



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/13/2026

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Registrar of Voters
Staff Name and Phone Number: Evelyn Mendez, (707) 565-8564
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Change Regular Public Hours of the Registrar of Voters Office Back to Pre-2024 Schedule

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution to change the regular public hours of the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office to be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each weekday (excluding County holidays), rather than closing an hour early (4:00 p.m.) on Wednesdays, effective January 28, 2026.

Executive Summary:

Since 2024, the public hours of the ROV Office have been as follows (with certain exceptions, such as county holidays and critical election periods):

- Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In accordance with County Code Sec. 2-2.1, this item would change these hours back to their pre-2024 schedule: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each weekday, including Wednesdays. Having the same hours of operation each weekday will not negatively impact ROV staff and simplify ROV's communications and outreach efforts.

Discussion:

Until recently, ROV was one of three divisions comprising the County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor (CRA) department (the other two being the County Clerk-Recorder and the Assessor).

In spring of 2016, CRA management decided it would be beneficial for employees in the County Clerk-Recorder and Assessor divisions if their offices closed to the public one hour early on Wednesdays (i.e., at 4:00 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m.). Up until that point, regular public hours for both divisions had been Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except county holidays). The Board of Supervisors (BOS) agreed to the change and the new hours took effect on July 1, 2016.

While there were a variety of reasons for the change, two of the most important were:

- To provide staff in the County Clerk-Recorder and Assessor divisions with uninterrupted "quiet" time to attend meetings, participate in trainings, take courses, and engage in team-building exercises.
- To create a more unified CRA department with increased communication and cross-training opportunities between divisions.

In 2023, CRA management decided to extend the modified hours to ROV so its employees could have the

same opportunities as their counterparts in the County Clerk-Recorder and Assessor divisions. The BOS agreed and ROV's new hours took effect on January 1, 2024. However, in early 2025, the BOS approved an ordinance separating ROV from CRA and making ROV its own stand-alone department, effective July 1, 2025. As a result, maintaining consistency with CRA's hours of operation is no longer a concern.

There are several additional reasons why ROV management has decided to change ROV's public office hours back to their pre-2024 schedule:

- ROV staffing has increased. In January of 2024, ROV had 18 permanent full-time employees, including four managers. Today, ROV has 22 permanent full-time employees, including six managers. This makes it less of a burden for an employee or two to stay behind and staff the public counter while other employees attend an event, training, or activity.
- The ROV Office is set to move from 435 Fiscal Drive to 3880 Brickway Boulevard. The new building has far more space, which will allow ROV staff to be located together in the same space, making it easier to cover the public counter. By contrast, in early 2024, ROV staff were dispersed among several buildings.
- Having a simple "Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m." schedule has proven far simpler to communicate to the public than "Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesdays: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m." This is especially the case given that ROV regularly sends hundreds of thousands of postcards, guides, ballots, etc. that are required by federal law to be in both English and Spanish. With ad space at a premium and postage rates rapidly increasing, saving even just a line or two of text can result in substantial cost savings.
- During critical election periods ROV was required to revert back to its prior hours. Some of these periods lasted multiple weeks or even months, including:
 - Signatures-in-lieu (six to seven weeks)
 - Candidate nominations (four weeks)
 - Early voting (Vote-by-Mail and Vote Centers) (four weeks)
 - Official canvass (four weeks)

These frequent schedule changes were challenging to publicize, might lead to increased confusion among voters. For example, one press release in spring of 2024 described the ROV Office's upcoming hours like this:

"Next week, the Office will be open each weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. However, beginning April 3, office hours will revert back to 'normal' (closing at 4 p.m. instead of 5 p.m. on Wednesdays; the Office will still close at 5 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays)."

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

Prior Board Actions:

On February 11, 2025, the BOS approved adopted Ordinance No. 6505, creating a stand-alone ROV department, effective July 1, 2025.

On January 28, 2025, the BOS adopted Resolution Number 25-0087, reading the title of and waiving further reading of a proposed ordinance to create a stand-alone ROV department.

On October 3, 2023, the BOS approved Resolution Number 23-0487, modifying the public office hours of the ROV division of the CRA department to close an hour early (i.e., 4:00 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m.) on Wednesdays, effective January 3, 2024.

On May 17, 2016, the BOS approved a modification to the public office hours of the County Clerk-Recorder and Assessor divisions of the CRA department to close an hour early (i.e., 4:00 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m.) on Wednesdays, effective July 1, 2016.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY25-26 Adopted	FY26-27 Projected	FY27-28 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Resolution

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Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A