



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in running for elective office with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) – Election of November 5, 2024!

This guide has been prepared to assist you in understanding and complying with the requirements and laws related to candidates for the Board of Directors. Please note that this guide is not all-encompassing, is subject to change and is not intended to provide legal advice - it is for general information only.

There are three ward seats up for election, each for a term of four years.

- [Ward 3](#) Representing: Cupertino, Sunnyvale
- [Ward 4](#) Representing: Cupertino, Los Altos, Mountain View, Sunnyvale
- [Ward 7](#) Representing: El Granada, Emerald Lake Hills, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Moss Beach, Redwood City, San Carlos, Woodside

Additional information on the Board of Directors can be found here: [Board of Directors](#)

Midpen is a multi-county special district in the counties of Santa Clara, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz. For candidate elections information please see the Registrar of Voters website that pertain to the ward in which you are running, and/or the California Secretary of State's Election and Voter Information website.

- California Secretary of State's Election and Voter Information: www.sos.ca.gov/elections
- Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters: www.sccvote.sccgov.org;
- San Mateo County Registrar of Voters: <https://smcacre.gov/elections>

For campaign finance disclosure related questions, information is available on the California Fair Political Practices Commission website: www.fppc.ca.gov

As Midpen's District Clerk, I am available to you as a resource, and I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions. To make an appointment to receive and file your nomination papers please contact me at (650) 691-1200 or at msoria@openspace.org. I look forward to working with you throughout the election process.

Sincerely,

Maria Soria, MMC, CPMC
District Clerk



A CALL TO SERVICE

To serve on the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors means:

- ❖ Supporting the mission of the agency.
- ❖ Practicing good governance principles.
- ❖ Partnering with the General Manager to ensure effective governance of Midpen.
- ❖ Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in achieving Midpen's mission.
- ❖ Being a respected ambassador for Midpen and advancing Midpen's culture as an engaged, respectful, and collaborative Board member.
- ❖ Being informed about the work of Midpen.
- ❖ Attending, preparing for, and actively participating in Board and Committee meetings.
- ❖ Engaging in the development of annual work plans and budget.
- ❖ Engaging in respectful communication, being open to diverse viewpoints and perspectives, and engaging in respectful listening, dialogue and deliberation with fellow Board members, staff and the public.

A GUIDE TO RUN FOR ELECTIVE OFFICE

Introduction

Created in 1972, Midpen is an independent special district that helps plants, animals and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region by preserving a connected greenbelt of more than 70,000 acres of public open space. These diverse and scenic landscapes, from bay wetlands to redwood forests and coastal grasslands, host an incredible diversity of life, making our region one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

History

The late 1960s was a time of rapid growth in the Bay Area. Through a determined and heartfelt grassroots effort by local conservationists, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District was created in 1972, when the Measure R "Room to Breathe" Initiative was passed by Santa Clara County voters. Local residents voted to expand Midpen's boundary into southern San Mateo County in 1976, and in 1992 to a small portion of Santa Cruz County. In the late 1990s, development pressure increased on the San Mateo County Coast, threatening sensitive habitat and the area's rural heritage. This led to the 2004 Coastsides Protection Area, an extension of District boundaries to the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County, and the addition of preserving rural character and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources to our mission.

To learn more, visit our history webpage: [Midpen History](#)

Midpen's Mission:

Midpen's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

On the Coast, Midpen has an expanded mission: to acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Meetings

Midpen holds regular public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Midpen's Administrative Office Board Room, located at 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos, unless otherwise designated. Board members are asked to hold these dates available as early as 5:00 p.m. for the frequent need to hold special Board meetings or closed session discussion(s). Standing Committee meetings are held typically on Tuesday afternoons as early as 1:00 p.m. For information on upcoming meetings please see our public meeting website: <https://www.openspace.org/who-we-are/public-meetings>.



Meeting Materials

Materials for Board of Director meetings are usually published by the District Clerk the Thursday prior to the regular Wednesday meetings. Board members are encouraged to read and receive materials electronically. Supplemental or amended materials may be presented for consideration before or during the meeting. Public notice of the place, date, and time of a meeting shall be posted at least 72 hours prior to the Regular Meeting time or 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting.

Role of a Board Member

Midpen is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected to four-year terms. Each director represents one of Midpen’s wards. The Board oversees Midpen’s business including approval of policies, work plans, and budgets.

One of the most significant responsibilities as a Board member is to understand that the Board is a team, and you need to work together as such. Understanding the dynamics of the group, as well as the individual perspectives and opinions of your fellow Board members, is crucial to the success of the team, Midpen, and the community you represent.

Compensation

The Board most recently adopted an ordinance in April 2024, increasing the per-meeting compensation to \$121.28 per meeting. Board members may be compensated for up to six (6) meetings per month.

Terms of Office

Board members serve four-year terms and are sworn in after certification of the election results. The outgoing Board members will be provided an opportunity to be recognized and thanked for their dedicated service to Midpen and new members will be seated at the Board dais for the first time.

Records and Disclosure

As required by the California Public Records Act (CPRA), found in Government Code section 7920 *et. seq.*, Midpen records are subject to public review and scrutiny. The public may request copies of records in the possession of a special district, including records on a Board member’s personal device or account that are related to Midpen business. As a candidate for elective office, all documentation provided to Midpen, including email, texts, and written correspondence, may be subject to public disclosure unless otherwise exempt under applicable law.

Running for Office

A candidate for Midpen must be a resident and registered voter in the Midpen ward for which they are running.

Filing for More than One Office

Candidates should consider the common law doctrine of “incompatibility of offices.” This doctrine prevents an elected official from holding two offices simultaneously if the offices have overlapping



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and conflicting public duties. Candidates should refer to Government Code section 1099 for more information. For additional information about conflict of interest or incompatibility of offices, contact the Fair Political Practices Commission’s website at www.fppc.ca.gov.

Nomination Process

Candidates must obtain and file all required nomination forms with the District Clerk at the Midpen office located at 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos, CA 94022. Candidates must meet the eligibility requirements. Candidates are also required to file a Nomination Petition with a minimum of 50 valid signatures of registered voters who live within the ward in which the candidate is to be voted on.

Midpen is divided into seven geographic wards, each represented by an elected official for a four-year term. Find your ward: [WARD MAP](#)

Nomination Period

Pursuant to California Elections Code, the nomination period shall begin on **Monday, July 15, 2024 and end on Friday, August 9, 2024**. During the nomination period, the District Clerk shall issue and accept nomination documents during regular business hours of Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The deadline for filing nomination documents is **Friday, August 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.** Candidates arriving after the deadline will be turned away. **NO EXCEPTIONS ARE PERMITTED.**

Extended Nomination Period

If an incumbent for elective office has not filed nomination documents by the close of the nomination period, the nomination period shall be extended to **5:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 14, 2024**. Candidates arriving after the deadline will be turned away. **NO EXCEPTIONS ARE PERMITTED.** During the extended period, no incumbent may file nomination documents.

Submission of Nomination Documents

All nomination documents shall be submitted at one time. In order to ensure that nomination documents are complete and aligned with all regulatory requirements, candidates are required to schedule a submission appointment prior to the filing deadline. This provides time to review documentation with the District Clerk and ensure that documentation is complete and acceptable. Appointments may be made by contacting the District Clerk at (650) 691-1200 or via email at msoria@openspace.org.

Withdrawal of Candidacy

Withdrawal of candidacy is permitted up to the close of the nomination period of **Friday, August 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.** If the nomination period is extended, withdrawal is permitted up to the close of the extended nomination period of **Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**



Write-in Candidates

A candidate who does not file during the nomination period may file for office as a write-in candidate if the office appears on ballot. The nomination period for write-in candidates begins on **Monday September 9, 2024, and ends on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

Write-in candidates are subject to the same requirements and follow the same process as other candidates, with the following exceptions: Write-in Candidates do not have the option to submit a Candidate Statement. Write-in Candidates will not have their name, or a ballot designation, printed on the ballot.

Unopposed Candidates and Candidates' Statements

In the case where only a single candidate qualified to appear on the ballot, such candidate will not be permitted to have his or her name on the ballot (Public Resources Code section 5532(e)). If such unopposed candidate requests that his or her candidate's statement be included in official election material distributed to voters, Midpen will bill such candidate for the cost thereof, including costs related to any required translation.

In those wards where two or more candidates have qualified to appear on the ballot, a candidate may file a candidate's statement not exceeding 200 words. Midpen will pay for the cost of the statements, (and, if required by the respective county, translations of candidates' statements pursuant to the Elections Code of the State of California), and no such candidate shall be billed for availing himself or herself of these services.

Important Dates to Remember

July 15, 2024

- Nomination period opens for Ward 3, Ward 4 and Ward 7 through August 9.
 - Complete nomination papers and collect signatures.

August 9

- Nomination period closes for Board of Directors seats unless an incumbent for a seat does not submit nomination papers to run for reelection.

August 14

- Nomination period closes only for Board of Directors seats where an incumbent has not submitted papers to run for reelection.

October 21

- Last day to register to vote.

November 5 - ELECTION DAY



Remember to schedule your appointment, please call the District Clerk at 650-691-1200 or email msoria@openspace.org