



SHERIFF

CHRISTINA CORPUS

SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

330 Bradford Street, Redwood City, CA 94063

Telephone: (650) 363-4911

September 21, 2025

John Nibbelin
County Attorney's Office
500 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

Via Email: jnibbelin@smcgov.org

Re: Board of Supervisor's Meeting
Tuesday, September 23, 2025
Agenda Item 7

Dear County Attorney Nibbelin,

This is an official request to remove Agenda Item 7- Adopt a resolution directing the County Executive to use oversight procedures set forth in the County Reserves Policy as to Sheriff's Office due to its low reserves level from September 23, 2025, Board of Supervisors Agenda until non-conflicted counsel can review the legal efficacy of this legislation.

I am writing to urgently address a matter of serious concern that I only recently became aware of through social media. A resolution has been placed on the agenda for the upcoming Board of Supervisors meeting that, if passed, would strip the Sheriff's Office of its independent budgetary authority and transfer that control to the County Administrator.

Until this point, I have received no notice of this action, nor any opportunity to provide input or explanation. The lack of transparency surrounding this resolution is deeply troubling and raises fundamental questions about governance and fairness.

The stated justification for this proposed resolution appears to be tied to reserve policy compliance. However, the facts tell a different story. The most significant impact on the Sheriff's Office's ability to meet the 2% reserve requirement resulted from a decision made solely by the County Administrator to authorize double overtime.

This decision placed a substantial and unforeseen burden on the Sheriff's Office budget—one entirely outside my control. To now use those very impacts as justification to curtail

the authority of the Sheriff's Office is fundamentally unfair and inconsistent with the principles of good governance.

The County Administrator who stands to gain this authority is the same official who:

- Personally, authorized the double overtime that destabilized the Sheriff's Office budget, and
- Is currently a named plaintiff in active litigation against me, actively seeking my removal from office.

This creates a clear and undeniable conflict of interest. It is improper and deeply concerning for an individual in this position to assume direct control over the budget of an independently elected official, especially when the actions leading to the alleged problem originated from that very office.

The pattern is unmistakable: directives are issued without warning, decisions are made that impose costs on the Sheriff's Office without consultation, and then those impacts are cited as justification for stripping away authority. This is not fiscal stewardship—it is retaliatory behavior.

The most significant impacts on our reserves came not from decisions within the Sheriff's Office but from structural obligations and county-level actions. The Office was required to fund \$10 million toward the 330 Bradford Street building, a burden no other department faced. In FY 2023–24, double overtime was authorized for a six-month period, totaling \$17.2 million, of which only \$8.4 million was covered by the County Executive's Office, leaving us to absorb the balance. Shortly afterward, in September 2024, the County revised its reserve policy to increase the departmental requirement from 2% to 4% of Net Appropriations. For our Office, this meant a \$13 million requirement while our reserves stood at only \$1.5 million, creating an \$11.5 million shortfall. At the same time, the MOU with the Deputy Sheriffs' Association, which included salary increases, was negotiated and approved prior to my taking office and without my involvement, though the pay increases were later implemented during my tenure.

As part of our strategy to meet these new reserve requirements, we kept staff vacancies in place even as we hired over 260 employees. The hiring process and associated training created additional expenditures, but it was essential to restore staffing levels. Our FY 2024–25 Spending/Savings Plan identified \$7.1 million in vacancy savings, \$2 million in deferred operating expenses, and \$1.8 million in net savings after the CEO's 50% retention policy.

We also raised unresolved issues including \$3.9 million in DSA COLAs (effective Jan 2025) and \$1.6 million in SEIU COLAs (effective Oct 2024) that were not included in budget targets, \$26.3 million in specialty pays that have not received a Net County Cost adjustment in over ten years despite 43% cumulative COLAs, and a \$4.25 million cost to replace obsolete radios. In addition, our repayment obligation for the FY 2023–24 year-end fund balance adjustment was set at \$4,449,493. Stacey Stevenson documented in writing that the CEO raised the option of a loan to help address these obligations, but when she sought clarity from CFO Roberto Manchia, she never received a response.

To ensure clarity and fairness, I respectfully request answers to the following questions before any action is taken:

- Are any other department heads being subjected to the same scrutiny for reserve compliance?
- Which departments are currently below the 2% reserve threshold?
- Which departments have experienced budgetary impacts as significant as those imposed on the Sheriff's Office by the double overtime authorization?

If this resolution were truly about fiscal responsibility and accountability, these questions would be addressed openly, and similar actions would be applied consistently across all departments—not selectively to the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office plays a critical role in protecting the safety and wellbeing of our communities. Removing its independent budget authority threatens not only operational effectiveness but also public trust.

This proposed transfer would set a dangerous precedent, erode the independence of an elected law enforcement office and concentrating power in a single administrator who has demonstrated clear bias and personal involvement in ongoing disputes.

I strongly urge the Board to delay or table this resolution until there has been:

A full and transparent review of the facts,

- An opportunity for the Sheriff's Office to provide meaningful input, and
- Public discussion to ensure the community understands the stakes involved.

I remain committed to collaboration and to the principles of transparency and accountability. My sole focus is serving the residents of San Mateo County with integrity and ensuring that every decision we make strengthens—not weakens—our ability to keep them safe.

County Attorney Nibbelin

September 21, 2025

Page 4

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I trust that you share my commitment to upholding the independence of the Sheriff's Office and ensuring that decisions of this magnitude are made openly and fairly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CC' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Christina Corpus

Sheriff of San Mateo County