



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 1
File #: 23-912

Board Meeting Date: 11/14/2023

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: President Dave Pine, District 1
Vice President Warren Slocum, District 4

Subject: Formalization of a Process for the Annual Rotation of Officers of the Board of Supervisors

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution formalizing a process for the annual rotation of officers of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

BACKGROUND:

State law requires the Board of Supervisors to elect a Chairperson of the Board and allows for the election of a Vice Chairperson. (In San Mateo County, the practice is to use the terms "Board President" and "Board Vice President.") For at least the last two decades, the Board has elected its President and Vice President at the Board's annual reorganization meeting, which typically occurs at the first regular meeting of the Board in January of each year.

The Board also has an established practice of using a rotation system to determine who to elect as President and Vice President each year. Specifically, the practice has been that the outgoing President moves to the end of the rotation behind all other Board members, the Vice President becomes President for a one-year term, and the next in line in the rotation becomes Vice President for a one-year term. Once these offices have been filled, continuing and re-elected Board members move up in the rotation, and newly elected and newly appointed members are added to the rotation before the outgoing President and behind the continuing and re-elected Board members.

DISCUSSION:

San Mateo County strives to uphold core democratic principles, and its historical use of a rotation system to elect Board officers serves that goal by allowing all Board members to serve as Board president, creating equitable representation for the County's five supervisorial districts, balancing the priorities and opinions of the Board's members, promoting equity and diversity; and ensuring the orderly and predictable transition of the Board presidency.

To date, the Board has not formally adopted this rotation system as a policy of the Board. Formalizing political customs and practices, especially those intended to achieve democratic ends, can foster good governance. By adopting a written process formalizing the rotational system for electing its officers, the Board can shield this democratic process from politics and ensure the orderly transition of the Board presidency into the future.

The proposed resolution formalizes the annual rotation system for electing Board officers at the annual reorganization meeting of the Board. It creates a rotation list for determining the order in which officers will be elected.

Under this system, the Board will elect a new President and Vice President each year, with the Vice President from the previous year serving as President in the new year and the next Board member on the rotation list serving as Vice President. The outgoing President is then moved to the end of the rotation list, and the continuing and/or re-elected Board members move up the list. Newly elected and newly appointed members are then added to the list before the outgoing President but behind any continuing and/or re-elected Board members. The resolution also accounts for how the rotation system will operate when a Board member declines to serve as an officer and when a vacancy in an officer role occurs mid-year.

The resolution also creates a process for determining the order in which new Board members are added to the rotation list when two or more Board members take office at the same time. In such a scenario, the newly elected or appointed Board members will be placed on the rotation list in the order determined by a random draw as determined and presided over by the Clerk of the Board at the first regular Board meeting following the date the new members take office.

A supermajority vote of four Board members would be required to deviate from the established rotational system.

Finally, if the resolution is adopted, the rotation list for the present Board will be as follows:

1. President Dave Pine
2. Vice President Warren Slocum
3. Member David Canepa
4. Member Noelia Corzo or Member Ray Mueller (determined based on random draw by the Clerk of the Board)
5. Member Noelia Corzo or Member Ray Mueller (determined based on random draw by the Clerk of the Board)

If the resolution is adopted, it is recommended that the Board direct the Clerk of the Board to conduct a random draw at a Board meeting prior to the January 2024 Reorganization Meeting to determine the order of Supervisors Mueller and Corzo on the rotation list.

If the Board chooses to adhere to the adopted process in January 2024, the rotation list will be as follows after the January 2024 Reorganization Meeting:

1. President Warren Slocum
2. Vice President David Canepa

3. Member Noelia Corzo or Member Ray Mueller (determined based on the aforementioned random draw)
4. Member Noelia Corzo or Member Ray Mueller (determined based on the aforementioned random draw)
5. Member Dave Pine

The rotation list after the January 2025 Reorganization Meeting will be as follows:

1. President David Canepa
2. Vice President Noelia Corzo or Vice President Ray Mueller (determined based on the aforementioned random draw)
3. Member Noelia Corzo or Member Ray Mueller (determined based on the aforementioned random draw)
4. One of the two Board Members elected in 2024 (determined based on random draw by the Clerk of the Board at the Reorganization Meeting in January 2025)
5. One of the two Board Members elected in 2024 (determined based on random draw by the Clerk of the Board at the Reorganization Meeting in January 2025)

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.