



Interoffice Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM

March 8, 2019

TO: Mayor Jerry L. Demings  
-AND-  
Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Kurt N. Petersen, Manager, Office of Management and Budget

*K.N.P.*

SUBJECT: Discussion Item for March 26, 2019  
Supervisor of Elections – FY 2019 Budget Adjustment

The Orange County Supervisor of Elections is requesting an amendment to his budget by \$1,707,905 to upgrade the voter registration database system, purchase additional voting equipment, and update communication modems to 4G network/modems. The memo explaining his funding request is attached. Approval of a budget transfer is required to increase the Supervisor of Elections budget.

**ACTION REQUESTED: Approval of budget transfer #19-0815 to increase the Supervisor of Elections budget and authorization to disburse \$1,707,905.**

KP/vh

Attachment

c: Randy Singh, Deputy County Administrator

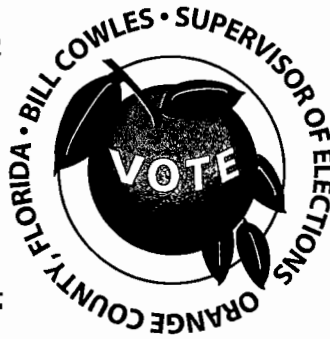
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**BILL COWLES**  
Supervisor of Elections  
Orange County, Florida

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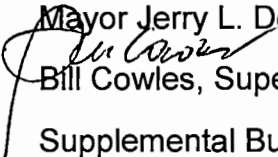
OUR MISSION IS TO:

*Ensure the integrity of the electoral process.  
Enhance public confidence.  
Encourage citizen participation.*

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March 8, 2019

To: Mayor Jerry L. Demings  
From:  Bill Cowles, Supervisor of Elections  
Re: Supplemental Budget Request for FY 2019

There were three lessons learned during the 2018 General Election that we believe need to be addressed now rather than delaying until the start of the next fiscal year. The three items needing immediate attention are: upgrading the voter registration database system; purchasing additional voting equipment; and replacing our tabulators' 3G modems, that Verizon will be retiring at the end of this year. Please allow me to briefly expand on each one.

Our current voter registration database system was developed in-house in 1991. For 28 years, the database has been maintained, expanded, reprogramed and upgraded multiple times by our IT staff. Currently, 64 Florida Counties are using a database software system provided by VR Systems, known as Voter Focus. VR Systems' products were designed to interface with the Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS) based in Tallahassee. Two other counties (Palm Beach and Sarasota) are preparing to convert to this system before the end of the year. Between our rapidly growing voter registration database (now over 819,900 active voters and 870,510 total voter records), the complexities of today's voter registration processes, and the fact that we do not want to be that one county, in the state, not on this system, I believe the timing is right to convert. The VR Systems representative says that it will take until December 2019 to completely convert all of our records/data. My hope was to have it done prior to the November City of Orlando Election so we could test the system before the 2020 countywide elections. By acting now (this fiscal year), we will be able to test the system during the March 17, 2020 Presidential Preference Primary Election. Otherwise, we must wait until after the 2020 Presidential Election to convert. I don't think any of us want to take the risk, in 2020, of being the only county not on this statewide system. The initial conversion cost is \$880,000. Additionally, there is an annual license fee that will need to be budgeted each fiscal year. Currently, it is \$195,000.

The 2018 Mid-term Election was historic in both voter turnout and for the four recounts (three statewide recounts and a recount for County Commission District 4). The lesson learned here is that we need additional voting equipment. If we had not been able to

rent an additional high-speed counter (DS850), we might not have completed the machine recount on time. We are requesting the funds to be able to purchase 3 additional high-speed counters. They are needed to keep up with the ever increasing use of Vote-by-Mail Ballots and to have the ability to sort ballots in preparation for potential recounts. The sorting process is necessary due to having multiple page ballots per voter in General Elections and that the Early Voting ballots are mixed by precinct as voters can go to any Early Voting site within the county. We are also requesting 60 additional tabulators (DS200). These are the voting machines used on Election Day and at Early Voting. We need these for the additional Early Voting sites for the 2020 Presidential Election cycle, for hands-on Poll Worker training for Early Voting and Election Day workers, and as back-ups during the voting process. Obtaining them now will allow us time to receive them and complete acceptance testing before starting training for the 2020 Presidential Preference Primary. The cost for these units is \$723,775. The annual post-warranty license and maintenance and support fees will be in our next fiscal year budget.

The last item is rather simple. Verizon has announced that it will retire its 3G network/modems on December 31, 2019. Our 320, DS200, tabulators have 3G modems that are used to transmit results from the polling places on Election night. The 60 new units, mentioned above, will come with the new 4G network/modems. We are scheduled to have our annual Performance Maintenance Service in late summer/early fall. Our vendor can install the new modems at that time. The total cost for the new modems for our existing machines is \$104,130.

In total, we are requesting a \$1,707,905 budget adjustment for fiscal year 2019. We believe these three requests are necessary at this time. To wait until the start of the new fiscal year will only delay our preparations for starting the 2020 Presidential Election cycle. It's hard to imagine that December 17, 2019 is the deadline for candidate names from the national political parties and municipalities for the March 17<sup>th</sup> Presidential Preference Primary and Municipal Elections.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you or your staff may have concerning this request. I look forward to sharing this information with the members of the County Commission on March 26, 2019.

Cc: Board of County Commissioners  
County Administrator Byron Brooks  
Deputy County Administrator Randy Singh  
OMB Manager Kurt Petersen

# AGENDA ITEM

BCC Mtg. Date: March 26, 2019

BUDGET TRANSFER REQUEST

CONTROL NO 19-0815 BCC  
 (To be assigned by OMB) vh

FUND NO 0001 DEPARTMENT(S) Supervisor of Elections DATE: 03/26/19

Request the following transfer be made for the reason(s) stated:

	AGENCY	ORGANIZATION	OBJECT	APPR	AMOUNT FROM	AMOUNT TO
NO.	023	0475	9510	MPB	\$1,707,905	
TITLE		Reserves	Reserve for Contingency			
NO.	023	0451	3144	EAJ		\$1,707,905
TITLE		Supervisor of Elections	Commissions and Fees Supervisor of Elections			
TOTAL:					\$1,707,905	\$1,707,905

JUSTIFICATION (to be completed by OMB): This budget transfer is necessary to provide the Supervisor of Elections funding to upgrade the voter registration database system, purchase additional voting equipment, and update communication modems to 4G network/modems. Funding is available from General Fund Reserves.

RECOMMENDED BY: *Kurt R. Peterson*  
 Office of Management & Budget

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 (County Comptroller)

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APPROVED / DISAPPROVED  
 Board of County Commissioners / County Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_