



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 12/16/2025

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**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sonoma County Regional Parks  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Bert Whitaker, 707-565-2041  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisorial District(s):** Fifth

**Title:**

Ordinance Amending Chapter 20 Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Consider an Ordinance amending Chapter 20, Article VIII, of the Sonoma County Code updating Sonoma Marinas related to marina governance and operations; and
- B) Adopt a Resolution introducing, reading the title of, and waiving further reading of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code.

**Executive Summary:**

On September 23, 2025, Regional Parks brought a comprehensive package of updates to the Board intended to improve the governance, financial transparency, and operational integrity of the County of Sonoma owned and operated marinas. In the item was the introduction of an Ordinance amending Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code related to marina governance and operations which was approved by the Board. However, due to updates and corrections since that ordinance introduction, staff is re-introducing an updated Ordinance.

This ordinance amends Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code to modernize local regulations governing marina safety, berthing, public use, pollution control, enforcement, and infrastructure management. It renames Article VIII to reflect oversight of all County of Sonoma Marinas, updates key definitions, and clarifies the authority and responsibilities of the Park Authority and Marina Supervisor. These changes bring the County Code in line with current operations and best practices. If the Board adopts the resolution, the ordinance will return for adoption at a later date.

**Discussion:**

Sonoma County's marina system (Marina System) is composed of Spud Point Marina, Mason's Marina, and the Sport Fishing Center. On September 23, 2025, Regional Parks introduced a comprehensive package of updates related to marina governance, financial structure, and recommended amendments to Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code. During review of the materials for the second reading of the amendments to the ordinance, it was identified that the first reading did not fully reflect the ordinance title or provide a comprehensive list of all the intended changes proposed. Accordingly, Regional Parks is bringing the ordinance forward again with the corrected information incorporated.

The proposed ordinance amending Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code (Attachment A)

intends to modernize and expand marina regulations to improve operational efficiency, financial flexibility, environmental protection, and public service across all County-operated marinas.

Revisions include:

- Section 20-41 - Renaming and expanded applicability: Retitles Article VIII as the County of Sonoma Marinas Ordinance and extends applicability from Spud Point Marina to all County-operated marinas, including Mason's Marina and the Sport Fishing Center.
- Section 20-42 - Updated definitions and roles: Expands and clarifies key terms and updates references to the Park Authority and Marina Supervisor to reflect current operational structure, enforcement authority, and delegated responsibilities.
- Section 20-43 - Operational authority: Clarifies the duties and authority of the Park Authority and designated marina personnel to manage berths, enforce regulations, and ensure safe and orderly marina operations.
- Section 20-44 - Violation of Article: Defines "day" to 24-hour period.
- Section 20-45 - Owner's Responsibility to Pay: Clarifies that vessel owners and persons in charge are responsible for all fees, charges, damages, and costs incurred by or owed to the County.
- Section 20-46 - Revised berthing and residency provisions: Establishes consistent live-aboard rules, including limited allowances for up to 20 security-related live-aboard vessels, transient vessel stays of up to 14 days within any 60-day period, and authorization for up to 30 short-term, lower-cost visitor-serving berths to support public access and economic vitality.
- Section 20-48 - Pollution and Control Restrictions: Updates prohibition of aggressive animals.
- Section 20-49 - Operational and area use rules: Adds removal of use area restrictions by Park Authority.
- Section 20-51 - Vessel maintenance and operations: Updates repair, sanding, and dock-use standards; and establishes requirements for safe vessel maintenance to prevent environmental impacts.
- Section 20-52 - Parking and vehicle use: Clarifies overnight vehicle and trailer occupancy requirements subject to Park Authority approval.
- Administrative updates (Sections IV & V): Add CEQA findings under Section 15378(b)(5) for organizational and administrative actions, incorporate publication and effective-date requirements consistent with Government Code § 25123, and delete outdated or redundant provisions.

Collectively, these revisions bring the County Code in line with current operations and best practices, ensuring consistent oversight, environmental compliance, and balanced support for both commercial and recreational marina users. A redline version of the proposed changes to Chapter 20 Article VIII is attached as Attachment C.

Staff recommends the Board adopt the resolution introducing, reading the Title of and Waiving Further Reading of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code and if so, staff will return to the Board at a later date to adopt the Ordinance.

**Strategic Plan:**

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

**Pillar:** Resilient Infrastructure

**Goal:** Goal 1: Strengthen operational effectiveness, fiscal reliability, and accountability

**Objective:** Objective 1: Align the Board of Supervisor's strategic priorities, policy, and operational goals

with funding and resources.

**Racial Equity:**

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

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

09/23/25: Introduced ordinance updating the governance, financial structure, and county code for Sonoma County Marinas

1984 - Adoption of Resolution No. 84-2421 establishing the Spud Point Marina Advisory Committee and defining the structure and purpose of marina oversight at that time.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Introduction of the amended ordinance to update Chapter 20, Article VIII of the County Code does not generate a direct fiscal impact but supports long-term cost control through improved enforcement tools, clarified operational authority, revenue generating opportunities and more efficient management.

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

- A. Ordinance Amending Chapter 20 Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code
- B. Resolution Introducing, Reading the Title of, and Waiving Further Reading of the Proposed Ordinance Amending Chapter 20, Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code
- C. Redline of Amendments to Chapter 20 Article VIII of the Sonoma County Code

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A