



# Alameda County Elections Commission

## Approved Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2026

4:00 PM

San Lorenzo Library Greenhouse Community Room  
395 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo, CA 94580  
Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87981215132>

### 1 Call to Order / Roll Call

The Elections Commission convened at 4:00 p.m. with President Lindsay presiding as chair.

Present -- *Commission Members*: Judy Belcher, Karen Butter, Irene Dieter, Susan Henderson, James Lindsay, Alissa Moore, Alex Ramon, Alexandra (Sasha) Ritzie-Hernandez (remote), Karl Seabrook, Tiega Varlack, David Wagner, Allie Whitehurst, and ex officio Thai Nam Pham (participated via teleconference at 34009 Alvarado-Niles Road, Union City, CA pursuant to Cal. Gov't Code § 54953(b)(3)).

*Registrar of Voters*: Cynthia Cornejo, Noe Lucio, Shaheer Siddiqui, and Charles Smithline.

*County Counsel*: Jason Allen.

Absent -- No commissioners were absent.

### 2 Swearing In of New Commissioners

Sasha Ritzie-Hernandez was sworn-in in public.

#### 2(a) Nominations and Elections of President and Vice President

President Lindsay reviewed the process and duties of officers. Irene Dieter was nominated for president by Commissioner Butter, seconded by Commissioner Ramon, and passed 10 to 0. Alex Ramon was nominated for vice president by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Lindsay, and passed 10 to 0. Ms. Dieter then began to preside as chair.

### 3 Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to move Agenda Item 8(a)(4), the post-election assessment, to follow 8(b)(2), the observation notifications, by Ms. Dieter, seconded by Mr. Lindsay, and passed 10 to 0.

### 4 Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the November 20, 2025 minutes with no changes was made by Mr. Ramon, seconded by Ms. Henderson, and passed 11 to 0.

A motion to approve the January 11, 2026 minutes was made by Mr. Ramon, seconded by Mr. Lindsay, and passed 11 to 0.

### 5 Announcements and Communications on non-agenda items (video time 22:43)

a. From staff - Acting Registrar of Voters Cornejo announced that the next meeting of the Elections Commission will be held at the Registrar of Voters offices, 1225 Fallon Street in Oakland, in the Superior Court Building in the basement.

b. From commissioners - Commissioner Belcher said she is curious about whether the ROV is addressing any threats to the elections system.

## 6 Public Comment on Agenda Items

One public comment was made.

## 7 Monthly Update from Registrar of Voters Office (video time 30:15)

Ms. Cornejo reviewed the processes and timeline for candidate nominations and filings and optional signatures in-lieu to off-set filing fees. The nominations period runs through March 6. She reported to date there were 100 filings. The website shows who has filed. County residents running for state or federal offices can file in the county, but they are administered by the Secretary of State. Commissioners asked questions about the filing fees and how they are set. Mr. Noe Lucio, the ROV's division manager for candidate services, provided details between city and county offices, and confirmed that candidate statements of qualification to be printed in the voter guide will be available in five different languages.

## 8 Regular Agenda Items (video time 39:20)

### 8(a) Ongoing Items from Ad Hoc Committees

#### 8(a)(1) Voting Participation

Commissioner Seabrook reported that the committee has reevaluated direction and mission and is working on measurable goals and partnering with other organizations. A motion to add Commissioner Ritzie-Hernandez to the committee was made by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Seabrook, and passed 11 to 0.

#### 8(a)(2) Nominations

Mr. Ramon announced the committee completed filling the last vacant seat and could be disbanded. A motion was made to disband the Nominations Committee by Mr. Ramon, seconded by Mr. Seabrook, and passed 11 to 0.

#### 8(a)(3) Youth Participation

Commissioner Varlack reported that the committee met and has done some preliminary research on how to promote youth voting and involvement. She said the committee through the president requested from the ROV information related to the demographics of youth voters and trends of turnout in election cycles. They would like to hear about election costs and if in-person youth voting will add to costs. Ms. Cornejo highlighted how the ROV Outreach and Education Team have been working on the program to filter data for pre-registered youth voter turnout. The ROV is working with schools, unified school districts, and organizations. The ROV is enhancing the student election worker program, where there is a recruiting team and students get a stipend for working and school credit. Commissioners asked related questions.

#### 8(a)(4) November 2025 Post-election Assessment

This item was to be heard after item 8(b)(2) and postponed to the next meeting.

#### 8(a)(5) Update on Recruitment for ROV position

Mr. Lindsay reported that he sent an email to the supervisors saying commissioners were encouraging people to spread the word about the opening and asking if there was anything else they would like the commission to do. He received a response thanking and providing us with the information that was in the agenda packet showing us the hiring is in process. They also said they would contact the commission if they needed the commission's assistance.

8(b) New Business (video time 1:06)

**8(b)(1) Budgeting for Elections and Candidate Statements**

Ms. Dieter reminded commissioners that this issue has been before the commission for awhile, including in previous post-election assessments, as city managers and clerks have a hard time budgeting for elections when they are not clear about the costs. Mr. Lindsay added that the problem centers around reallocations or other charges for many ballot measures, ranked-choice voting (RCV), or youth voting. Mr. Lindsay clarified that the commission's feedback may be incorporated in the ROV and city clerk discussions on this issue.

Ms. Cornejo reported the Finance Team has been working on it. The published rate for a standard election in the November 2024 election was \$5-\$7 and the actual charge levied was \$4.63. Factors considered for non-standard elections, such as RCV and youth voting, include paper and printing costs, and expenses to implement additional requirements and mandates, and one-time costs. The ROV Finance Team continues to look at other counties. A subcommittee is working on a standardized billing method for guidance in setting prices in all 58 counties.

A motion that the ROV office produces a written document that clearly and unambiguously defines exactly how cities will be charged for the 2026 primary and general elections. This is not the amount, but rather the formulas that will be used for cities using RCV, youth voting, or too many issues on a ballot, and that charges must be clearly defined in the document. And due to time constraints that cities are facing, form an ad hoc committee, preferably with the city clerk participating, to work with staff on resolving the issue was made by Mr. Lindsay.

A substitute motion requested that the ROV office produce a written fee schedule that clearly defines exactly how jurisdictions will be charged with an explanation of those charges, including RCV and youth voting, and for reallocations of charges for five or more ballot measures for the 2026 elections, and to form an ad hoc committee to oversee its implementation was made Ms. Dieter. Mr. Lindsay withdrew his motion. The substitute motion was seconded by Mr. Lindsay. A discussion ensued. The motion passed 12 to 0.

Commissioners Wagner, Lindsay and Pham volunteered to be part of the ad hoc committee. A motion was made to form the ad hoc committee consisting of Mr. Wagner, Mr. Lindsay and City Clerk Pham by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Ramon and passed 12 to 0.

**8(b)(2) Start times and processes in ROV notifications to the public for observation** (video time 1:37)

Mr. Lindsay clarified that the expectation was not to announce a start time the day before. A motion was made that one staff member be designated as the point person to give election observers and any other interested parties the fastest and the most thorough updates possible via the ROV's alert list by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Ramon.

Ms. Cornejo reminded the commission that the ROV's response on the issue was in the grand jury report and she described the enhancements for observations. She reiterated that the ROV cannot control all the factors that determine when any given process can be efficiently and lawfully conducted, that the ROV already notifies subscribers at the beginning of each day what processes will take place that day, and that the ROV provides an interactive kiosk for each process area for in-person observers. Ms. Dieter asked if there is way to alert subscribers when a certain process is about to take place. Ms. Cornejo explained that staffing and capacity are constraints, and setting expectations could confuse the public and raise other problems. Mr. Wagner said there may be an opportunity to make incremental customer

service improvements. Ms. Belcher said this issue has already been covered and that the ROV has been making incremental improvements, so the issue is redundant. Ms. Moore mentioned that a volunteer student intern could perform the task.

A substitute motion that the commission have a standing recommendation that the ROV make incremental improvements on alerting subscribers when a certain process is about to start, and that the ROV update the commission on this issue was made by Ms. Dieter, seconded by Ms. Varlack, and passed 11 to 1, with Ms. Belcher dissenting.

A motion to hear public comment next was made by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Seabrook, and passed 12 to 0.

#### **9 Special Report from the ROV**

The special report on new laws that will impact the ROV was postponed to the next meeting.

#### **10 Public Comment on Agenda or Non-Agenda Items**

One public comment was made.

#### **11 Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 6:33 p.m.