

County Of Sonoma Agenda Item Summary Report

Clerk of the Board Use Only

Meeting Date

/ /

Agenda Item No:

Department: County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor

4/5 Vote Not Required

Name and Phone Number:

Janice Atkinson - (707) 565-1877

Board Date:

3/13/2012

Deadline for Board Action:

3/30/2012

AGENDA SHORT TITLE: Implementation of the Sonoma County Management Employee Voluntary Election Worker Program.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION: Adopt the Resolution Supporting Implementation of the Sonoma County Management Employee Voluntary Election Worker Program and Encouraging County Departments and Managers to Participate in the Program.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT - None.

Explanation (if required): None.

Prior Board Action: None.

Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval: Non-approval of the proposed program would result in continued reliance on extra-help staff by the Registrar of Voters Division, exceeding budgeted funds for the 2011-12 fiscal year.

Background: The Registrar of Voters Division of the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor Department conducts elections for all jurisdictions in Sonoma County. The upcoming June Presidential Primary Election is a highly complex, county-wide election, with few consolidating jurisdictions to offset costs. The production of this election requires a significant use of additional staffing and is thus expected to require a significant expenditure of extra-help funds.

Sonoma County has approximately 250,000 registered voters, of whom 152,000 are permanent Vote by Mail voters and roughly 15,000 are required to vote by mail because they reside in areas too small to have designated polling places. Six weeks immediately preceding a major election, the Registrar of Voters Division begins preparing the nearly 170,000 Vote by Mail ballots to be sent to voters in Sonoma County. Extra-help staff has been hired to assist in preparing the mailing.

Extra-help employees are also employed for other tasks (data entry, voter registration, signature verification, preparation of polling place supplies, etc.). Staffing needs increase dramatically 10 days before the election, during which time voted Vote by Mail ballots are prepared for counting on Election Day. In addition, extra-help employees, along with departmental employees, have been employed to staff “ballot drop-off” locations, to assist in processing ballots, and to run ballot card readers.

In order to meet budget constraints for the 2011-12 fiscal year budget, the Registrar of Voters Division identified **\$80,000** in reductions in extra-help salaries and benefits, predicated on a discussion with other county departments that management employees would be encouraged to volunteer to assist with election-related tasks to the extent possible, without impacting their ability to complete their assigned workloads. This practice is utilized in other counties, including Alameda and San Francisco.

This program would encourage county managers and department heads to assist the Registrar of Voters Division by supplementing extra-help staffing and thus generating cost savings. Department heads and management employees would be scheduled to work evenings between the hours of 5:30 and 8 p.m., on designated weekends, and on election night (or at other times if it complements their work schedules). Participation must be approved by the employees' supervisors or department heads. The program would be voluntary, but encouraged and supported by the Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the Registrar of Voters is exploring a partnership with the CalWorks program to provide work experience for CalWorks participants at no cost to the Registrar of Voters Division. We are hopeful that between these two programs, we will be able to meet our budgetary goal of offsetting the reduction in extra-help funding. In the event there is insufficient participation in the Management Employee Voluntary Election Worker program and we are not able to bridge the gap with CalWorks participants, it will be necessary to revert to using paid extra-help employees to meet staffing needs through the completion of the election process.

Attachments: Resolution.

On File With Clerk: None.

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")	Vote:
---	--------------