MEMORANDUM

DATE:       November 2, 2009
TO:         Board of Supervisors
FROM:       Lew C. Bauman  
            County Administrative Officer
SUBJECT:    County Administrative Officer's Weekly Report for November 2, 2009

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.

Elections

Outreach: On Wednesday, October 28th, the Registrar of Voters was the guest speaker at the October meeting of the Citizens League for Progress in Seaside. The two-hour agenda called for a 45-minute presentation regarding the current activities relating to voter registrations and elections at the federal, state, and local level and, after a brief break, the remainder of the meeting was reserved for Q&A. Topics ranged from national trends in voting technology and programs and what the federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is working on in relation to poll worker training and election contingency plans; the Secretary of State’s work on post-election tallies and cost savings measures, voting systems development and the recent move towards open and public source codes, and conditional voter registration (virtually eliminating the concept of a “close” to the voter rolls for an election); and, new programs and projects the Department has started over the past two years such as the Inmate Voting Program, production of an Observer Guide containing the Department’s procedures, increased information available on the Department’s website, and working with volunteers on the Observer Panel.

November 3, 2009 Consolidated City, School, and Special District Elections: The November local election is tomorrow. You may verify if you are eligible to participate, find your polling place location, and view your Voter Information and Sample Ballot Pamphlet on the
Department’s website. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters may also find going to vote at the Elections Department on South Main Street convenient.

Vote by Mail: To date, the Department mailed over 71,000 vote by mail ballots and received just more than 20,000 voted returns, which reflects a 29% vote by mail turn out to date. At this same time frame for the May 19, 2009 Statewide Special Election, the Department had nearly 29,000, or 30% of the voted returns and for the November 4, 2008 Presidential General the Department had nearly 60,000, or 61% of the voted returns. The Election Day, polling place turn out is expected to be lower.

Turnout and Certification: The Department is expecting a low turnout at the polls this Tuesday, estimating that the final overall turnout for the election to be somewhere in the 27% to low 32% range, after all vote by mail and provisional ballots have been verified and counted. The overall turnout may be similar to the Statewide Special election, which showed a near 33% turnout in Monterey County. However, there are certain areas of the County where the turnout may be higher, such as Carmel Valley for the Incorporation, the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea for the sale of the Flanders Mansion, and the City of Salinas’ special tax Measure K.

Final results must be completed and certified by the elections official no later than Monday, November 23rd. Normally, the Department would have 28 days after the election to complete the final official canvass of the vote, which would put certification no later than Tuesday, December 1st. This shortened official canvass period for the odd-year local election is mandated by state law.

Health

Clinic Services Bureau: Over the past two years, the Clinic Services Bureau has seen an increased number of Medicare patients. This increase is attributable to both a demographic shift in the larger community, and the declining number of local primary care physicians willing to provide care to new Medicare patients due to low reimbursement rates. In order to maximize the revenue opportunity represented by Medicare patients, the Clinic Services Bureau prepared and submitted an application for Medicare FQHC licensure and funding to the federal Center for Medicare Services (CMS). I am pleased to report that we have been notified that CMS has approved Medicare FQHC funding for all seven MCHD clinic sites effective October 16, 2009. The next step in the sequence is for the State of California to issue new billing numbers for each site. This licensure will allow the Bureau to receive an enhanced flat fee rate for all Medicare patients served. The Bureau estimates that this program will provide an additional $100,000 a year in revenue.

Library

Fine Free Months at Monterey County Free Libraries: Are you worried about overdue library materials? Monterey County Free Libraries gives you the gift of Fine Free Months during this
holiday season. Now is the time to return those library materials so they free up some room in your house and are back on the library shelves for someone else to borrow. Return your library materials at any of our 17 branches during November or December and the library will remove the charges associated with the late return. Some exceptions apply. Please contact your library staff for details. Monterey County Free Libraries are located in Aromas, Big Sur, Bradley, Las Palmas/River Road, Carmel Valley, Castroville, Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, Marina, Pajaro, Parkfield, Prunedale, San Ardo, San Lucas, Seaside, and Soledad. For locations, hours and contact information, please go to www.montereycountyfreelibraries.org

This concludes the CAO Report.