

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2023**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 9

SUBJECT: PROMOTING GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY UPDATE: IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND BUILDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

The County reimagined its mission, vision, and values at the beginning of 2022, putting community engagement at the center of the County’s operations to create a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all. A key component of creating this vision and supporting community engagement is access and participation in local government for all people, with a particular focus on increasing transparency among diverse audiences to encourage civic involvement. To work toward these goals, the Board of Supervisors approved a range of recommendations in separate actions on May 10, 2022 (8), and May 24, 2022 (10), which are outlined in the subsequent background section, and directed staff to return to the Board.

Due to the close alignment of the actions directed in both items to support community engagement, civic participation, and overall transparency, this report combines the summary of the staff’s research, findings, and recommendations, and incorporates feedback received from County departments across the enterprise and the community.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Receive the report on actions related to government transparency and promoting civic engagement through boards, committees, and commissions.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Boards, committees, and commissions (BCCs) are a mechanism for civic engagement. Racial and socioeconomic disparities exist across the nation in voter participation and public engagement. As noted in the May 10, 2022 (8) board letter, trends show that white people, older adults, and people with higher incomes and education levels vote at higher rates, and these demographics are more likely to be reflected in elected officials. The disparity continues when considering that residents who need policies to support them are less likely to receive support through representation. A 2019 review by the RAND Corporation found that civic engagement, through voting or other activities such as membership in civic organizations, is associated with better health outcomes. Civic participation is a key issue in the social and community context domain of Healthy People 2030, an initiative to improve health and well-being through data-driven national objectives. In addition, community involvement through volunteerism is one of *Live Well San Diego’s* Top 10 Indicators and the rate of volunteer participation has decreased since 2009.

The updates presented in this report include reducing process barriers, encouraging diversity of representation, and conducting outreach to encourage civic participation among underrepresented groups.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The information presented in this report contributes to the County’s efforts to engage the community in meaningful ways and promote an environment that provides equitable access to opportunities for public engagement and representation. These efforts will contribute to the County of San Diego Sustainability Goal No. 1 by “encourag[ing] people and diverse stakeholders to partner and participate in decisions that impact their lives and communities.”

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with today’s recommended actions, though they may result in future fiscal impacts. Staff will return to the Board for consideration and approval of any such impacts.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

ON MOTION of Supervisor Fletcher, seconded by Supervisor Desmond, the Board of Supervisors took action as recommended, on Consent.

AYES: Vargas, Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Fletcher, Desmond

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed
by Andrew Potter