



COUNTY OF FRESNO
COUNTY CLERK / REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
BRANDI L. ORTH

January 24, 2013

Brad Friedman
Brad@BradBlog.com

RE: Request for Comment Regarding Hand Recount Estimate

Dear Mr. Friedman:

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to respond to your questions regarding the estimate of costs provided to Tom Courbat for the proposed recount of Prop. 37 in Fresno County.

My Office has complied with California Code of Regulations Section 20815 in preparing the estimated Cost of Recount. Subsection (e) provides, in pertinent part that "...all actual costs of the recount that would not have been incurred but for the requestor's particular recount request shall be directly recoverable from the requestor and may include, but are not limited to, additional supervision hours, security guard hours, the elections official's staff hours, space rental, transportation of ballots and materials and administrative costs".

Fresno County was formally noticed by the Office of the Secretary of State of the Request for Recount of Prop 37 on Monday, January 7, 2013. In accordance with Election Code Section 15626, "the recount shall be commenced not more than seven days following the receipt by the elections official of the request for the recount". Preparations for the recount began immediately to ensure the Fresno County Elections Office would be ready to begin the recount on Monday, January 14, 2013. The attached "How to Prepare a Recount Estimate" was developed by the California Association of Clerks and Elections Officials (CACEO) to assist election officials from all 58 California Counties in compiling the cost estimates for such an endeavor. Fresno County followed these guidelines in preparing the estimates for Mr. Courbat.

The requestors did not provide specifics regarding the scope of the recount. At their request, we compiled two data files (Statement of Vote and Voter Registration Database) onto a DVD. It is our policy that customers pay the data cost (\$66.00 in this instance) prior to receiving the data. In an effort to assist the requestors in their planning, and to reduce time, my Office waived that policy and sent the DVD via overnight service to them on Tuesday, January 8, 2013.

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The final estimate of \$17,852.84 provided to Mr. Courbat included start-up costs of \$14,024.82 and the first daily cost of \$3,828.02 for one recount board. The attached Description of Expenses provides the detailed salary and benefit costs used in calculating the estimate for the proposed recount based on an 8-hour workday. The staffing level is prescribed in the California Code of Regulations Section 20818. The average cost per hour for recount board members was \$38.18. The 3-person executive staff average cost per hour of \$76.80 cost consisted of the County Clerk, Systems and Procedures Manager, and the Principal Staff Analyst. Each of these staff performs unique functions necessary to conduct a manual recount.

As identified in the California Code of Regulations, our Office provided a cost estimate. Only actual costs incurred during the recount process would have been charged to the requestors. If the deposit is more than the actual costs, then the difference would be refunded to the requestors. However, the Code also specifies that if the actual costs incurred during the recount exceed the daily estimate, then the requestors would be responsible for the additional costs.

We have no information, nor details regarding the cost estimates provided by Sierra and Orange Counties for the Prop. 37 Recount. But according to the California Code of Regulations Section 20815, I can only assume that those counties did not recover the totality of their costs in the recount process.

We hope that this information is helpful to you. We appreciate the opportunity to further the goal of conducting elections in a manner that protects the integrity of the election process.

Sincerely,



Brandi Orth
Fresno County Clerk/Registrar of Voters

Attachments:
How to Prepare a Recount Estimate
Description of Expenses