



COUNTY OF EL DORADO

RECORDER CLERK - REGISTRAR OF VOTERS - VETERANS AFFAIRS

William E. Schultz

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: William E. Schultz
Registrar of Voters

DATE: June 3, 2015

SUBJECT: Consolidation of Rescue Fire Protection District to even year elections

SUMMARY:

Districts whose governing body is elected in odd years may submit a resolution to the Board of Supervisors to request their elections to occur on the same date as the Statewide General Election, (Elections Code 10404). Rescue Fire Protection District Resolution #2015-03 states the first such election will occur on the November 2018 General Election.

As required by law, the Clerk to the Board has sent a notice to all districts located in the County, advising them of the receipt of the resolution and asking for their input.

The Resolution shall become operative upon approval by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Elections Code section 10404. This code section states that "the 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 material cannot be handled".

ANALYSIS:

The even-year General statewide elections currently have over 42 local entities eligible to go to election, along with federal, state and county offices and local measures that qualify for the ballot. The State of California now requires that most state propositions to be placed on the General even-year election ballot. In November 2014 only 16 of these local entities went to election, this varies for each election, the balance of the entities being either appointed in lieu of election or eligible for appointment by the Board of Supervisors.

Ballot System Limitations

The ability to consolidate additional districts to the General Election is limited by the ballot tabulation and layout system currently used by El Dorado County. The current system is capable of producing duplex ballots in 11", 14" and 18" format. The system cannot gracefully handle multiple card ballots. To date, we have not exceeded the capacity of a single 14" ballot for any election.

System Testing using November, 2014 election parameters

The November 2014 election was typical of a general statewide election held within El Dorado County. Tests were conducted by the Elections Department using the November 2014 election parameters as a starting point and adding 3 contests to that election to see what impact it would have on the ballot styles in a typical general election. Ballot styles are produced based on geographic areas, grouping voters who vote on the same issues. In November 2014, there were 57 ballot styles. The test added one ballot style to the election and pushed the length of 2 ballot styles to an 18" format. The cost of printing 18" ballots is 38% higher than the cost of 11" or 14" ballots and 18" ballots take about 30% longer to process through the ballot card readers.

Polling Place Consolidations

It is undesirable to mix ballot styles at precinct polling places. This is due to the difficulty of insuring that a voter who goes to the polling place to vote, is issued and allowed to vote the correct ballot style. For this reason, we rarely consolidate precincts with different ballot styles into the same polling place. Adding more contests to any given election can result in more ballot styles and more polling places. More polling places equal higher election costs.

IMPACT/COST ANALYSIS:

It is clear that adding Rescue Fire Protection District to the general election will increase the cost of conducting the election but there is no way to know for sure what any future election will actually look like as far as contests, ballot styles, ballot formats or number of polling places needed to conduct an election. The addition of more races to the general election will increase the overall cost of the election, however, all entities going to election pay their pro-rata share of the election costs. We believe that any increase in cost will be negligible and likely outweighed by the savings of removing Rescue Fire Protection District from the odd-year UDEL election. Additionally, the ballot system currently used by El Dorado County should be able to handle the added contents.