



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY ATTORNEY

File #: 25-1032

Board Meeting Date: 12/9/2025

Special Notice / Hearing: None

Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: John D. Nibbelin, County Attorney

Subject: Resolution Establishing a 2026 Charter Review Committee to Make Recommendations to the Board of Supervisors Regarding Proposed Amendments to the County Charter

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution establishing a 2026 Charter Review Committee to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding proposed amendments to the County Charter.

BACKGROUND:

Section 801 of the County Charter provides as follows:

“The Board of Supervisors shall convene a Charter review committee within eight years of the last complete Charter review. The committee shall review the Charter and, after public hearings, make appropriate recommendations for amendment or revision to the Board.”

The County’s last Charter Review Committee was convened in 2018. Therefore it is appropriate for the Board to convene a new Charter Review Committee which would develop potential County Charter amendments for the Board’s consideration. In September of this year, the Board established and appointed President Canepa and Vice President Corzo to an ad hoc subcommittee for the purposes of developing and presenting recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the creation of the 2026 Charter Review Committee.

The Board considered the subcommittee’s recommendations at its December 2, 2025 meeting, and during that meeting the Board provided direction for development of criteria for the composition and appointment of the 2026 Charter Review Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Based on the Board’s direction, staff has prepared a resolution for the Board’s consideration and approval to establish and define the composition of the 2026 Charter Review Committee. The resolution does the following:

1. Provides that the 2026 Charter Review Committee will consist of up to sixteen (16) members, selected as follows: (a) each Board member will select one member from the residents within the Board member's District; and (b) the Board will select up to eleven (11) members representing the following community interest groups and organizations: (1) cities; (2) schools; (3) organized labor; (4) businesses; (5) underserved communities; (6) LGBTQI+ community; (7) seniors; (8) youth; (9) environmental groups; (10) immigrants' rights groups; and (11) voting rights organizations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board may choose to fill all, some, or none of the representative seats described above. There shall be no alternates. In light of the desire to convene the Charter Review Committee meetings as soon as possible in 2026, the Board should appoint all members of the 2026 Charter Review Committee at the January 13, 2026 Board meeting.
2. States that the County Attorney and the County Executive, or their designees, shall serve as staff to the Charter Review Committee.
3. Provides guidance regarding the organization of the Charter Review Committee and the conduct of its business in the following areas: compliance with the Brown Act, appointment of officers, and quorum and voting requirements.
4. Specifies that the Charter Review Committee should consider any changes to the County Charter as authorized by the Constitution and State Law, which in its opinion are appropriate, including but not limited to any specific issues identified by the Board of Supervisors.

At the January 13, 2026 Board meeting at which the Committee members will be appointed, the subcommittee will present specific recommendations for issues for the 2026 Charter Review Committee to consider.

Additionally, recent amendments to the Brown Act authorize the Board to enable certain "subsidiary bodies" of the Board to meet via teleconference without complying with the traditional teleconferencing rules if the Board finds that it would increase public participation and promote the attraction, retention, and diversity of eligible members. The "subsidiary body" still must designate a physical location for the public to participate in person as well as any committee members who chose to participate in person. The subcommittee intends to recommend that the Board make the necessary findings at the January 13, 2026 Board meeting to authorize Committee members to participate via teleconference in order to attract a broad pool of potential members.

Individuals interested in serving on the 2026 Charter Review Committee, either as a Supervisor's District appointee or as one of the eleven community interest group representatives, will submit the County's Charter Review Committee Application.

The application window will open upon the Board's establishment of the 2026 Charter Review Committee on December 9, 2025, and remain open for approximately ten days. Following review of the applications, each Supervisor will identify their individual District appointee. At the Board's January 13, 2026 meeting, the Board will select the community interest group representatives from the remaining pool of applicants.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

Adopting this Resolution will initiate the 2026 Charter review process required by the County Charter,

which ensures periodic public review of the County Charter.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The convening of a 2026 Charter Review Committee will result in only incidental impact to the General Fund relating to the staffing of the committee.