

**AGENDA  
ITEM**

**15**



# CALEXICO *California*


WHERE CALIFORNIA AND MEXICO MEET


AGENDA  
ITEM  
**15**


## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** June 5, 2024

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**APPROVED BY:** Esperanza Colio Warren, City Manager   
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**REVIEWED BY:** Sandy Fonseca, Interim Finance Director 

**PREPARED BY:** Esperanza Colio Warren, City Manager   
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**SUBJECT:** Approve Payment to the Imperial County Registrar of Voters Office for the following:

- a) Signature Verification for the Petition to Recall Councilmembers Ureña and Manzanarez in the Amount of \$51,937.15
- b) April 16, 2024, Calexico Special Recall Election in the Amount of \$105,873.65

=====

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the City Council of the City of Calexico approve the following items:

- a) Signature Verification for the Recall in the Amount of \$51,937.15
- b) April 16, 2024, Calexico Special Recall Election in the Amount of \$105,873.65

**Background:**

On November 16, 2023, local proponents seeking the removal of Council Members Urena and Manzanarez timely filed in the Calexico City Clerk’s Office two recall petitions. After the City Clerk’s Office accepted both recall petitions for filing and at the request of the City Manager, the petitions were referred to the Imperial County Registrar of Voters, who conducted formal signature verification with official County voter registration records.

The process of the verification of signatures was from November 17, 2023 to November 30, 2023. (see attached email)

A Special Municipal Election was held in the City of Calexico on Tuesday, April 16, 2024 for the purposes of submitting the questions to Calexico voters regarding whether Councilmembers Urena and Manzanarez should be recalled from the Calexico City Council. The County of Imperial Registrar of Voters completed the canvass of the results and the election was successful in recalling Councilmembers Urena and Manzanarez

**Fiscal Impact:**

No fiscal impact. Expenses budgeted in FY 2023-24.

**Coordinated With:**

Finance Department

**Attachment(s):**

1. Invoices and Emails

ATTACHMENT NO. 1



Imperial County Registrar of Voters  
 940 West Main Street, Suite 206  
 El Centro, CA 92243



**APRIL 16, 2024**  
**CALEXICO SPECIAL RECALL ELECTION BILLING**

	<b>Amount</b>
<b>All Ballots, Booklets, Mailings, Envelopes</b>	
Includes layout, print and postage of vote-by-mail ballots and Voter Information Guides sent to all registered voters, online support for military/overseas voters and remote access voting	\$ 54,021.20
<b>Programming</b>	
Pre-Election, Election Day and Post Election support from Information Technical Services	\$ 419.90
<b>Publications</b>	
Notice of Election - Calexico Chronicle	\$ 182.00
<b>Permanent &amp; Extra Help Staff</b>	
Permanent & Extra Help Staff	\$ 34,241.50
<b>Poll Workers &amp; Canvass</b>	
Election Day Poll Workers and Post Election Canvass Workers	\$ 9,920.00
<b>Equipment &amp; Delivery</b>	
Delivery and tracking for election voting equipment to/from poll sites	\$ 6,216.16
<b>Vehicles</b>	
Pre-Election and Election Day vehicles for Rovers & Inspectors	\$ 872.89

**Total Amount Due \$105,873.65**

Imperial County Registrar of Voters  
940 West Main Street, Suite 206  
El Centro, CA 92243



**Petitions to Recall  
Councilmembers Gilberto Manzanarez and Raul Ureña  
City of Calexico**

<b>Charges</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Signature Verification</b>	
Verification of 5,105 signatures for Petition to Recall Councilmember Gilberto Manzanarez and 5,157 signatures for Petition to Recall Councilmember Raul Ureña	\$ 51,937.15

**Total Amount Due \$51,937.15**

**From:** Linsey Dale <LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us>

**Date:** April 8, 2024 at 5:26:28 PM PDT

**To:** Esperanza Colio <ecolio@calexico.ca.gov>

**Cc:** Ronny Luna <rluna@calexico.ca.gov>, Gloria Romo <gromo@calexico.ca.gov>, Jesus Escobar <JesusEscobar@co.imperial.ca.us>, Miguel Figueroa <miguelfigueroa@co.imperial.ca.us>, Rebecca Terrazas-Baxter <RebeccaTerrazas-Baxter@co.imperial.ca.us>

**Subject: RE: Recall Election - Signature Verification Invoice**

I am writing to address the concerns you have raised regarding the cost associated with the signature verification process for petitions received for the April 16<sup>th</sup> Calexico Special Recall Election. After reviewing my email records, I could not locate any correspondence dated December 6<sup>th</sup> from your end. My apologies if I have missed it. However, I would like to provide clarity on the timeline and procedures followed during the signature verification process and associated costs.

We received the petitions from your office on November 17, 2023 and promptly initiated the verification process, which concluded on November 30<sup>th</sup>. As you may recall, the timeline was particularly tight, given the volume of signatures, over 10,000, that needed verification in time for the December 8, 2023 deadline to qualify for the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election ballot.

On November 1, 2023, Andrew Briseno, Deputy County Counsel, confirmed via email our agreement that the Registrar of Voters' staff would undertake the signature verification task, with the City of Calexico covering the associated costs. Please see attached letter. This agreement was crucial in ensuring a smooth and timely verification process.

Your email dated November 20, 2023 rightly emphasized the urgency of meeting the December 8, 2023 deadline to avoid the necessity of a special election, which could have posed financial challenges to the city. To fulfill this requirement, we mobilized all available resources, including regular staff and three extra-help staff members hired specifically for this project.

In total our Registrar of Voters' staff dedicated 408 hours to the signature verification process. Given the importance of the situation, full-time employees were reassigned from their usual duties to focus entirely on Calexico's signature verification requirements. Without the dedication of our entire staff, the deadline you imposed would not have been met.

Attached to this email, you will find a detailed breakdown of the hours worked by each employee, along with the hourly rate for our services calculated at a full-burden rate. We did not charge any overtime hourly rates. Additionally, although I assisted with this project, my services as Registrar of Voters are not included in these expenditures and will not be charged out. It is worth noting that the original quote, which was approved for funding by your council, amounted to approximately \$80,000.



Should you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out. I am committed to ensuring transparency and addressing any concerns you may have regarding this matter. Thank you.

*Linsey*

**From:** Esperanza Colio <[ecolio@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:ecolio@calexico.ca.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 12:45 PM  
**To:** Linsey Dale <[LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us)>  
**Cc:** Ronny Luna <[rluna@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:rluna@calexico.ca.gov)>; Gloria Romo <[gromo@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:gromo@calexico.ca.gov)>; Jesus Escobar <[JesusEscobar@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:JesusEscobar@co.imperial.ca.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: Recall Election - Signature Verification Invoice

**CAUTION:** This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Good morning Ms. Linsey,

Per my previous email dated December 6, 2023, please provide me with a detailed explanation of the charges subject to the attached invoice:

1. Number of extra help employees and hourly rate that were hired specifically to validate the signatures. Per your email dated November 22, 2023, you only hired 2 extra help to assist you with signatures and another extra help was pending to assist but never confirmed (attached email).
2. Number of over-time hours and hourly rate incurred by your office regular staff validating the petition recall signatures. Please note that regular time should not count as regular employees' salaries are already budgeted as part of the election office duties; charging for regular hours of existing staff that is already in your office budget may be considered as double dipping or supplanting.

The counting of the ballots was completed in 7 working days; \$51,937.15 seems to be an astronomical amount owed to the county for this activity.

Thank you.

*Esperanza Colio Warren*  
*City Manager*  
*City of Calexico*

**From:** Linsey Dale <[LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2024 11:47 AM  
**To:** Esperanza Colio <[ecolio@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:ecolio@calexico.ca.gov)>  
**Cc:** Ronny Luna <[rluna@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:rluna@calexico.ca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Recall Election - Signature Verification Invoice

Attached is a 2<sup>nd</sup> Notice for the invoice presented to you on December 8<sup>th</sup> for the verification of signatures for the petitions to recall Councilmembers Ureña and Manzanarez. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.



*Linsey J. Dale*

Registrar of Voters

County of Imperial

940 West Main Street, Suite 206

El Centro, CA 92243

Office: (442) 265-1060

Cell: (760) 604-1624

[www.Elections.ImperialCounty.org](http://www.Elections.ImperialCounty.org)

*Eric Havens*  
*County Counsel*

*Mistelle Abdelmagied*  
*Assistant County Counsel*



*County Counsel*  
*County Administration Center*  
*940 West Main Street, Suite 205*  
*El Centro, CA 92243*  
*Telephone (442) 265-1120*  
*Fax No. (760) 353-9347*  
*countycounsel@co.imperial.ca.us*

Imperial County Office of the County  
Counsel

November 1, 2023

City of Calexico  
Esperanza Colio-Warren, Manager  
608 Heber Avenue  
Calexico, CA 92231

and via e-mail: [ecolio@calexico.ca.gov](mailto:ecolio@calexico.ca.gov)

Dear Ms. Colio-Warren;

The Imperial County Registrar of Voters, Linsey Dale and this Office is in receipt of your request for the Imperial County Registrar of Voters to undertake the task of signature verification for the recall petitions of Councilmembers Ureña and Manzanarez, per your letter dated October 30, 2023. The serious task has historically been competently undertaken by former City Clerks in Calexico. We understand that Calexico now has a new City Clerk who is not experienced in handling that task. Experience is acquired with time and actually undertaking the task. However, we understand that the current recall effort is being undertaken by Calexico's electorate and has given rise to a politically charged contest. Having a "green City Clerk" handle such a politically charged task as their first Signature Verification learning exercise would not be a reasonable action for Calexico to take. The County Registrar of Voters appreciates the confidence the City of Calexico has placed in her office to carry out this important task. The County Registrar of Voters understands the urgency of this matter and will do her utmost to ensure that the signature verification process is conducted accurately and efficiently.

As agreed, and previously done, all costs associated with this service will be paid by the City of Calexico. Charges associated with the signature verification and reporting services will be calculated based on employee hourly rate plus benefit expenditures. The specifics of the cost breakdown will be detailed in the invoice which our Registrar of Voters will provide upon completion of the verification process.

We understand the importance of a transparent and reliable verification process in matters of this nature. Should you have any further questions or require additional information regarding the ROV's billing process, please feel free to contact Linsey Dale at (442) 265-1074 or via email at [LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:LinseyDale@co.imperial.ca.us). Please carbon this Office with email exchanges, should they take place.

Sincerely,  
Eric Havens,

By:   
Andrew Briseno, Deputy County Counsel.

**2024 Petitions to Recall Councilmembers Gilberto Manzanarez and Raul Ureña**

Registrar of Voters - Signature Verification Expenditures

<b>Employee #</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Total Charge</b>
200416	72.0	\$ 181.22	\$ 13,047.84
170445	54.0	\$ 163.31	\$ 8,818.74
202258	63.0	\$ 126.95	\$ 7,997.85
192759	62.0	\$ 140.01	\$ 8,680.62
202596 - EH	64.0	\$ 85.30	\$ 5,459.20
202020 - EH	56.0	\$ 85.30	\$ 4,776.80
202605 - EH	37.0	\$ 85.30	\$ 3,156.10
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT DUE</b>			<b>\$ 51,937.15</b>