An Introduction to the San Mateo County Attorney’s Office

JOHN NIBBELIN
OCTOBER 25, 2023
Outline

1. WHO WE ARE
2. WHAT WE DO
3. QUESTIONS
Who are we?

John D. Nibbelin
County Attorney
Who we are (cont.)?

33 Attorneys

19 non-Attorney staff members

- Legal Secretaries
- Paralegals
- Legal Office Assistants
- Administrative managers
Who are we (cont.)?

All experienced attorneys and a Michael P. Murphy Fellow

We come from:

- DA’s Office
- AG’s Offices (state and federal)
- Private Law Firms
- Non-profit agencies
- Former law enforcement and military
Purposes

The Office of the County Attorney provides quality and timely legal services to the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive’s Office, elected County officials, all County departments, and boards and commissions. We also provide services to school districts, special districts, and other public agencies operating within the county, allowing them to carry out their responsibilities in a manner fully consistent with the law.
What do we do?

General Counsel to:

- Board of Supervisors
- County Departments
- Elected Officials
- School Districts
- Special Districts
- Joint Powers Authorities
- Miscellaneous other public entities
2023 Board of Supervisors

**District 1**
Dave Pine  
President

Represents:
Burlingame, Hillsborough, Millbrae, San Bruno (east of Interstate 280 and areas west of 280 and south of Sneath Lane), South San Francisco (east of Junipero Serra Boulevard and south of Hickey and Hillside Boulevards),
Unincorporated Areas:  
Burlingame Hills, Highlands/Baywood Park, San Francisco Airport.

**District 2**
Noelia Corzo

Represents:
Belmont (excluding southeast portion), Foster City, San Mateo

**District 3**
Ray Mueller

Represents:
Atherton, Belmont (southeast portion only), Half Moon Bay, Menlo Park (west of El Camino Real), Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Carlos, Woodside
Unincorporated Areas:

**District 4**
Warren Slocum  
Vice President

Represents:
East Palo Alto, Menlo Park (east of El Camino Real), Redwood City.
Unincorporated Areas:
North Fair Oaks

**District 5**
David Canepa

Represents:
Brisbane, Colma, Daly City, San Bruno (north of Sneath Lane and west of Interstate 280), South San Francisco (east of Junipero Serra Boulevard and north of Hickey and Hillside Boulevards).
Unincorporated Areas:  
Broadmoor
Cities/Towns

20 Cities/Towns in SMC

1. Atherton
2. Belmont
3. Brisbane
4. Burlingame
5. Colma
6. Daly City
7. East Palo Alto
8. Foster City
9. Half Moon Bay
10. Hillsborough
11. Menlo Park
12. Millbrae
13. Pacifica
14. Portola Valley
15. Redwood City
16. San Bruno
17. San Carlos
18. San Mateo
19. South San Francisco
20. Woodside
Unincorporated San Mateo County
County & City Functions

Cities - Municipal powers/services (public works, planning & building permits, parks, etc.)

The County “acts like a city” for residents in the unincorporated areas

The County is a “political subdivision” of the state

- Fulfills certain “state” functions (i.e., implementation of programs re social services, health services, prosecution of crimes, etc., at the local level)

The County has no authority over the cities but sometimes acts on cities’ behalf

- Limited examples: animal control, environmental health, contracts for law enforcement services, etc.
Some of Our Clients/Acronym Soup

- Probate
- Public Administrator
- LPS
- Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer
- Property Assessment (and Appeals Board)
- Coroner

- Grand Jury
- LAFCO
- SMMC
- CPS (CFS)
- First Five
- HAA/CEQA/LCP/LAND USE
Recent Priorities and Focus

- Economic Recovery
- Housing, including Project Homekey
- Addressing Homelessness, including ordinance to move folks to housing
- Equity
- Personnel Safety Issues
- Assessment Appeals involving hundreds of millions of dollars
- Law Enforcement Oversight
- Litigation including cases alleging past sexual abuse
Recent Priorities (cont).

- Emergency Response
- Response to COVID, Wildfires and 2022-23 Flooding
- Farmworker Housing Task Force
Assistance in Forming /Advising Local Agencies

One Shoreline
High Speed Lanes
Peninsula Clean Energy
- Billion Dollars of Power (negotiations)
- Public Solar
- Expansion
- Credit rating
- 7 years later
Public Interest Work

- PCBs
- Sea Level Rise/ Climate Deception
- Opioids
- Lead Paint
- Elder Abuse
- Minimum wage ordinance
- Immigration Matters
Office Priorities

Building/sustaining office and wider County culture

Affordable housing; farm labor housing; housing element

Move to COB3

Fiscal law issues (excess ERAF/VLF shortfall)

Procurement

Commitment to DEI and Supporting County-wide DEI efforts

Hiring, engagement, retention, succession planning
Questions?