



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0494, **Version:** 2

Clerk of the Board providing additional information regarding the feasibility of County provided business cards for members of boards, committees, and commissions that make a formal request, pursuant to Board direction on March 12, 2019 and April 9, 2019. (Cont. 4/9/19, Item 22) (Est. Time: 15 Min.)

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On April 9, 2019 the Board discussed this matter and directed staff to gather additional information and perspective from County Department Heads. The subject matter was discussed at the next available Department Heads meeting on April 26, 2019, resulting in the following key take-aways regarding the provision of business cards for members of boards, committees, and commissions:

- 1) Departments that provide staff support to boards, committees, and commissions were not in favor of the additional responsibilities that would be required of staff.
- 2) Should the Board decide to move forward, the Department Heads generally preferred to utilize a generic, standardized business card and recommends the Board adopt a policy with defined procedures to aid the process.

It is important to reiterate that costs for business cards have not been specifically provided for in the various departments that support boards, committees, and commissions, inclusive of the Office of the Clerk of the Board. Further, staff time currently dedicated to providing services that are statutorily mandated or otherwise directed by the Board may be negatively impacted as staff time is redirected to the variety of processes necessary to order and maintain business cards.

In the event the Board chooses to direct staff to proceed with option 2 shown above, staff will prepare a policy pursuant to Board Policy A-1 *Development and Distribution of Board of Supervisors Policies* and return to the Board on a future date for consideration.

Information provided on April 9th is shown below.

On March 12, 2019 the Board directed staff to perform a feasibility analysis to consider providing business cards to members of boards, committees, and commissions that make a formal request.

Staff conducted an informal verbal survey of appropriate County staff in the Chief Administrative Office-Fiscal Division, Auditor-Controllers Office, Community Development Services - Administration and Finance Division, Environmental Management, Department of Transportation and the Health and Human Services Agency to outline the process and determine the minimum investment of staff time required to order business cards and process payment. See the Financial Impact section below for information regarding cost potential.

For the purposes of this staff report, the term "committee" refers to all applicable boards, committees, and commissions.

Options for Board consideration:

Fully Customized Business Cards

Cards would be printed by the service provider and may include the member name, committee name, personal and/or County office telephone number, personal email address and a website address for the committee, if one exists. Cards may be ordered and maintained by the department most closely aligned with supporting the committee and where none exists, the Office of the Clerk of the Board would perform these functions.

Semi-Customized Business Cards

Cards would be printed by the service provider and may include the committee name, a County office telephone number, a website address for the committee, if one exists. Blank space would be provided for the member to handwrite their name and respective contact information. This option reduces staff time in terms of less frequent orders when compared to the fully customized version.

Cards may be ordered and maintained by the department most closely aligned with supporting the committee and where none exists, the Office of the Clerk of the Board would perform these functions.

In-House Business Cards Prepared by County Staff

In some departments, fully customized business cards are prepared for staff in-house using preformatted text and graphics specific to the corresponding department. In these instances, staff print small quantities (50 or less) for two primary purposes; 1) New county staff awaiting fulfillment of the order for 500 or 1000 cards by the County's service provider; and 2) For use by staff who use cards infrequently. This option could be modified to apply to committees as a less expensive alternative in terms of the actual cost of the cards and it is reasonable to expect staff time invested in this process would be reduced to approximately 30 minutes. Further, this option may strike a balance as it is reasonable to anticipate most committee members would not require a full order of 500 or 1000 cards.

Cards may be prepared and maintained by the department most closely aligned with supporting the committee and where none exists, the Office of the Clerk of the Board would perform these functions.

Generic Business Cards

As an alternative to ordering customized business cards for each member, a relatively generic business card could be created that provides blank space for a member to hand write their name, the name of the committee and respective contact information at the discretion of each member. Although less expensive and less labor intensive, this option may appear to some as being unprofessional in appearance.

Cards would be ordered and maintained by the Office of the Clerk of the Board by way of an order for a large volume of generic cards to be distributed upon request and within guidelines yet to be established.

Additional Information

Should the Board choose to provide business cards, it is recommended the Board contemplate the inclusion of standard text and graphics for all business card types in this context such as the County Seal and perhaps references to reflect that the committee member is not a County employee and

therefore not authorized to speak on behalf of the County or commit County resources.

For cards ordered through the service provider, staff follows a process that includes verification of contact information and multiple layers of accounting and auditing measures. It is important to note that one or more of the steps in the process may be repeated in the event of an error that may require re-approval or other authorization prior to continuing with the next step.

Professional Organization and Staff Input

Responses from several members of the California Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Association online forum generally reflect the absence of a provision for the designation of business cards for committee members. One exception was Marin County where an "Administrative Regulation" addresses the use of business cards by members of committees. The Marin Clerk offered that the regulation was implemented as a result of a committee member printing their own business card and making representations in the community that were not precisely aligned with the committee's purpose or Board Policy.

County Counsel requested feedback on this issue from the State County Counsel Association, consisting of all 58 counties. Ten counties responded, all of which said they do not provide business cards to committee or commission members, and recommended against doing so. As County Counsel previously noted when this matter was first discussed on March 12, one potential risk of providing business cards to committee members is that it could create a perception that the member is an employee or agent of the County and has authority to act and/or speak on the County's behalf, even on matters outside the scope of their appointed position.

Accordingly, should the Board elect to proceed, staff requests a reasonable amount of time to have an in-depth conversation with Department Heads and key stakeholders to develop internal controls, procedures and forms. If during that process staff identifies previously unforeseen complications, additional funding needs, or greater than anticipated impacts to existing staff time, staff may return to the Board with recommendations prior to officially enacting the new procedure(s).

ALTERNATIVES

The Board may choose to:

- 1) Direct staff to take action based on their discussion.
- 2) Take no action.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

March 12, 2019, Item 17, file 19-0371, direction to staff provided.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

County Counsel

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Due to the anticipated increase to staff time and costs, and the potential risk of creating the appearance of authority outside the scope of the appointed or volunteer position, it is not recommended that the Board provide business cards for members of boards, committees, and commissions. However, if the Board wishes to provide business cards, it is recommended that generic cards be used.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The consensus of department staff surveyed resulted in the **minimum** cumulative investment of staff time at **90 minutes** for orders to be fulfilled by the service provider. In all scenario's, a County Purchasing Card (PCard) is the most efficient method to process payment. A simple formula was used to estimate costs based on the information received during the informal survey of County staff.

(Cost of the cards) + (\$30 average hourly wage) X (minimum time for processing)

The average hourly equivalent wage of \$30 takes into account the salaries of employees typically responsible for various components of the process. Using the above formula and current unit prices, estimated **minimum** costs are as follows:

All Business Card Types Ordered through Current Vendor (contract)

500 single-sided, single-color business cards priced at \$17.30 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$62 per order.

1000 single-sided, single-color business cards priced at \$19.80 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$65 per order.

Sample Costs from other Local Providers

Staff reached out to the current service provider and two other local providers to determine the feasibility of a lower number of cards per order. As an example, the providers were asked to provide a verbal quote for 100 single-sided, single color business cards. Responses were as follows and include the estimated costs for staff time.

Minuteman Press, provided we use their standard template: \$20.00 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$65 per order.

OfficeMax, provided we use their standard template: \$10 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$55 per order. In the event OfficeMax needs to manipulate the template to accommodate our needs, or we choose a different template, there would be an additional charge of \$9.95 for a total of \$19.95 per order + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$65 per order.

Sierra Gold Graphics (current provider): \$5.00 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$50 per order.

In-House Cards

250 blank business cards may be ordered through the current office supply vendor for approximately \$10.00 + \$15 staff time (30 minutes) which amounts to approximately \$25 per order. Costs for this category will vary depending on the frequency of ordering blank cards. In this scenario, staff time is reduced by eliminating the need to process a separate PCard payment for each order as a single order of 250 blank cards could theoretically provide a sufficient number of cards for a given committee (5 members, 50 cards each).

Generic Cards

1000 single-sided, single-color business cards priced at \$19.80 + \$45 in staff time which amounts to approximately \$65 per order.

There are currently 296 member positions on committees. At this early stage, it is reasonable to anticipate less than a third of current appointees (under 100) would make a request for a business card. It is important to point out that a significant amount of membership turnover occurs on a regular basis which will contribute to the costs and dedication of staff time.

While no current funds are identified for ordering business cards for members of committees, staff estimates actual costs are likely to be absorbed within existing applicable department budgets.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Follow up action dependent upon Board direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Good Governance, Objective 2.3

CONTACT

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