding Amount	\$253,464.71

Vendor:

Sequoia Voting Systems, Inc.

New Hardware:

AVC Edge I Upgrade for the VeriVote (DRE Printers) – 573 Units

Background:

State law requires that Voting Modernization Funds received from the VMB be used for the purpose of placing at least one accessible voting unit in each polling place (Elections Code § 19227(b)). State law effective January 1, 2005, requires that all DRE voting systems receive federal qualification and include an accessible Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) by January 1, 2006, in order for the equipment to be certified and used in California, and states that to the “extent that they are available for expenditure,” federal funds or monies from the Voting Modernization Fund shall be used to comply with the VVPAT requirements (Elections Code §§ 19250, 19251).

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The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) specifies standards that voting systems must meet in order to comply with federal mandates. However, HAVA does not require that DRE voting systems come equipped with a VVPAT. The Secretary of State has received guidance from the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) that HAVA funds may not be used to retrofit an otherwise HAVA-compliant voting system with a VVPAT. A voting system that is equipped with a VVPAT at the time of its purchase, however, is an eligible HAVA expense because the VVPAT meets the federal voting system standard for a manual audit capacity.

HAVA Section 251(c)(1) allows a State to “use a requirements payment as reimbursement for costs incurred in obtaining voting equipment which meets the requirements of Section 301 if the State obtains the equipment after the regularly scheduled general election for Federal office held in November 2000.”

The Secretary of State’s Office received an opinion from the EAC that permits a county to remit funds it received through the Voting Modernization Bond Act and to receive a “retroactive payment,” pursuant to Section 251(c)(1), to pay the costs of purchasing a HAVA Section 301-compliant voting system from HAVA resources received by the State.

Staff Report:

At the September 17, 2003 meeting of the Voting Modernization Board, the Board approved Shasta County’s Project Documentation Plan and awarded funding for the reimbursement of the county’s purchase of 438 Sequoia AVC Edge DRE units and 2 Sequoia Optech 400C Central Count Optical Scan units. The county used this new equipment at the October 7, 2003 Statewide Special (Recall) Election.

Shasta County began modernizing its voting equipment before the state requirements for a VVPAT were enacted. Consequently, the county was required to retrofit all of the Sequoia AVC Edge DRE machines to include a VVPAT printer. These newly equipped machines were successfully implemented countywide during the June 6, 2006 Primary Election.

Shasta County is requesting that the Board allow the county to return funds received from the VMB in order to qualify for retroactive reimbursement from HAVA for its purchase of a HAVA Section 301 compliant voting system and concurrently requests funding from the VMB to fund its VVPAT retrofit costs.

Shasta County would be required to refund the allowable retrofit cost of \$253,464.71 to the Voting Modernization Fund (VMF) from the county’s general fund before the county would be eligible for any VMB funding for the VVPAT retrofit or any retroactive reimbursement from HAVA Section 301. Once the refund for the retrofit cost has been received and deposited back into the VMF and confirmation of that deposit has been received from the State Controller’s Office, the VMB would notify Shasta County and the Secretary of State’s HAVA coordinator that the deposit has been completed.

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The VMB could then amend the original Funding Award letter issued to Shasta County to explicitly state that the VMB will allocate the \$253,464.71 in funding returned by the county to the VMF for the purpose of reimbursement of the VVPAT retrofit costs.

Shasta County would then be required to submit to the VMB an acknowledgement letter certifying that the new funds will be used in accordance with the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002. Shasta County could concurrently submit a Payment Request Form with required documentation to receive reimbursement for the VVPAT retrofit costs.

Staff Recommendation:

It is our recommendation that Shasta County's change to their approved Project Documentation Plan be approved, contingent upon receipt of the funds as outlined above.

Once confirmation of the deposited funds is obtained, the VMB staff will notify the Chair of the Board and an amendment to the original September 17, 2003 Funding Award letter may be issued in the amount of \$253,464.71 to fund the allowable VVPAT retrofit costs only.