



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

VACANT
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: May 23, 2023

29

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

RESOLUTION TO CALL A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL THE VACANCY OF THE FOURTH DISTRICT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (DISTRICT: 4)

OVERVIEW

On March 30, 2023, the Board of Supervisors was notified that Fourth District Supervisor Nathan Fletcher resigned from his office effective May 15, 2023. The San Diego County Charter gives the Board of Supervisors the authority and responsibility to take action to fill the vacant position within thirty days either by appointment, by appointment until a special election, or by calling a special election. On May 2, 2023 (20), the Board considered the options and directed the Interim Chief Administrative Officer to return to the Board with a resolution that calls for a Special Election to be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. If no candidate receives a majority vote at that election, then a Special General Election would be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. The Board also chose to conduct both the special primary election and the special general election utilizing the Vote Center model.

The elected Supervisor would serve the remainder of the unexpired term, with the term ending at 12 noon on Monday, January 4, 2027.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Adopt the resolution that calls for a Special Election to be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. If no candidate receives a majority vote at that election, then a Special General Election would be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to include \$5.2 million in the Registrar of Voters for the Special Election and Special General Election in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operational Plan via the CAO Recommended Operational Plan Change Letter, funding will be based on General Purpose Revenue.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today's proposed action seeks to begin the process for filling the vacancy of the Fourth District Supervisor through a Special Election. A person's vote can influence policy and who represents

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO CALL A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL THE
VACANCY OF THE FOURTH DISTRICT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (DISTRICT: 4)**

them in government, which in turn impacts their environment, health, and quality of life. The Registrar of Voters' conduct of fair, accurate, and transparent elections allow all eligible citizens to have a part in matters that affect them.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

A person's vote has a direct influence on the sustainability of their neighborhood, community, and local region. By voting, San Diego residents have a direct impact on their health, equity, the economy and environment. With the County's implementation of the vote center model, all active registered voters receive a ballot in the mail as required by current law. This increases accessibility by providing voters with the opportunity to consider the method that is most convenient for them to return their ballot and has the possibility of reducing vehicle miles traveled to cast their vote. In addition, voters have the option of receiving their voter information guides electronically to reduce paper waste. The recommended action today aligns with the County of San Diego Sustainability Goal of providing just and equitable access to County services.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is anticipated that the costs for the special election will range from \$2.1 million to \$2.6 million per election. If approved, this request will result in an additional estimated costs of \$4.2 million to \$5.2 million in Fiscal Year 2023-24 if both a primary and general election are required. Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 CAO Recommended Operational Plan in the Registrar of Voters. If approved, this request will result in estimated costs and revenues of \$5,200,000 in Fiscal Year 2023-24. The funding source will be the redirection of General Purpose Revenue (GPR) included in the Recommended Operational Plan for Board Security and unanticipated expenditures. There will be no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The County of San Diego is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors elected to four-year terms in district, nonpartisan elections. Each Board member is limited to no more than two terms and must reside in the district from which they are elected. The Board of Supervisors sets priorities and approves the County's two-year budget. The County may exercise its powers only through the Board of Supervisors or through agents and officers acting under authority of the Board or authority conferred by law. The Board of Supervisors appoints the following officers: the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the County Counsel, the Probation Officer, and the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. All other non-elected officers are appointed by the CAO.

On March 30, 2023, the Board of Supervisors was notified that Fourth District Supervisor Nathan Fletcher would be resigning from his office effective May 15, 2023. The San Diego County Charter, Section 401.4, provides a procedure for filling the vacancy of the Fourth District Supervisor which includes the options to appoint, appoint until a special election can be conducted,

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO CALL A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL THE
VACANCY OF THE FOURTH DISTRICT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (DISTRICT: 4)**

or conduct a special election. The County Charter requires the Board of Supervisors to act within 30 days of the vacancy.

On May 2, 2023 (20), the Board considered the options and directed the Chief Administrative Officer to return to the Board with a resolution that calls for a Special Election to be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. If no candidate receives a majority vote at that election, then a Special General Election would be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. The Board also chose to conduct both the special primary election and the special general election utilizing the Vote Center model.

In accordance with the Charter, the special primary election must be held no earlier than 76 days and not more than 90 days following the adoption of the resolution calling the special election. The special primary election would be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. If no candidate receives a majority at that election, then a special general election shall be held on the twelfth Tuesday after the special primary election, Tuesday, November 7, 2023. The two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the special primary election would be the candidates in the special general election.

Based on current voter registration in the Fourth District (396,824 voters) the following would be required for a special election under the Vote Center model:

- 14 One-Day Vote Centers open on Election Day
- 7 of the 14 Vote Centers open for 11 days
- 27 Ballot Drop Box Locations
- All voters are mailed a ballot
- Two voting options mailers in addition to the Voter Information Pamphlet and Mail Ballot Packet mailings.

The Registrar's office has a robust multilingual voter education and outreach program with five dedicated full-time outreach coordinators and an additional 10 to 20 seasonal staff during election cycles. The outreach coordinators have strong and well-established relationships with local community leaders, key stakeholders, and advocacy groups who represent a myriad of voting groups including younger voters and underrepresented populations.

The Registrar's outreach coordinators participate in more than 300 community events and meetings each year. For these efforts, the outreach team will be providing voter registration and educational materials at several community events and meetings in the months leading up to the August 15 special primary election, five of which are in the Fourth District.

The voter education campaign for the election in the Fourth District will include three direct mailers, targeted voter education workshops, meetings and presentations with interested organizations and community partners, purchasing advertisement in a variety of general and in-language community newspapers, news stories and interviews, voting options materials and posters throughout the district, and publicly available social media toolkits and election-related materials on the Registrar's website.

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO CALL A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL THE
VACANCY OF THE FOURTH DISTRICT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (DISTRICT: 4)**

In addition, Public Service Announcements (15 and 30-second versions) are available in English and in the County's federally covered languages (Spanish, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Chinese) with closed captioning. These announcements will run on the County's social media channels targeting the district's general population, and federally covered language communities along with other targeted efforts to communities of interest. All these details and more are outlined in the County's Election Administration Plan found at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/voters-choice-act/vca-participating-counties>.

To ensure the widest possible reach the Registrar's office will leverage its internal Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee and Language Accessibility Advisory Committee along with existing County communications channels and planned engagement opportunities to distribute election-related notices and election information. The latter will take advantage of the County's over one million county residents who have subscribed to receive information through the County's GovDelivery system, along with County News Center and County TV.

In addition to County News Center and County TV, more than 40 social media accounts across 22 county departments provide opportunities for residents to get information through their preferred channels. The county's new digital outreach and engagement platforms, 'Engagement Center' and 'Engage San Diego County' will be used to further promote election information and make it easy for every voter to access information at their convenience.

The Fourth Supervisorial District has a population of 675,829 residents as of the 2020 Census. Current voter registration totals in the Fourth District show 396,588 registered voters. The District includes approximately 23 square miles of unincorporated areas and 78 square miles of incorporated areas. The Fourth District border travels south along the western boundaries of the Linda Vista and Mission Valley, east-southeast along the borders of Balboa Park and North Park, east-northeast along the outer boundary of the Spring Valley Community Plan Area, the City of Lemon Grove, north and west following the boundary of the Casa de Oro-Mount Helix Community Plan Area and the City of La Mesa. The boundary continues west into the City of San Diego and follows the northern limits of the College Area Community Plan Area towards the Serra Mesa Community Plan Area, northwest at the Inland Freeway, and the northeast at the Cabrillo Freeway to the northern border of the Kearny Mesa Community Plan Area, where it moves west to include the Clairemont Community Plan Area.

The Fourth District includes the communities of Lemon Grove, La Mesa, North Clairemont, Hillcrest, Balboa Park, North Park, Bankers Hill, Old Town, Mission Hills, Normal Heights, University Heights, Oak Park, Webster, Valencia Park, Encanto, Bay Terraces, Paradise Hills, Skyline, Kearney Mesa, Clairemont Mesa, Linda Vista, Birdland, Serra Mesa, Civita, portions of Grantville, City Heights, Rolando, Azalea Park, Chollas Creek, Rolando Park, Kensington-Talmadge, Mid-City, Montezuma Mesa, SDSU Mission Valley, Crest-Dehesa, Spring Valley, Casa de Oro, Mt. Helix, and Rancho San Diego.

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION TO CALL A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL THE
VACANCY OF THE FOURTH DISTRICT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (DISTRICT: 4)

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Community Initiative of the County of San Diego's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan by inspiring civic engagement by providing information, programs, public forums or other avenues that increase access for individuals or communities to use their voice, their vote, and their experience to impact change.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen N. Robbins-Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Helen" and last name "Robbins-Meyer" clearly distinguishable.

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A – Resolution