

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE AND COUNTY COUNSEL

ITEM: 3.40
(ID # 30014)

MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, March 03, 2026

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE and COUNTY COUNSEL: Palo Verde Healthcare District Board of Directors Vacancies, District 4. [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to notify the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board that they must call an election to fill the District Board vacancy created on November 30, 2025;
2. Take public comment, discuss and determine whether to appoint an individual to fill the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board's second vacancy created on January 7, 2026, or direct the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board to call for an election to fill the District Board vacancy; and
3. Direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to schedule interviews for the candidates that applied to the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board for the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24, 2026, at which time the Board of Supervisors will interview and appoint a new District Board member; or
4. Direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to solicit new applications from eligible candidates to fill the vacancy on the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board, review the applications, select the most qualified candidates as finalists, and schedule interviews for the finalists for the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24, 2026, at which time the Board of Supervisors will interview and appoint a new District Board member; or
5. Direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to notify the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board that they must call an election to fill the District Board vacancy created on January 7, 2026.

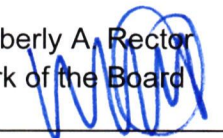
ACTION:Policy

 Mike C. Tran, County Counsel 2/26/2026  Jeff Van Wagenen, County Executive Officer 2/26/2026

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Perez, seconded by Supervisor Medina and duly carried, IT WAS ORDERED to direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to notify the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board that an election must be called to fill the District Board vacancy created on November 30, 2025; and direct District 4 to schedule interviews for candidates to fill the vacancy created on January 7, 2026, and return to the Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24, 2026, with a nomination for final approval.

Ayes: Medina, Spiegel, Perez, and Gutierrez
Nays: None
Absent: Washington
Date: March 3, 2026
xc: EO, CO.CO., BOS-District 4

Kimberly A. Rector
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

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C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

The Palo Verde Healthcare District (District), which encompasses 1,022 square miles in eastern Riverside County, is the publicly elected body in the Palo Verde Valley charged solely with operating the Palo Verde Hospital and other ancillary services. The five-member board is elected at large throughout the District to represent the people of the Palo Verde Valley. For several months, the District has been facing significant governance challenges, in addition to ongoing legal and financial issues. Since November, two District Board members have resigned their positions: Rosie Rowell resignation was effective on November 30, 2025, and Dr. David Brooks was effective on January 7, 2026.

Pursuant to the District's bylaws the remaining board members may fill any vacancy on the District Board by appointment until the next District general election that is scheduled 130 or more days after the effective date of the vacancy, provided the appointment is made within a period of 60 days immediately subsequent to the effective date of such vacancy and provided a notice of the vacancy is posted in three or more conspicuous places in the District at least 15 days before the appointment is made. In lieu of making an appointment, the remaining members of the Board may within 60 days of the vacancy call an election to fill the vacancy. (See Attachment A.)

Over the course of several weeks earlier this year, the District Board was unable to reach a quorum at a series of special meetings specifically scheduled to fill the vacancies. On February 3, 2026, the District Board President sent a letter to the County requesting that "the County oversee and complete the appointment process for the two vacant seats." (See Attachment B.)

Pursuant to Government Code section 1780, section (f), subsection (1), if a vacancy is not filled by the District by appointment, or if the District has not called for an election within 60 days of the date the District is notified of the vacancy or the effective date of the vacancy, whichever is later, then the Board of Supervisors may appoint a person to fill the vacancy within 90 days of the date the district board is notified of the vacancy or the effective date of the vacancy, whichever is later, or the Board of Supervisors may order the District to call an election to fill the vacancy.

As it relates to the first vacancy, the 90-day period to fill via appointment expired on February 28th. As a result, the District must call for an election. Pursuant to Government Code section 1780, section (e), subsection (2), and section (g), subsections (1) and (2), the election called shall be held on the next established election date that is 130 or more days after the District Board calls the election. That election date would be November 3, 2026.

As it relates to the second vacancy, the 90-day period to fill via appointment expires on April 7, 2026. Accordingly, the Board of Supervisors may fill the vacancy by appointment before that

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date, or return it to the District to call an election. The Board of Supervisors may consider any of the following options:

- 1) Interview the candidates that applied to the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board at the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24, 2026, and appoint a new District Board member; or
- 2) Direct the Executive Office and County Counsel to solicit new applications from eligible candidates, review the applications, select the most qualified candidates as finalists, and schedule interviews for the finalists at the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24, 2026, at which time the Board of Supervisors will interview and appoint a new District Board member; or
- 3) Notify the Palo Verde Healthcare District Board that they must call an election to fill the second District Board vacancy, with an election date of November 3, 2026, the same date as the election to fill the first vacancy.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

The filling of these vacancies, either by appointment or election, will ensure that the Palo Verde Healthcare District is fully represented and is able to meet quorum and ensure that the work of the District can continue with minimal impact on the residents of the District and the County.

Additional Fiscal Information

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with providing direction under this item. Should the Board initiate an appointment process, administrative costs would be minimal and absorbed within existing County resources.

Attachments:

Attachment A. Palo Verde Healthcare District Bylaws (rev. January 28, 2009)

Attachment B. Letter from Palo Verde Healthcare District dated February 3, 2026


Jacqueline Ruiz, Principal Analyst

2/26/2026


Gregg Gu, Chief of Deputy County Counsel

2/26/2026

Attachment A

Palo Verde
Health Care District
Bylaws

BYLAWS OF

PALO VERDE HEALTH CARE DISTRICT

ARTICLE I. DEFINITIONS

AHospital @ means Palo Verde Hospital at 250 North First Street, Blythe, California.

ABoard @ means the Board of Directors of the District.

ADirector @ means a member of the Board.

ADistrict @ means the Palo Verde Health Care District.

A Medical Staff @ or AStaff @ means the organized medical staff of Palo Verde Hospital.

APresident @ means the president of the Board.

ASecretary means the secretary of the Board.

ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION, POWERS AND PURPOSES

ORGANIZATION. The District is a political subdivision of the State of California organized under the Local Healthcare District Law, Division 23 of the Health & Safety Code.

PURPOSES AND POWERS. The District is organized for the purposes described in the Local Healthcare District Law and shall have and exercise such powers in the furtherance of its purposes as are now or may hereafter be set forth in the Local Healthcare District Law (Health & Safety Code '32000et. Seq.,) and any other applicable statutes, rules or regulations of the State of California.

ARTICLE III. OFFICES

PRINCIPAL OFFICE. The principal office of the District is hereby fixed and located at 250 North First Street, Blythe, California.

OTHER OFFICES. Branch or subordinate office may, at any time, be established by the Board at any place or places.

ARTICLE IV. BOARD

GENERAL POWERS. The Board is the governing body of the District. All District Powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board. The Board is authorized to make appropriate delegations of its powers and authority to officers and employees. The Board shall evaluate the performance of its officers and employees, and also its own performance.

NUMBER AND QUALIFICATION. The Board shall consist of five (5) members, each of whom shall be a registered voter residing in the District.

ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE. An election shall be held in the District on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in each even numbered year, at which time a successor shall be chosen to each Director whose term shall expire on the last Friday of November following such election. The election of the Board members shall be an election at large within the District and shall be consolidated with the statewide general election. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes for the offices to be filled at the election shall be elected thereto. The term for the offices to be filled at the election shall be four (4) years, or until the Board member=s successor is elected and has qualified, except as otherwise provided by law in the event of a vacancy. An orientation shall be provided which familiarizes each new Board member with his or her duties and responsibilities, including the Board=s responsibilities for quality care and the Facilities quality assurance programs. Continuing education opportunities shall be made available to the Board members.

COMPENSATION. Directors shall serve without compensation but shall be eligible for payment or reimbursement of reasonable and necessary expenses in performance of their duties.

VACANCIES. When a vacancy occurs on the Board, and excepts as otherwise provided in Government Code ‘1780, the remaining board members may fill any vacancy on the Board by appointment until the next District general election that is scheduled 130 or more days after the effective date of the vacancy, provided the appointment is made within a period of 60 days immediately subsequent to the effective date of such vacancy and provided a notice of the vacancy is posted in three or more conspicuous places in the District at least 15 days before the appointment is made. In lieu of making an appointment, the remaining members of the Board may within 60 days of the vacancy call an election to fill the vacancy.

If the vacancy is not filled by the Board as specified, or if the Board has not called for an election within 60 days of the vacancy, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside may fill the vacancy within 90 days of the vacancy or the Board of Supervisors may order the District to call an election to fill the vacancy.

RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL. Any Board member may resign effective upon giving written notice to the President, the Secretary or the Board , unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such a resignation. The term of any member of the Board shall expire if the member is absent from three consecutive regular meetings or from three of any five consecutive meetings and if the Board by resolution declares that a vacancy exists on the Board. All or any of

the members of the Board may be recalled at any time by the voters following the recall procedure set for in the Division 16 of the Election Code.

ARTICLE V. BOARD MEETINGS

All meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code '54950et. Seq., (the Brown Act @).

REGULAR MEETINGS. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held without notice to the Board members as follows:

On the last Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at Palo Verde Hospital Conference Room, located at 250 First Street, Blythe, California; provided, however, that should said date fall upon a legal holiday, then the meeting shall be held at the same time on the next business day.

ORGANIZATION MEETING. At the first regular Board meeting in December, the Board shall organize by the election of one of its members as President, one as Vice President, and one as Secretary. The Board shall also appoint a Treasurer at the organizational meeting.

SPECIAL MEETINGS. A special meeting may be called at any time by the President, or by three Board members, by delivering written notice to each Board member and to each local newspaper of general circulation, radio or television station requesting such notice in writing, personally or by mail. Such notice must be delivered personally or by mail at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of such meeting as specified in the notice. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. No other business shall be considered at the special meetings. Such written notice may be dispensed with as to any Board member who at, or prior to the time the meeting convenes, files with the Secretary a written waiver of notice. Such waiver may be given by telegram. Such written notice may also be dispensed with as to any member who is actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes.

QUORUM. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of a majority of the Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the board. The Board shall not take action by secret ballot, whether preliminary or final.

ADJOURNMENT. The Board may adjourn any regular, adjourn regular, special, or adjourn special meeting to a time and place specified in the Order of Adjournment. Les the a quorum may so adjourn from time to time. A copy of the Order or Notice of Adjournment shall be conspicuously posted on or near the door of the place where the meeting was held within twenty-four (24) hours after the time of the adjournment.

RULES AND REGULATIONS. The Board may adopt rules and regulations governing the Board, the District, its facilities and programs, which rules and regulations shall not conflict with these bylaws.

RULES OF ORDER. Unless otherwise provided by law, these bylaws, or Board rules, Board meeting procedures shall be in accordance with *Robert=s Rules of Order Newly Revised*. However, technical failures to follow Robert=s Rules shall not invalidate any action taken. The President may make and second motions and vote in the same manner as other Board members.

ARTICLES VI. COMMITTEES

APPOINTMENTS. All Board committees, whether standing or special (ad hoc) shall be appointed by the President. The chairperson of each committee shall be appointed by the President. All committees shall be advisory only to the Board unless otherwise specifically authorized to act by the Board.

STANDING COMMITTEES. Standing committees shall meet periodically to review reports from the Executive Director, legal counsel, and consultants relating to particular subject matter of the committee. There shall be the following standing committees

Finance/Audit. This committee shall be responsible for review of the budgetary and financial matters related to the District including the annual audit.

Personnel. This committee shall be responsible for review personnel matters including management and consulting contracts.

Legal/Legislative. This committee shall be responsible for review of legal matters and legislative issue of importance to the District.

Facilities. This committee shall be responsible for periodic inspection of hospital facilities to ensure the hospital is in good condition and meets the necessary regulatory requirements.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES. Special committees may be appointed by the President for special tasks as circumstances warrant, and upon completion of the task for which appointed such special committee shall stand discharge.

CONSULTANTS. A committee chair person may invite additional individuals with expertise in a pertinent area to meet with and assist the committee. Such consultants shall not vote or be counted in determining the existence of a quorum and may be excluded from any committee sessions. A committee chair person may exclude any or all consultants from attending a committee meeting.

MEETINGS AND NOTICE. Meetings of a committee may be called by the President of the Board, the Chairperson of the Committee, or a majority of the committees=s members.

QUORUM. A majority of the members of a committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of such committee. Each committee shall keep minutes of its proceeding s and shall report periodically to the Board.

MANNER OF ACTING. The act of a majority of the members of a committee present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee. No act taken at a meeting at which less than a quorum was present shall be valid unless approved in writing by the absent members.

ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS

PRESIDENT. The Board shall elect one of its members as President at the first regular meeting in December of each year, and the President shall hold office until a successor is elected. The President shall be the principle officer of the District and the Board, and shall preside at all meetings of the board. The President shall appoint all Board committee members and committee chairpersons, and shall perform all duties incident to the office and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

VICE PRESIDENT. The Board shall elect one of its members as Vice President at the first regular meeting in December of each year, and the Vice President shall hold office until a successor is elected. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President.

SECRETARY. The Board shall elect one of its members as Secretary at the first regular Board meeting in December of each year, and the Secretary shall hold office until a successor is elected. The Secretary shall provide for the keeping of minutes of all meetings of the Board. The Secretary shall give or cause to be given appropriate notices in accordance with these bylaws or as required by law and shall act as custodian of District records, reports and the District's seal.

TREASURER. The Board shall appoint a Treasurer who shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Treasurer shall be charged with the safekeeping and disbursal of the funds in the treasury of the District.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER. The Board of Directors shall select a Chief Executive Officer who shall be responsible for the overall operations of the Hospital and the hiring and termination of all employees. Responsibilities shall also include but are not limited to the implementation of policies adopted by the Board and responsibility for sound, financial, accounting and statistical information practices, including preparation of budgets and forecasts, maintenance of proper financial and patient statistical records and collection of data required by governmental and accrediting agencies. The Chief Executive Officer shall also work with the committees of the Board and the Medical Staff.

ARTICLE VIII. MEDICAL STAFF

ORGANIZATION. There shall be a Medical Staff organization for the Hospital with appropriate officers and bylaws and with staff appointments on a biennial basis. The Medical Staff of the Hospital shall be self-governing with respect to the professional work performed in the Hospital. Membership in the Medical Staff organization shall be a prerequisite to the exercise of clinical privileges in the Hospital, except as otherwise specifically provided in the Medical Staff bylaws.

BYLAWS. The Medical Staff shall propose and adopt by vote bylaws, rules and regulations for its internal governance which shall be subject to, and effective upon, Board approval, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. The bylaws, rules and regulations shall be periodically reviewed for consistency with Hospital policy and applicable legal or other requirements. The bylaws shall

create an effective administrative unit to discharge the functions and responsibilities assigned to the Medical Staff by the Board. The bylaws, rules and regulations shall state the purpose, functions and organization of the Medical Staff and shall set forth the policies by which the Medical Staff exercises and accounts for its delegated authority and responsibilities. The bylaws rules and regulations shall establish mechanisms for the selection by the Medical Staff of its officers, departmental chairmen and committees.

QUALITY ASSURANCE, MEDICAL STAFF MEMBERSHIP AND CLINICAL

PRIVILEGES. Membership on the Medical Staff shall be restricted to Practitioners who are competent in their respective fields, worthy in character and in professional ethics, and who are currently licensed by the state of California. The bylaws of the Medical Staff may provide for additional qualifications for membership and privileges, as appropriate. The Board shall require, after considering the recommendation of the Medical Staff, the conduct of specific review and evaluation activities to assess, preserve and improve the overall quality and efficiency of patient care in the Hospital. The Board shall also require mechanisms to assure the provision of quality health care at the Hospital. The Board, through the Chief Executive Officer, shall provide whatever administrative assistance is reasonably necessary to support and facilitate these activities. The Board hereby delegates to the Medical Staff the responsibility and authority to carry out these activities including the investigation and evaluation of all matters relating to Medical Staff membership status, clinical privileges and corrective action. The Medical Staff shall forward to the Board specific written recommendations with appropriate supporting documentation that will allow the Board to take informed action. Final action on all matters relating to Medical Staff quality assurance, membership status, clinical privileges and corrective actions shall be taken by the Board after considering Medical Staff recommendations. The Board shall utilize the advice of the Medical Staff in granting and defining the scope of clinical privileges to individuals, commensurate with their qualifications, experience and present capabilities. If the Board does not concur with a Medical Staff recommendation relative to any Medical Staff appointment, reappointment or termination of appointment and granting or curtailment of clinical privileges, there shall be a review of the recommendation by a conference of two Directors and two or other number members of the Medical Staff, before the Board renders a final decision. No applicant shall be denied Medical Staff membership and/or clinical privileges on the basis of sex, race, creed, color or national origin, or on the basis of any other criterion lacking professional justification.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS. The terms and conditions of membership status in the Medical Staff and of the exercise of clinical privileges shall be as specified in the Medical Staff bylaws.

PROCEDURE. The procedure to be followed by the Medical Staff and the Board in acting on Matters of membership status, clinical privileges and corrective action, shall be specified in the Medical Staff bylaws.

APPELLATE REVIEW. Any adverse action taken by the Board with respect to a Practitioners Medical Staff status or clinical privileges, shall, except under circumstances for which specific provision is made in the Medical Staff bylaws, be subject to the practitioners right to an appellate review in accordance with procedures set forth in the Medical Staff bylaws.

JUDICIAL REVIEW. Section 1094.6 of the California Code of Civil Procedure shall govern the rights of any person aggrieved by the final decision of the Board, either with respect to a decision pertaining to a Medical Staff issue or any other issue whatsoever upon which the Board may act.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT

These bylaws may be amended or repealed by vote of at least three members of the Board at any board meeting. Such amendments or repeal shall be effective immediately.

Attachment B



February 3, 2026

Via Email (paceves@rivco.org; acuen@rivco.org)

Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
County of Riverside Board of Supervisors
78-015 Main Street, Suite 205
La Quinta, CA 92253

Re: Appreciation for Financial Support and Request Regarding Board Vacancies

Dear Supervisor Perez:

On behalf of the Palo Verde Healthcare District, I want to again thank the County of Riverside for the \$1 million loan, which, along with the City of Blythe's support, has allowed the District to maintain emergency department services and the community clinic while longer-term solutions are pursued in coordination with the County and Riverside University Health System.

As you know, the District currently has two vacancies on its Board of Directors following the resignations of Ms. Rosie Rowell and Dr. David Brooks. We appreciate the County's willingness to allow the District to attempt to fill these seats, despite one vacancy exceeding the typical 60-day threshold. However, it has become clear that the District Board is unable to convene a quorum to lawfully appoint new members. Even with an adjourned meeting scheduled for February 4, 2026, and despite the fact that the County has indicated that the adjourned meeting date is acceptable for the Board appointments, the Board does not expect to have sufficient attendance to take formal action. The February 4, 2026 Adjourned Special Meeting will be cancelled.

Given these circumstances, and in the interest of restoring a fully functioning five-member Board as efficiently as possible, I, as President of the Board, respectfully request that the County oversee and complete the appointment process for the two vacant seats. While we understand the County's appointment process may take additional time, this approach offers the most practical and reliable path forward under the current constraints.

The loan agreement requires the Board to maintain a quorum at our meetings. If the County agrees to make appointments to the District Board of Directors, I believe it is more likely that a quorum can be consistently achieved. Because the loan agreement requires the participation and attendance of all sitting Board members at Board meetings, I will actively encourage participation among and attendance by my fellow members to ensure this requirement is met.



We appreciate the County's continued partnership and consideration of this request, and we remain committed to working collaboratively to support the hospital and the Palo Verde Valley community during this critical period.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Carmela Garnica, President
Palo Verde Healthcare District Board of Directors

cc: Palo Verde Healthcare District Board of Directors
Jeffrey Van Wagenen, Executive Officer, County of Riverside
Minh Tran, County Counsel
Sandra Anaya, Chief Executive Officer
Lena D. Wade, District Counsel