

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: STEPHANIE WILLIAMS, CITY CLERK
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
SUBJECT: GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION – NOVEMBER 3, 2020:
CALLING THE ELECTION, REQUESTING CONSOLIDATION
WITH THE STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION AND ADOPTING
REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

AGENDA ACTION: TWO RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the City Clerk that the Council, by two resolutions: 1) call and request to consolidate the November 3, 2020, General Municipal Election for the elective offices for Council Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7 with the Statewide General Election; and 2) adopt regulations pertaining to candidate statements as required by Elections Code Section 13307.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Santa Rosa has historically consolidated its general municipal elections with statewide general elections and contracted with the Sonoma County Registrar of Voters for election services. The purpose of this item is to (1) request the County Board of Supervisors consolidate this year's General Municipal Election for the elective offices for Council Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7 with the Statewide General Election to be held on November 3, 2020; and (2) adopt regulations pertaining to candidate statements as required by Elections Code section 13307.

BACKGROUND

City Charter Section 30 provides that the City's General Municipal Election be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Therefore, this year's General Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, the same date as the Statewide General Election. The Charter further requires that elections be conducted pursuant to the election laws of the state as the same relate to municipal elections.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

Pursuant to the California Elections Code, the Council must adopt certain resolutions for the conduct of municipal elections. The proposed resolutions call and give notice of the General Municipal Election, request the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors consolidate the General Municipal Election with the Statewide General Election, and adopt regulations for candidates for elective office pertaining to candidate statements.

The City of Santa Rosa has historically consolidated its general municipal elections with statewide general elections and contracted with the Sonoma County Registrar of Voters for election services. The Registrar of Voters Office is currently under contract with the City to provide these services through December 31, 2022. In accordance with Elections Code Section 10403, the City Clerk recommends the City Council adopt a resolution requesting the County Board of Supervisors to consolidate this year's General Municipal Election with the Statewide General Election to be held on November 3, 2020.

Elections Code Section 13307 provides that the Council may adopt regulations pertaining to candidate statements. A resolution adopting such regulations has been prepared, which contains general provisions, provisions related to foreign language translation, a provision prohibiting the inclusion of additional materials other than a candidate's statement in the ballot package, and provisions regarding payment by the candidate for his or her pro rata share of the total cost of printing, handling, translating and mailing candidate statements.

Generally, candidate statements are limited to 200 words. Section 13307 authorizes the Council to increase the limit to 400 words; however, staff recommends the word count for the candidate statements be set at 200 words per statement consistent with previous elections.

For the 2018 election, the cost per candidate for the printing of a 200-word candidate statement was \$1,348 for English only and \$2,796 for English and Spanish. While the Council could elect to subsidize all or a portion of the cost for the candidate statement, the City Clerk recommends that the Council continue to require the candidate to pay his or her full pro rata share of the cost to print the candidate statement consistent with previous elections. In addition, Santa Rosa City Code Chapter 10-33 provides for the inclusion of candidate information on the City's website and an election mailer at no cost to the candidate if the candidate agrees to a voluntary campaign spending limit of \$59,187.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Sonoma County Registrar of Voters provided an estimated cost of the City Council district-based election of \$500,000. The estimated cost was based on the most recent annexation, voter registration report, initiative ballot measure item, and the services needed to hold a district-based election. Funding for this expenditure is included in the proposed FY 2019-20 City Council Budget under professional services.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Election Calendar
- Resolution - Calling General Municipal Election and Requesting Consolidation of the Election with the Statewide General Election
- Resolution - Adopting Regulations Pertaining to Candidate Statements

CONTACT

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