MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 28, 2008

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman
County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer’s Weekly Report for January 28, 2008

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer to the Board of Supervisors. This report provides information on issues affecting the County and the progress of County activities.

Cooperative Extension

Statistical information regarding the value of agriculture and the multiplier effect that it has on the economy for California as well as data specific to the Central Coast can be found on pages 20 – 22 of a report on the University of California Agricultural Issues website.

The report shows that on the Central Coast agricultural production and processing has an employment multiplier of 1.66, meaning for every 100 jobs in the industry 66 additional jobs are created in the region. The industry’s total impact on labor income was estimated as $7.2 million.

To view the report, go to http://aic.ucdavis.edu/publications/MOCA_Ch_5.10aPrePrint.pdf.

Elections

Registration Deadline Over: The deadline to register to vote for the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election was Tuesday, January 22, 2008. The Department kept its doors open until midnight to those who needed to register to vote. The Department received over 1,000 voter registration forms in the mail and assisted 369 people at its front counter, with the last registrant of the evening completing their form at 11.53 p.m! The total number of voter registration cards received up to the deadline to register was 3,507.
**Modified Primary:** Monday’s edition of the Monterey Herald included the following article out of Sacramento County:

“County election chiefs across California are warning that thousands of ballots may not be counted in next month’s presidential primary because absentee voters are voting for candidates outside their parties.

Election officials are reminding voters that Republicans have to vote for Republicans, and Democrats for Democrats.

In Sacramento, hundreds of ballots received by the Registrar of Voters have had write-in votes for candidates for other parties.

Part of the confusion is because millions of California voters decline to state their party affiliation. Those voters can cast ballots for Democrats or American Independent Party candidates — but not for Republicans.

To get their ballot counted, those voters have to request a special ballot.”

Monterey County’s local Sample Ballot & Voter Information Pamphlet informed all voters of the Modified Primary and also provided details on changing party affiliation in order to be able to vote for a different party’s candidate in the Modified Primary. The Department has taken many calls from voters regarding this election and how to request a ballot from a different party. The Department included information on the Modified Primary system as a part of a letter from the Registrar of Voters sent to each voter inside the local pamphlet, as well as used a “filler page” to explain the history of the Modified Primary and included scenarios for “What it means to the voter”.

**So, what does it mean?** In California, the Modified Primary system allows the qualified parties to adopt Modified Primary rules and notify the Secretary of State at least 135 days before the scheduled primary whether or not they will allow voters who are NOT affiliated with a qualified political party to request their party’s ballot. For the Presidential Primary Election, the American Independent and the Democratic Parties will participate. Voters who have “declined to state” (referred to as DTS or nonpartisan voters) an affiliation with a political party, or those voters who are currently registered with a non-qualified political party in this State (Reform, Whig, Liberal to name a few) are the only voters eligible to “cross-over”. Voters who are registered to vote with a qualified political party may only choose from candidates running in their affiliated party. If the voter wishes to change parties, or change to “decline to state”, they must have filled out a new voter registration form by the deadline of Tuesday, January 22, 2008. If not, they must vote the party ballot with which they are registered to vote.

**What does the voter have to do?** The Vote By Mail (Absenteec) Voter who has received a nonpartisan ballot may simply return that ballot to the Department and write either the American Independent Party or the Democratic Party next to the box used to indicate they have spoiled their
ballot. Voters intending to exercise this option should do so right away – the last day the Department can mail out ballots is Wednesday, January 30, 2008. Otherwise, the voter should take the ballot they already received to their polling place on Election Day to surrender that ballot and request a new ballot.

The Polling Place Voter simply asks an Election Officer at their precinct for one of the two optional partisan ballots.

*Vote by Mail (Absentee) Voting:* The Department has issued 83,463 Vote By Mail ballots and has received 24,080 voted returns. Voters have until the close of polls to return their ballot to an Elections Official and many voters do wait and drop their ballot off on Election night at one of the County’s polling places. The Department suggests that anyone who plans to return their voted ballot should mail it no later than Thursday or Friday, January 31st or February 1st to allow enough time for the Department to receive it by Election Day.

*City Hall Secure Ballot Boxes:* Last week’s Monterey Herald informed voters they may be able to drop off their voted ballot at any City Hall in Monterey County on Election Day. This is not accurate! The last day to drop off a voted ballot at one of the City Halls in the County is THIS FRIDAY, February 1, 2008. The Department immediately called the Herald and requested a correction appear in this weekend’s paper, which it did. However, the location where all corrections appear is very small so the Department would like to clarify this for all County Employees. If anyone asks you, please inform them that they may drop their voted ballot off on Election Day to any polling place in the County or directly to the Elections Department in Salinas. Post marks do not count on voted ballots so please don’t return your ballot via mail after Friday, February 1, 2008 – drop it off in person to be assured your ballot will be received in time to count.

The Department commenced tabulation of returned and verified vote by mail ballots on Monday, January 28, 2008. The next scheduled tabulation day is Monday, February 4, 2008.

*Poll Worker Training:* Poll worker training is coming to a close. The three final classes are scheduled for today, Monday, January 28, 2008. The hands-on “Practice Makes Perfect” training on the voting equipment begins tomorrow and runs each afternoon at the Department’s office in Salinas through Friday, February 1, 2008. Through the County Employee Election Official Program, we now have a total of 122 employees who have applied to participate during the Presidential Primary Election. Thank you to all who have signed up to assist on Election Day!

**Resource Management Agency**

On January 17th & 18th, RMA managers and staff from County Counsel participated in a stimulating seminar “Negotiations for Managers” provided by Professor Peter Robinson, Co-Director of the Pepperdine Law School Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution. The focus of the course was to integrate negotiation skills into our customer interactions and daily activities in the agency.
Professor Robinson is an experienced trainer who works with both public and private sector organizations. He also oversees the Dispute Resolution Certificate, Masters in Dispute Resolution and Masters in Law Program at Pepperdine.

The seminar was interactive, alternating between presentations by Professor Robinson, role-play exercises and staff perspectives on how the topics covered could apply to agency procedures and our own personal style in the workplace.

Managers will meet again to discuss how to transfer the knowledge they gained from the course to others in the agency as well as what changes to processes and procedures might be appropriate to ensure that the seminar learning translates into action.

Seminar participants have the opportunity to complete an additional 19 hours of training on mediation skills, which will enable them to receive a mediation certificate. Alana Knaster will teach the remainder of the curriculum.

This concludes the CAO report.