



AGENDA SUBMITTAL TO SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ITEM TITLE Receive a report on the re-organization of the Department of the Assessor-Recorder; Approve in concept the deletion of 1.0 FTE Supervising Cadastral Mapping Technician, 1.0 FTE Senior Auditor-Appraiser, and addition of 1.0 FTE Appraiser Technician to address revised personnel requirements due to changes in demand for services and to implement a more cost efficient management structure; and Direct the Department of Human Resources to bring back a resolution to amend the position allocation list		BOARD MEETING DATE December 7, 2010	AGENDA NUMBER 26
Dept:	Assessor-Recorder	Supervisorial District Number All	
Contact:	Marc Tonnesen, Assessor-Recorder		
Extension:	784-6203		
	Published Notice Required?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>
	Public Hearing Required?	Yes <u> X </u>	No <u> </u>

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors receive a report on the re-organization of the Department of the Assessor-Recorder; approve in concept the deletion of 1.0 FTE Supervising Cadastral Mapping Technician, 1.0 FTE Senior Auditor-Appraiser, and addition of 1.0 FTE Appraiser Technician to address revised personnel requirements due to changes in demand for services and to implement a more cost efficient management structure; and direct the Department of Human Resources to bring back a resolution to amend the position allocation list.

SUMMARY:

To meet the department's budgetary reduction target, the Assessor is recommending a departmental reorganization that would generate necessary cost savings from the resulting efficiencies. This reorganization also rebalances position allocations between sections to address new workload requirements.

Changes in demands for mapping services and real property appraisals have created an imbalance in staffing levels in the Mapping and Real Property Sections. With declining demand for mapping services, the Mapping Section now has excess staffing capacity. In contrast, increasing real property appraisals primarily due reassessments mandated by Proposition 8 has created a need for additional staff in the Real Property Section. To balance staffing requirements between the two sections, the Assessor is recommending the elimination of 1.0 FTE Supervising Mapping Technician in the Mapping Section and the addition of 1.0 FTE

Appraiser Technician in the Real Property Section. Due to differential in salaries between the two classifications, this action will result in annualized savings of \$34,400.

Also, due to a lay-off and the hiring freeze, the Personal Property Section is currently operating with a staff of three auditor-appraisers, namely: 1- Supervising Auditor-Appraiser, 1- Senior Auditor-Appraiser and 1- Auditor-Appraiser. The supervisor-to-staff ratio has been effectively reduced to a ratio of 1-to-1, a span of control that is too narrow and is not efficient use of the Department's limited resources. The Assessor is recommending the restructuring of the Personal Property Section by eliminating a 1.0 FTE Senior Auditor-Appraiser position and filling the vacant Auditor-Appraiser position in its place. This action would expand the span of control to a ratio of 1-to-2 and result in annualized savings of \$105,000.

FINANCING:

The proposed changes will result in a net savings of \$58,100 for five months in FY2010/11 and annual savings of \$139,400 starting in FY2011/12.

DISCUSSION:

Since January 2009, County departments collectively have had to eliminate a net of over 400 positions in order to meet budgetary constraints brought about by sharply declining revenues. With an additional \$18 million County structural deficit, departments are facing additional budgetary cuts. To find additional savings, a number of departments have re-organized to ensure that their operating structures optimize the capacity of their remaining personnel to effectively meet program service requirements and also to adjust span of control to appropriately manage their operation. The goal is to have a lean and effective organization.

The Assessor-Recorder has been working with the County Administrator's Office to identify additional opportunities for budgetary savings and cost reductions. With current workload already exceeding the capacity of existing staff, backlogs have accumulated in the department. The Assessor-Recorder has determined that the Department cannot recommend any additional staff reduction. However, an organizational review conducted with the CAO has identified opportunities for cost savings within the department.

Mapping Section/Real Property Appraisal Section

The collapse of the housing market has created changes in the demand for certain services provided by the Assessor. These changes have been most pronounced in Mapping Services and Real Property Appraisal Sections. Mapping Services has experienced a significant decline in demand, while real property appraisals has increased from 15,000 annually to over 65,000 each year due to the statutory requirements mandated by Proposition 8. The contrasting changes in demand have created an imbalance in the workload-to-personnel ratio between the two sections.

An organizational review of the assessor's organization revealed the Mapping Section has excess staff capacity with three full time allocated staff positions due to a decrease in workload. The Mapping Section is authorized 1.0 FTE Cadastral Mapping Technician (Supervising) and 2.0 FTE Cadastral Mapping Technicians. See Attachment A. The Assessor recommends the deletion of the Cadastral Mapping Technician (Supervising) to eliminate the excess staff

capacity created by the decline in demand for mapping services. With only two remaining mapping technicians, the Assessor-Recorder will revise the internal reporting structure for the unit.

Conversely, even with the implementation of automation and process improvements, the Real Property Section has not been able to fully meet all its workload requirements with its existing staff of 19 professional appraisers and para-professional appraiser technicians. A backlog of residential property appraisals and appeals has accumulated. The organizational review indicates the need for additional staff. The Assessor recommends the addition of 1.0 FTE Appraisal Technician to help mitigate the non-completed work.

These recommendations, if approved, will result in estimated annual savings of \$34,400.

Personal Property Appraisal Section

The Personal Property Appraisal Section assesses annually 6,700 business properties, 7,000 boats, and 200 aircrafts located in Solano County. It is currently assigned 1.0 FTE Supervising Auditor-Appraiser, 1.0 FTE Senior Auditor-Appraiser, and 2.0 FTE Auditor-Appraiser. See Attachment A. Although the Section has an existing backlog, the Assessor has left a vacant 1.0 FTE Auditor Appraiser position unfilled in order to comply with budgetary constraints. With no budgetary relief anticipated, the number of filled positions is expected to remain at the same level.

With only three auditor-appraisers, the following supervisor-to-staff relationships exist in the Personal Property Section: Supervising Auditor-Appraiser over the Senior Auditor-Appraiser; Senior Auditor-Appraiser over the Auditor-Appraiser. The resulting span of control is very narrow and not cost efficient. The high supervisor-to-staff ratio is not necessary, nor an effective use of limited resources. The review showed that the supervising auditor-appraiser could effectively supervise two auditor-appraisers. The Assessor recommends the deletion of 1.0 FTE Senior Auditor-Appraiser and filling the vacant Auditor-Appraiser position.

This recommendation, if approved, will result in estimated annual savings of \$105,000.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board of Supervisors may choose not to approve the reorganization and adopt the resolution. This alternative is not recommended because good business requires each department to optimize the use of its resources by allocating them based on need and organizing them to provide the most efficient service delivery.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Department of Human Resources has reviewed the proposed re-organization proposal for the Department of the Assessor-Recorder.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

The County Administrator concurs with the recommendation.

The CAO is working with the Assessor to address the Department's accumulated backlog in real property assessments, appeals, audits and business property statements. While additional position allocations are also being considered, sharply diminished fiscal resources and high labor costs require alternative solutions that are more cost effective.

Currently, the following options are being considered:

a. Automated Evaluation Systems for Processing Changes of Ownership and Residential Assessment Appeals

Funded through a \$1 million appropriation for technology initiatives, these programs will automate the processing of changes in ownership and residential assessment appeals. The automated processes will replace the equivalent of 4.5 FTEs, allowing the Assessor to redirect those efforts towards other assignments.

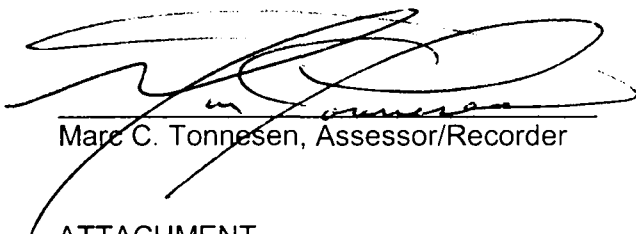
b. Solano County Integrated Property System (SCIPS) Upgrades for Processing Business Property Statements

These system enhancements would create efficiencies by enabling staff to implement mass assessment roll changes for business property statements and also accurately copy previous years' assessed values to the current year. These changes will greatly reduce the time required by auditor-appraisers and clerical staff in processing statements resulting in an increased number of processed statements within the same period.

c. Overtime Hours/Extra Help Staff

Due to statutory deadlines, the Assessor's Office experiences peaks in workload over a 3 month period (April – June). The volume of work during this period exceeds the capacity of regular staff, often resulting in non-completed assessments that have to be processed as roll corrections in the New Year. Each roll correction generates a second tax bill (corrected tax bill), which results in additional costs and extra work for both the Tax Collector and the Auditor. Based on substantiated needs, the CAO will recommend appropriations at the Mid Year budget review for Overtime/Extra Help Staff.

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE:



Marc C. Tonnesen, Assessor/Recorder

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A – Current Organization Chart

ASSESSOR / RECORDER
 Department Total 53
 Assessor 40 Recorder 13
 October 8, 2010

Office Coordinator
 Brenda Romero

ASSESSOR Division
 Budget Unit #1150

ASSESSOR RECORDER
 Marc Tonnesen

ASSISTANT
ASSESSOR RECORDER
 Kathy Dossa

RECORDER Division
 Budget Unit #2909

CHIEF APPRAISER
 VACANT

SUPERVISING CADASTRAL DRAFTING TCH
 Paul Doyel

CADASTRAL MAPPING TECH III
 Jerry Shoger

CADASTRAL MAP. TECH I/II
 Chris Rodgers

SUPERVISING RP APPRAISER
 Dan Higgins

Sr. APPRAISER
 Jeff Lancaster

APPRAISER
 Becky Benton
 Kellie Serrano

Sr. APPRAISER
 Rick Sousa

APPRAISER
 Richard Koewler
 Mike Manuel
 Hillary Patrick

SUPERVISING RP APPRAISER
 Marcia Paxton

Sr. APPRAISER
 George Clark

APPRAISER
 Les Casazza
 James Woodsey

Sr. APPRAISER
 Rick Roberts

APPRAISER
 Janette Cayanan
 Jim Elliott
 Melissa Catron

SUPERVISING AUDITOR - APPRAISER
 Emma Gilbride

Sr. AUDITOR - APPRAISER
 Crystella Powell

AUDITOR - APPRAISER
 Eduardo Zarco
 VACANT

CLERICAL OPERATIONS MANAGER
 Debbie Dominguez

Ownership OA III
 Suzanne Baker
 Cammy Johnson
 Claudia Martin

Personal Prop. OA III
 Frances Mesa

Exemptions OA III
 Kim Harris

OA I/II
 Simona Atable
 Suzanne Jackson
 Rebecca Torres
 Michaela McKay

OFFICE COORDINATOR
 VACANT

RECORDING OPERATIONS MANAGER
 Yolanda Ditts

CLERICAL OPS SUPERVISOR
 VACANT

EXAMINING OAI/II
 Avis Gidon
 Lillian Keats
 Martha Sandoval
 Sioux Williford

Indexing/Verfying OAI/II
 Barbara Miller

Reception OAI/II
 Nehrah Ditts

CLERICAL OPS SUPERVISOR
 Jan Phelps

Scanning OAI/II
 M. Morehouse

Vitals OAI/II
 Kim Marino
 Ilyea Quintana