

Ehlmann vetoes bill calling for nearly \$2 million in spending for new election machines

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St. Charles County, Missouri _ County Executive Steve Ehlmann vetoed a bill today (March 13) that would have enacted a contract spending nearly \$2 million for new election machines.

"I believe that the Director of Elections should be given deference in determining the need to replace equipment and which machines to purchase," Ehlmann said. "However, the Charter imposes a responsibility on this office when it comes to personnel and purchasing."

Ehlmann pointed out that the contract with Henry Adkins & Son called for \$1.2 million in additional spending, after a trade-in credit of \$76,176 from the current system.

There was only one bid for the new system, and Ehlmann said, "Confronted with a decision to spend \$1.2 million dollars based on a single bid, I did not believe a purchase at this time was in the best interest of County taxpayers."

In returning the contract to the County Council, he suggested that the bid specifications be amended to encourage more bidders or existing specifications be reissued only after a more competitive market exists in the State of Missouri.

The electronic voting machines now being used were purchased in 2006 with a \$1.5 million federal grant.

This is the fourth veto issued by Ehlmann, who is in his fifth year as County Executive.

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