



Board Agenda Item 22

DATE: April 22, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: James A. Kus, County Clerk/Registrar of Voters

SUBJECT: Freewater County Water District Request to Move Elections of Board of Directors From Odd-Numbered to Even-Numbered Years

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve Freewater County Water District's request to move Board of Director elections from odd-numbered to even-numbered year elections and set the date for the District's next election to occur on the same day as the November 2026 Statewide General Election.

The District requests to move their election year from odd-numbered to even-numbered years and to consolidate their elections with the Statewide General Election. The California Elections Code requires the Board of Supervisors to notify all districts located within Fresno County of the receipt of the resolution to consolidate and request input from each district on the effect of consolidation. This item pertains to a location in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

The District's request for consolidation with statewide general elections may be denied if it is found that the ballot style, voting equipment, or computer capacity is such that additional elections or materials cannot be handled.

If the recommended action is not approved, the District could still be required to change their elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years. With the passing of the California Voter Participation Rights Act (Elections Code section 14050, *et seq.*), special districts are required to hold their elections on a statewide election date unless a district meets a voter-turnout threshold formula.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost (NCC) associated with the recommended action. The result of this consolidation will increase the overall cost of the Statewide General Election, which will be shared by all the districts involved in the election. Approval of the recommended action will result in each of the Districts receiving a lower election bill. Except for the district mentioned above, all other districts including special districts within Fresno County currently conduct their elections in even-numbered years and share in the cost of the election.

DISCUSSION:

On March 7, 2025, the Freewater County Water District filed Resolution No. 2025-001 with the County Board of Supervisors requesting the consolidation of their odd-numbered year district election with even-numbered year Statewide General Election in accordance with California Elections Code section 10404. This District

is wholly located in Fresno County. The District's Resolution shall become operative upon approval by your Board pursuant to California Elections Code section 10404(e). This code section states that "[t]he Board of Supervisors... shall approve the resolution unless it finds that the ballot style, voting equipment, or computer capacity is such that additional elections or materials cannot be handled." Prior to approval of the Resolution submitted by the District, Elections Code section 10404(c) requires the Board of Supervisors to notify all districts within Fresno County of the receipt of the resolution to consolidate and shall request input from each district on the effect of the consolidation. All districts were notified by a letter dated March 10, 2025 of Freewater County Water District's consolidation request with instructions to provide their comments to the Clerk of the Board of the County of Fresno. As of the writing of this agenda item, one district has responded. Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District is in support of this change. If any other district comments are received by the Clerk of the Board after the submission of this agenda item, they will be presented to your Board on or before April 22, 2025.

The addition of more races to the even-year Statewide General Election ballot will increase the overall cost of the election. However, all entities going to election pay their pro-rata share of the election costs, thereby providing offsetting revenue to the NCC of the election.

If your Board approves the recommended action, the County Clerk/Registrar of Voter's office will notify all registered voters in the District of this approval within 30 days. Notification expenses will be paid by the District as stated in the District's Resolution, and in accordance with Elections Code section 10404(f).

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

Freewater County Water District reviewed and concurs with this item.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Freewater County Water District Resolution No. 2025-001

On file with Clerk - Letter from Coalinga-Huron Recreation and Park District

CAO ANALYST:

Amy Ryals