



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: County Clerk, Recorder and Assessor
Department No.: 062
For Agenda Of: December 14, 2021
Placement: Administrative-Set Hearing (December 14, 2021); Departmental (January 11, 2022: First Reading); Administrative (January 25, 2022: Second Reading)
Estimated Time: 20 Minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Joseph E. Holland, County Clerk, Recorder and Assessor
Director(s)
Contact Info: Renee Bischof, Chief Deputy Registrar of Voters, (805) 696-8963
SUBJECT: Electronic Campaign Disclosure

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: Select_Concurrence

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

On December 14, 2021, set a hearing for January 11, 2022, to consider the introduction (First Reading) of an Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara adding Chapter 11C to the County Code requiring electronic campaign disclosure.

On January 11, 2022:

- a) Approve the introduction (First Reading) of an Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara adding Chapter 11C to the County Code requiring electronic campaign disclosure; and
- b) Read the title of the Ordinance and waive further reading of the Ordinance in full; and
- c) Continue the item to the Administrative Agenda, of January 25, 2022, to considered the adoption (Second Reading) of an Ordinance adding Chapter 11C to the County Code requiring electronic campaign disclosure.

On January 25, 2022:

- a) Adopt the attached Ordinance (Second Reading) adding Chapter 11C to the County Code requiring electronic campaign disclosure; and
- b) Determine that the above action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), because it consists of organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors has suggested in the past that our office allow for the electronic filing of campaign statements, reports and other documents. The reporting system used by the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's Election Division is already approved by the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) for this purpose.

Additionally, AB 2151, which became operative on January 1, 2021, requires a local government agency to post on its website, within 72 hours of the applicable filing deadline, a copy of campaign statements, reports or other documents filed with that agency in paper format.

Moving to electronic filing will greatly benefit filers, drastically reduce staff time reviewing and redacting documents for posting on the web, and increase transparency by making filings available to the public as soon as documents are filed.

The allowable use of electronic filing of campaign statements and reports requires that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance allowing for it. Therefore, we are requesting the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance that will require the electronic filing of campaign statements and reports upon reaching the contribution/expenditure threshold as specified by the Political Reform Act, which is currently set at \$2,000.

Those filers that do not meet the threshold and are otherwise subject to filing campaign statements and reports, will have the option to file electronically.

We further recommend that once a filer chooses to file electronically, whether meeting the threshold or not, that they continue to file electronically.

Background:

Currently, committees are required to submit two signed original statements to the filing officer. Upon receiving such filings, significant staff time is spent in redacting, scanning, organizing and uploading statements to the Granicus system (formerly SouthTech) to be accessible to the public on the web.

Electronic filing offers many advantages to the filer, the Elections Division, and the public when compared to paper filings. Paper filings typically contain errors caused by miscalculations, omissions of required data, or placing data on wrong schedules of the form. In addition, the system is capable of providing email reminders to the filers of approaching deadlines, which would also help eliminate late filings. Electronic filing and its built-in validation significantly improves the quality of the filings. This would mean that the Elections Division almost entirely eliminates amendment letters to be sent to filers who make common mistakes found with paper. This reduces additional work for both the filer and the Elections Division. For the public, electronic filings are instantly shown in redacted form upon filing and advanced searches can be immediately made by the public to look at data across all filings, thereby increasing transparency. Transparency in campaign financing is critical to maintain public trust and support of the political process.

In order for a local government agency to receive campaign finance statements electronically, it is required that the legislative body adopt an ordinance.

Performance Measure:

N/A

Contract Renewals and Performance Outcomes:

N/A

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund	\$ 8,730.00	\$ 10,555.00	
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ 8,730.00	\$ 10,555.00	\$ -

Narrative:

Annualized ongoing cost is an average annual cost for the initial term of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024.

Key Contract Risks:

N/A

Staffing Impacts:

There will be no increase or decrease in staff as a result of adopting the proposed ordinance.

Special Instructions:

1. The Clerk of the Board shall publish notice pursuant to Government Code section 25124.
2. The Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's Elections Division requests the Clerk of the Board provide one copy of the adopted ordinance and one Minute Order by email to Alupare@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Ordinance

Authored by:

Renee Bischof, Chief Deputy, Registrar of Voters

cc:

Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's Elections Division