

# HISTORY OF ELECTIONS CITY OF LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

## FIRST INCORPORATION

January 30, 1888 – An election was conducted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; 106 votes were cast, with 103 in favor of incorporation.

February 10, 1888 – A proclamation was issued by the Board of Supervisors declaring Long Beach incorporated; it was the fifth city to be incorporated in Los Angeles County.

## FIRST CITY ELECTION

The City government was formally organized on March 2, 1888. April 9, 1888 saw the first City election conducted, at which five City Trustees were elected, two for four-year terms and three for two-year terms. Elections for Trustees were conducted in April of even-numbered years for the next eight years (through April 13, 1896).

## DISINCORPORATION

Mainly as a result of issues surrounding temperance, a movement to disincorporate the city resulted in a Special Municipal Election on July 27, 1896. The measure passed and government of the area returned to the County.

## REORGANIZATION

On December 1, 1897, an election was held to incorporate the City once again. A board of Trustees was elected. Trustee elections were conducted in April of even-numbered years through 1906.

## CITY CHARTERS

In November of 1904, a Board of Freeholders was elected for the purpose of preparing a City Charter. The Charter they prepared, however, was rejected by the voters on March 11, 1905.

Again in 1907, voters were asked to approve the Freeholders' Charter. This time it won voter approval and was ratified.

On October 15, 1914 a proposed Freeholders' Charter was approved by voters.

Fifteen Freeholders were again selected by voters on September 2, 1920 to frame a new City Charter. These Freeholders submitted a new Charter proposing a managerial form of government on April 14, 1921. The voters again approved the Charter.

On July 26, 1926, a Special Election was held to elect, for the third time in 22 years, a board of Freeholders to frame a Charter. In the March 9, 1927 election, however,

voters rejected the Freeholders' Charter as well as an alternate proposition concerning election of Councilmembers by districts.

### CITY COUNCIL/CITY COMMISSIONERS

In accordance with the terms of the Charter, City Council members were first elected on December 8, 1907. The City was divided into seven wards. The first Mayor was elected at this time.

City Council elections for the seven established ward were held in odd-numbered years until 1915, when Long Beach began an experiment with an elected Commissioner form of government. In April of 1921, voters approved a Charter that mandated a Manager/Council form. In the June 14, 1921 election three-year terms were established.

Voters in 1925 rejected a charter amendment, which would have established nine councilmanic districts. In February of 1929, voters approved the nomination of elective officers by direct primary election, and nomination of Councilmembers by districts. Nine councilmanic districts were created. It was required that a candidate for Council must live in the district to be represented. However, while councilmembers were elected to represent specific districts, all City voters were eligible to vote for all councilmembers, both in the Primary and General elections. The first election held under this system was May 13, 1930.

The term of office was changed to four years in the June 8, 1976 election. Staggered terms were also approved in this charter change. On November 2, 1976, voters approved the charter provision currently in effect, that Council members be elected only by voters of the district to be represented.

### TERM LIMITATIONS

In the election of November 3, 1992, voters approved an initiative charter amendment, which limits Mayor and Council Members to two terms. A provision was included in this amendment that allows for Mayor and Councilmembers to run for a subsequent term of office as a write-in candidate.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

The first election of a Board of Education for the City of Long Beach was held on April 7, 1911, electing three members. In this election the voters also approved the governance of the City School District by the Charter of the City.

Subsequent Board of Education elections were subsequently held in odd-numbered years.

## COLLEGE DISTRICT

In 1970, the California Legislature mandated separation of community colleges from unified school districts. Long Beach Community College District separated from the Long Beach Unified School District, but shared a common Board of Education.

In 1978, the Long Beach Community College District separated "governance" from the Long Beach Unified School District. Three members of the common Board of Education chose to serve the new Board of Trustees of the college district. A special election was held for the two remaining vacancies.

To establish "staggered" terms for the new Board of Trustees, a regularly scheduled election was held in 1979.

In 1994, the Board of Trustees approved elected trustees by "area" rather than at-large. They agreed to shorten terms for which they were elected in 1994 so all five trustees' positions would come due for election in 1996.

In 1996, elections were held for five trustees by area.