

**City of Piedmont**  
**COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

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DATE: October 1, 2007

FROM: Ann Swift, City Clerk

SUBJECT: **Municipal Election Options**

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RECOMMENDATION

Give direction to staff regarding whether or not to prepare a charter amendment for the Regular Municipal Election of March 2008 which would change the city's regular election date to the second Tuesday in November of even numbered years.

BACKGROUND

Under a city charter amendment made in 1999, the regular municipal elections of the City of Piedmont are held on the "first Tuesday after the first Monday of March in each even-numbered year." The charter amendment was approved by the voters in an attempt to consolidate city elections with the statewide primary held at the same time. In 2000, 2002 and 2004, Piedmont did consolidate with the statewide primary, saved money and increased voter turnout. In 2006, the legislature moved the statewide primary to June and Piedmont held a more expensive stand alone election in March. Again, in 2008, the primary election date has been changed.

With the shift of the statewide primary to February in 2008, the city was placed in a precarious position. There are less than 30 days between the statewide primary and the city election, a very tight schedule for the Alameda County Registrar of Voters. The Registrar has requested that the city consider other options for an election date and in April of this year, the council requested that I return with a proposal which could be incorporated with the March 2008 ballot.

The two statewide election dates which are available to Piedmont for consolidation are the second Monday in June and the second Monday in November. Both dates will save the city money and both dates will increase voter turnout in all probability. The following is my analysis of the pluses and minuses of each date.

## **June**

- The election process will run simultaneously with the annual budget process which will stretch staff resources at a critical point.
- A simultaneous process may politicize the budget process as candidates and/or incumbents campaign on specific proposals in the budget.
- New council members might be asked to approve a budget over which they had no control.
- Council terms will be extended three (3) months in 2010 when the new election cycle takes effect.

## **November**

- Piedmont issues will be subsumed in a very large election.
- Council terms will be extended eight (8) months in 2010 when the new election cycle takes effect.

As city clerk, it is my recommendation that the council consider placing a charter amendment before the voters setting the second Tuesday in November as the city's regular municipal election date. The City Administrator agrees and the city attorney has indicated that the November date may be preferable for Piedmont.

Please keep in mind that in order to meet the election timeline, a first reading of an ordinance regarding any charter amendment will need to be done on October 15, 2007.