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DATE: June 3, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

FROM: Caitlin Corley, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Resolutions Calling for and Giving Notice of the City’s Regular Municipal Election to be Held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024; Requesting the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to Consolidate the City’s Regular Election as a General Municipal Election with the Statewide General Election; and, Adopting Regulations for Candidates of Elective Office Pertaining to Candidate Statements

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**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt resolutions calling for and giving notice of the City’s Regular Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, for the purpose of electing three district City Councilmembers, each to serve four-year terms (Attachment 1); requesting the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors consolidate the City’s Regular Municipal Election as a general election with the Statewide General Election (Attachment 2); and adopting regulations for candidates of elective office pertaining to candidates statements (Attachment 3).

**BACKGROUND**

Section 4 of Article III of the Petaluma City Charter requires the City Council to hold a Regular Municipal Election on the same day as the Statewide General Election in November of even-numbered years. The City Charter refers to these elections as “regular” municipal elections to distinguish them from special elections held at other times. The City Charter also refers to regular municipal elections as general elections, which is also the term used in the Elections Code. Accordingly, the election addressed in this staff report and the attached resolutions is referred to as a general election. Additional actions pertaining to the notice of election and regulations for candidate statements are required by the California State Elections Code, which applies to the City’s general elections except as otherwise provided in the City Charter. The recommended actions would fulfill the Charter and Election Code requirements for Petaluma’s general municipal elections.

## **DISCUSSION**

In accordance with the Petaluma City Charter and the California Elections Code, the City holds a regular municipal election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year for the purpose of electing municipal officers and school board directors. This being an even-numbered year, a general municipal election is to be held on November 5, 2024.

The City of Petaluma recently completed the transition to district-based elections. The City has been mapped into six districts; Districts 1, 2, and 3 were the first three districts to elect district City Council representatives in 2022. This general election will include the final three districts: Districts 4, 5, and 6.

State law requires the Council to adopt by resolution regulations pertaining to candidate statements (Attachment 3). Consistent with past elections and State law, candidates will pay a deposit to cover the estimated costs associated with printing and translating the optional candidate statements. Prior to 2022, candidates had the option of translating candidate statements into Spanish but were only required to print in English. Sonoma County has since been designated a bilingual county due to the results of the 2020 Census. This means the voter pamphlets and ballots for all elections in Sonoma County are now required to include English and Spanish.

Pursuant to the California Elections Code, the City Clerk shall publish a notice of General Municipal Election for Candidates once, no earlier than the 127th or later than the 113th day prior to the Election (i.e., between July 1, 2024 – July 15, 2024).

The nomination period for the 2024 general municipal election opens at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, July 15, 2024 and will close 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 9, 2024. Appointments are required to obtain and file papers during the nomination period. Interested candidates should contact the City Clerk's Office to schedule an appointment. Other dates, deadlines, and information for the November 8, 2022 General Municipal Election can be found on the City website at <https://cityofpetaluma.org/elections>.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

This agenda item was noticed in compliance with the California Brown Act. Additionally, this agenda item appeared on the City's tentative agenda on May 20, 2024, which was a publicly noticed meeting.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

The City of Petaluma contracts with Sonoma County to consolidate municipal elections. After each election, the City receives an invoice from the County for its portion of the election costs.

The Sonoma County Registrar of Voters estimates that the cost to the City of Petaluma for the November 2024 election could range from \$31,053 to \$51,754. If the election also includes a ballot measure, the cost could range from \$89,955 to \$149,924.

This is a very preliminary estimate and will be revised as the Registrar of Voters learns more about how jurisdictions will be splitting the fixed costs. Petaluma’s cost for the 2022 election was \$102,452. The preliminary City of Petaluma FY 2024-2025 budget for total election costs is \$204,962.

Below is an estimated cost to print candidate statements (in both English and Spanish) for each district from the County Registrar of Voters. The actual cost will be dependent on number of registered voters and the number of statements printed.

District	Registered Voters	Estimate
4	6649	\$541 – \$983
5	7519	\$552 – \$1004
6	6533	\$540 - \$980

Consistent with past elections and State law, candidates will pay a deposit to cover the estimated costs associated with printing and translating the optional candidate statements, and will be reimbursed the difference.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution Calling and Giving Notice of a Regular Municipal Election
2. Resolution Requesting the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to Consolidate a Regular Municipal Election
3. Resolution Adopting Regulations for Candidates for Elective Office Pertaining to Candidate Statements