



Agenda Date: 11/1/2005
Agenda Placement: 6N

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Britt Ferguson for Nancy Watt - County Executive Officer
County Executive Office
REPORT BY: Britt Ferguson, Assistant County Executive Officer, 253-4406
SUBJECT: Approval of County Code of Ethics

RECOMMENDATION

County Executive Officer requests adoption of a resolution approving the County Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with direction received from the Board at your 2004 retreat, staff developed a draft County Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo. These documents were discussed with County department heads and given conceptual approval by your Board in May of this year. Following your conceptual approval of the Code and Credo, staff sought input from the unions representing County employees. The documents now before you are only slightly different from the Code and Credo you conceptually approved in May.

The proposed Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo focus on values rather than precise ethical rules. The goal is to get employees and others affiliated with the County, such as volunteers, thinking about the ethical implications of all that we do and, ultimately, to create an "ethical culture" in the organization.

Once a Code of Ethics and Management Credo are approved by your Board, staff will begin implementing an ethics training program for all employees.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

At your Board's 2004 retreat, one of your goals was the development of a Code of Ethics for the County. To accomplish this goal, the County Executive Officer (CEO) appointed a committee of department heads and other staff to develop a draft Code of Ethics and an implementation and training plan for the Code. That Committee worked for over 8 months on this project and earlier this year recommended Code of Ethics language as well as language for a Manager's Credo to the CEO. The draft Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo were discussed with all County department heads and revisions were made based on that discussion. In May of this year your Board gave your conceptual approval to the draft Code and Credo, with the understanding that staff would seek input from the unions representing County employees before returning to your Board for final approval. Staff has now completed the process of seeking union input, and a proposed final Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo, which include only minor changes from the draft documents previously before you, are now being presented for your approval.

As you can see, the proposed Code of Ethics is focused around three "Core Ethical Principles:" **Integrity**, **Accountability** and **Service**. Staff sees these Principles as being effectively the core values of the organization, as reflected, among other places, in your adopted Mission and Guiding Principles. The Manager's Credo, which all managers will be asked to affirm, recognizes the special role that managers play in setting an example of ethical behavior and providing leadership on ethical issues.

As previously discussed with your Board, both the Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo focus on values rather than detailed rules. The intent here is not to provide precise direction on how to deal with specific ethical issues. Rather, the goal is to get employees thinking about the ethical implications of all that we do and, ultimately, to create an "ethical culture" in the organization. An ethical culture is one in which concern about ethical behavior informs all that we do and where the organization, at all levels, is regularly engaged in reflecting upon and discussing the ethical implications of our actions. The Code and Credo will also inform and be supplemented by other, more specific, rules and policies and by individual departmental codes of conduct.

From staff's perspective, the Code of Ethics, Manager's Credo and the creation of an "ethical organization" are part of a larger effort to further position the County, as an organization, to deal with the changing local government environment and to serve our citizens as efficiently and effectively as possible.

An initial round of ethics training has already been provided to all County department heads and managers. In addition, a consultant has been retained to assist staff in preparing an ethics training curriculum for all employees. Once the Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo receive your Board's final approval, staff will begin a training program designed to ensure that all current employees receive ethics training within 6 to 8 months and that on-going ethics training opportunities are provided to staff. In addition, ethics components will be integrated into the County's new employee orientation and supervisory training programs.

There is no fiscal impact associated with your approval of the Code of Ethics and Manager's Credo, though there will be costs related to the planned ethics training. The exact amount of those costs have not yet been determined.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Resolution

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Britt Ferguson