A Note on Votes Required for Action as Referenced in Judge Rosenberg’s Video

Judge Rosenberg raises the issue of how many votes does it take to pass a matter. Here are some general rules to keep in mind:

- For an action of a county board of supervisors to be valid and binding, the action must be approved by a majority board (typically three out of the five members of the board of supervisors). See Cal. Gov’t Code § 25005.

- For general law cities, resolutions, orders for the payment of money, and all ordinances require a recorded majority vote of the total membership of the city council. See Cal. Gov’t Code § 36936.

- Cities with charters may prescribe their own vote requirements. See O.T. Johnson Corp. v. City of Los Angeles, 198 Cal. 308, 326 (1926) (state law requiring that ordinances have titles did not apply to charter cities); Adler v. City Council of the City of Culver City, 184 Cal. App. 2d 763, 776-77 and n.1 (1960) (zoning procedures were municipal affair within charter city’s authority).


Of course, local officials are always well-advised to consult with local agency counsel about how these general principles apply in any given situation.