

# NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino  
[www.sbcounty.gov](http://www.sbcounty.gov)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 28, 2005

For more information, contact  
David Wert, Public Information Officer  
(909) 387-4082  
[dwert@sbcounty.gov](mailto:dwert@sbcounty.gov)

---

## SUPERVISORS PROPOSE COUNTY REFORMS

SAN BERNARDINO – Three members of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors plan to bring forward proposals next week that would strengthen the county’s ethics rules and make more county information available to the public online.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus and Fourth District Supervisor Gary Ovitt are placing two proposals on the October 4 Board of Supervisors Meeting Agenda. The first proposal would call for the County Administrative Officer to evaluate the county’s ethics policies, compliance and training programs. The Board will also consider upgrading certain or all current personnel ethics rules to ordinances, providing for stricter enforcement and penalties for violations.

“We need to make sure we have tough ethics rules, and that we make sure all county officials understand them and are held accountable,” said Supervisor Ovitt.

Chairman Postmus said that although the Board of Supervisors has adopted personnel ethics standards and rules, not all of them exist in the form of ordinances. Certain recent activities suggest that some officials might not understand or appreciate all ethical considerations in the conduct of county business, Postmus said. “I believe more of our ethics policies should have the force of law behind them to give them some real teeth,” said Postmus.

Postmus’ and Ovitt’s second proposal would provide online access to campaign finance reports, statements of economic interest pertaining to county officials, and county contractor and vendor information. It would also create a searchable online database of Board of Supervisors agendas and minutes, and establish an e-mail subscription service that would allow the public to receive automatic updates of county information.

“The public needs to know that its government leaders are conducting business above-board and in the public interest,” said Supervisor Ovitt. “The public has a right to expect government records to be readily available. With the increasing prevalence of the Internet, more public records are becoming available online.”

**-MORE-**

## **REFORMS**

### **2-2-2-2**

A third proposal, to be presented by Second District Supervisor Paul Biane at the October 4 meeting, will be to consider approval of a Request for Proposals for development of online audio and video archives of Board of Supervisors meetings that would be accessible to the public on the County's website at [www.sbcounty.gov](http://www.sbcounty.gov).

"Improving online access will increase the County's openness and help strengthen the public's trust in its county government," said Biane, adding that the sheer difficulty of accessing information from County departments could help perpetuate a perception of a lack of openness.

Postmus said these reform plans would help assure the public that County Government is open to scrutiny and that its officials conduct business and make decisions in an ethical and deliberative manner.

Most of the proposed reforms set a target date of February 7, 2006 for final plans to be presented to the Board for approval. However, if approved, the Request for Proposals for audio and video archive services will be released October 5. All of the proposals include an option to contract for some or all related services, and each proposal calls for a thorough review of potential budgetary impacts.