



County of Monterey

Item No.2

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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- a. Receive and review application submittals for the vacant Labor and Higher Education seats screened by the Economic Development Ad Hoc Committee; and
- b. Provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Economic Development Committee:

- a. Support the appointment of applicant(s) to the Economic Development Committee as the Labor Sector member; and
 - a. Recommend one (1) of the two (2) applicants (Cesar Lara, Jorge Valenzuela) to the Board of Supervisors; or
 - b. Recommend the two (2) applicants to the Board of Supervisors for selection.
- b. Support the appointment of applicant(s) to the Economic Development Committee as the Higher Education Sector member; and
 - a. Recommend one (1) of the ten (10) applicants ((Mowafiq Alanazi, Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez, Fernando DePaolis, Jose Pablo Dundore-Arias, Seth Gustafson, Jenny Kuan (Ad Hoc recommended), Gayle Pitman, Seth Pollack, Vanya Quiñones (Ad Hoc recommended), Paige Viren (Ad Hoc recommended)) to the Board of Supervisors; or
 - b. Recommend all ten (10) applicants to the Board of Supervisors for selection.

SUMMARY:

The primary purpose of the Economic Development Committee is to advise the Board of Supervisors on appropriate economic development policies, programs and activities to ensure a Countywide perspective in support of a diversified economy; higher paying jobs and an expanded revenue base for local government services, while preserving and protecting the County's agricultural, tourism and education economic base in collaboration with cities.

The Economic Development Committee (EDC) currently has two (2) vacancies for the labor and higher education sectors. This has led to the committee directing staff to move forward with an open call for applications for both vacant seats. The committee created an Ad Hoc Committee to receive, review and verify the qualifications of all applications for these vacant seats.

The nomination procedures per the EDC Bylaws are as follows. For all nominations of Committee members occurring after the date of this amendment, the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall be notified and shall post notice of the vacancy in accordance with the Maddy Act (Government Code Section 54970, et seq.). An Ad hoc Committee of the EDC shall be appointed to review the qualifications of any nominee presented in accordance with this procedure, and forward all

eligible applicants on to the Committee for consideration. The EDC shall make appropriate recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

DISCUSSION:

On March 22, 2025 the Economic Development Committee (EDC) received and approved the resignation of Jonathan Brown, Labor sector committee representative. The Committee directed staff to move forward with the nomination procedure per the bylaws and advertise the vacancy countywide. The committee also created an Ad Hoc committee to review and recommend qualified applicants. The Ad Hoc Committee members consist of Supervisor Glenn Church (Chair), Norm Groot (Agriculture), and Ida Lopez Chan (Minority Owned Business).

On August 7, 2025 the EDC received and approved the resignation of Dan Ripke, Higher Education sector committee representative. The Committee directed staff to move forward with the nomination procedure per the bylaws and advertise the vacancy countywide. The committee referred the review of applicants for the higher education seat to the existing ad hoc committee.

Economic Development staff notified the Clerk of the Board, and the vacancies were posted in accordance with the Maddy Act (Government Code Section 54970, et seq.). Staff worked with County of Monterey Communications to advertise each vacancy through e-mail blasts and sent the advertisement to non-profits, business associations, city partners and chambers of commerce across the county.

There was a total of seven (7) applications received by staff for the Labor sector seat and eleven (11) applications received for the Higher Education sector seat. All applications were forwarded to the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Ad Hoc Committee met for a total of three (3) times to review, discuss and deliberate all applications received. The Ad Hoc Committee determined that two (2) of the seven (7) Labor sector applicants met the qualifications. The two (2) that met the qualifications are Cesar Lara and Jorge Valenzuela, these two have been referred to the EDC for review and consideration for a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The Ad Hoc Committee determined that ten (10) of the eleven (11) Higher Education sector applicants met the qualifications. The ten (10) that met the qualifications are Mowafiq Alanazi, Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez, Fernando DePaolis, Jose Pablo Dundore-Arias, Seth Gustafson, Jenny Kuan, Gayle Pitman, Seth Pollack, Vanya Quinones, and Paige Viren. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends three (3) applicants for the Higher Education sector to the EDC, Jenny Kuan, Vanya Quinones, and Paige Viren.

The Ad Hoc Committee reviewed and approved applications in accordance with the EDC Bylaws.

Below is a full list of applicants the Ad Hoc Committee determined to meet qualifications for both vacant sector seats:

Cesar Lara

Cesar Lara is interested in serving as labor sector position of the Economic Development Committee. His current role is Director of workforce and economic development for the California Labor

Federation, which includes all unions in California. With his experience in labor advocacy at both the local and state level, he is confident he can bring significant value to the Economic Development Committee.

Jorge Valenzuela

Over the past 14 years Jorge Valenzuela has provided leadership to the United Farm Workers of America as an Executive Assistant, Deputy Operations Manager, Regional Director of the Pacific Northwest, and most recently Business Agent and Vice President for Teamsters Local Union No.890. He believes he can add value and a sincere labor perspective to the Economic Development Committee where economic development goes hand in hand with labor.

Mowafiq Alanazi

Mowafiq Alanazi is interested in serving in the higher education sector of the Economic Development Committee. He has over 25 years in higher education with focus on leadership development. He believes he can assist in developing strategic plans to align the county's workforce with both existing and emerging skill-building opportunities. The goal is to foster a true partnership between local businesses and higher education institutions to cultivate an ideal workforce for Monterey County.

Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez

A current resident of Soledad, Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez, currently serves as Director of Student Outreach and Retention at Monterey Peninsula College. His work focuses on expanding educational access, workforce pathways, and equity for underrepresented communities. He is interested in serving on the Economic Development Committee to help strengthen the County's economy while preserving its agriculture, tourism, and educational foundations.

Fernando DePaolis

Fernando DePaolis is interested in serving in the higher education sector of the Economic Development Committee. He believes in the value of bringing alternative and diverse voices to all instances of democratic participation. He is currently a professor in the Environmental Policy & Management program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS). His experience as a senior academic administrator at MIIS gives a unique perspective into the role that higher education plays in the social, cultural, and economic development of the County.

Jose Pablo Dundore-Arias

As an associate professor and coordinator at California State University Monterey Bay, Jose Pablo Dundore-Arias, has dedicated his career to advancing higher education opportunities that directly serve the needs of Monterey County's agricultural communities. He is interested in serving in the higher education sector of the Economic Development Committee to contribute the perspective of higher education as a key driver of economic development in Monterey County. He is committed to making sure that diverse voices and perspectives-especially those of students, farmworker families, and underrepresented communities-are represented and heard in shaping Monterey County's future.

Seth Gustafson

Currently, Mr. Gustafson, is an assistant professor of Environmental Studies at California State University - Monterey Bay. In this role he has routinely researched and taught on issues related to the

public's interests in sustainability, environmental issues, urban planning, and development. He is interested in representing the higher education sector of the Economic Development Committee because he believes his expertise and experience in understanding issues of local sustainability and development would be a great asset as well as also being a tremendous opportunity for learning and collaboration across industry sectors.

Jenny Kuan

Jenny Kuan's current role as an Associate Professor of Economics and Entrepreneurship at the College of Business at Cal State Monterey Bay, where, since January, she has also been the Executive Director of the Institute for Innovation and Economic Development (iiED) and as such may be of service in bringing people together across organizational boundaries both inside the university and outside. Working with a broad cross-section of the County, as represented on the Economic Development Committee, would present enormous opportunities to create new collaborations and build on new ideas.

Gayle Pitman

Gayle Pitman is interested in serving as a member of the Economic Development Committee because she sees this work as essential to the long-term health and prosperity of Monterey County. For more than twenty-five years she has worked in the California community colleges, first as faculty and now as a senior executive at Hartnell College, where she oversees institutional research, strategic planning, accreditation, and college-wide initiatives. She hopes to contribute her expertise in higher education, strategic planning and equity focused initiatives to help foster inclusive economic development that uplifts families, diversifies industries, and sustains long-term prosperity for the entire county.

Seth Pollack

Seth Pollack is interested in serving in the higher education sector of the Economic Development Committee because of his interest in the challenges associated with building a more environmentally sustainable and inclusive rural economy; and, and in helping to highlight the interconnections between our "coastal" and "valley" economies. As founding faculty director of the Service Learning Institute at California State University - Monterey Bay (CSUMB) (serving from 1997-2022) he guided the development of service learning as a core component of CSUMB's academic program. He understands the importance of a healthy educational infrastructure in attracting and growing local businesses.

Vanya Quiñones

As President of Cal State Monterey Bay, Vanya Quinones is interested in serving the county because she believes education and economic growth are inseparable, and Cal State Monterey Bay is uniquely positioned to bridge the needs of the community and the students it serves. By joining the committee, she believes she will be better able to integrate the county's vision of a thriving, inclusive economy with the University's mission. Serving on this committee will allow her to shape strategies that expand access to opportunities and ensure the county's workforce is ready for the challenges of a rapidly expanding economy.

Paige Viren

Paige Viren is interested in serving in the higher education sector of the Economic Development

Committee to help guide equitable and resilient economic opportunities in Monterey County through policy, planning, and strategic collaboration, with a particular focus on workforce development. As Executive Director of the Sustainable Hospitality & Tourism Management Program at California State University, Monterey Bay and a member of the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, she brings a deep understanding of how tourism and related sectors can support regional prosperity, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

Staff consulted with County Counsel.

FINANCING:

Receiving this report has no financial impact.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

The Economic Development Committee aligns with the Board approved strategic plan.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan Goals:

This assists with attracting and retaining businesses that will improve the well-being of County residents.

- ☐ Well-Being and Quality of Life
- ☐ Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- ☐ Safe and Resilient Communities
- ☒ Diverse and Thriving Economy

Link to the Strategic Plan:

[<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showdocument?id=139569>](https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showdocument?id=139569)

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Approved by: Richard Vaughn, Economic Development Manager, x5602

Attachments:

Cesar Lara Application
Jorge Valenzuela Application
Mowafiq Alanazi Application
Fernando Ansaldo-Sanchez Application
Fernando DePaolis Application
Jose Pablo Dundore-Arias Application
Seth Gustafson Application
Jenny Kuan Application
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