

**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
STAFF REPORT
July 17, 2013**

For the meeting of July 23, 2013

TO: Town Council

FROM: Debra Stutsman, Town Manager

Subject: Proposed Sales Tax Ballot Measure

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the parameters for a proposed ballot measure placing a one-half cent sales tax measure for general purposes on the November, 2013 ballot, including final ballot language and a statement of intent on expenditures, and provide direction to staff.

BACKGROUND

At the meeting of Tuesday, June 25, the Council reviewed the results of the recent public opinion poll and directed staff to begin work to put a one-half cent general sales tax measure on the November 5, 2013 ballot. Councilmembers Dahlgren and McInerney worked with staff to review proposals from two consulting firms to assist the Town with the process up until the time that the measure is officially placed on the ballot. At the meeting of July 9, TBWB was selected to assist the Town with the process. At the same meeting the Council reviewed the ballot question, possible duration of tax measure, accountability measures and a proposed statement of intent and provided direction to staff.

DISCUSSION

There are several decisions that still need to be made regarding the ballot measure. These decisions include: the final wording of the ballot question and a statement of intent on expenditures. While the Town Council needs to determine the accountability protections such as a citizens' oversight committee and public reporting process that would be required as part of the measure, final decision related to the membership of such a committee and the frequency of meetings could be determined after the election.

Ballot Question – The Town must formulate the ballot question that describes the measure. Based on input from the Council at the July 9 meeting, the subcommittee has reworked the ballot question. The question that the subcommittee recommends is:

Town of San Anselmo Vital Services and Infrastructure Measure.

To repair potholes, repave roads, reduce traffic congestion, maintain and improve sidewalks/drainage/street medians, preserve public safety, and improve other general Town services, facilities, and infrastructure, shall the Town of San Anselmo establish a one-half cent sales tax for ten years, with annual independent audits,

mandatory public expenditure reports, and an independent citizens' oversight committee with all funds staying in San Anselmo under local control?

Statement of Intent on Expenditures – A statement of intent on expenditures would outline, generally, what the money would be spent on. The statement that was reviewed at the July 9 meeting has been revised to be in line with the recommended ballot question, as follows:

If the Town of San Anselmo Vital Services and Infrastructure Measure is passed, the current Town Council intends to spend the money for:

- Repairing potholes and accelerating the paving of streets that are sorely in need of treatment.
- Maintaining sidewalks and improving street drainage that is currently undersized, in disrepair or collapsed.
- Addressing important issues such as planting and maintenance of street medians that reflect the aesthetics of our Town.
- Completing long-deferred maintenance on Town facilities, such as the Isabel Cook Community Center, Robson House and Town Hall.

It is important to indicate in the statement that it is not binding and that the proceeds from the tax may be used for general governmental purposes. The Statement of Intent would be used to inform the community of the intended use of funds and provide a framework against which an oversight committee could compare the use of funds and report their findings to the public.

Accountability Measures – Staff recommends that the measure include oversight by a committee of local citizens and annual financial audits, with a public reporting process. This provision was included in the ballot language tested. Staff recommends that the Oversight Committee be comprised of five (5) members of the public, with expertise in public finance, construction, communications and public relations, etc. It is possible that the Committee could be formed from the Capital Program Monitoring Committee, but without Councilmembers as members. Should the ballot measure pass, the Oversight Committee would be formed after the election with a resolution setting the parameters that would require Council approval.

Sales Tax Duration – At the meeting of Tuesday, July 9, the Council decided on a duration of ten (10) years to ensure that significant progress can be made on the vital services intended with the measure.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

The subcommittee and staff are working with the consultant to prepare informational materials for residents. Included in our consulting contract with TBWB is the cost of one mailer to all residents that would extend an invitation to attend the August 5 meeting and provide input on the proposed sales tax measure. Additionally, it is recommended that we consider a second informational mailer to all residents after the August 5 meeting, should the Council vote to include the sales tax measure on the ballot. The cost of a second mailer to all residents would be an additional \$6,000.

BALLOT MEASURE TIMELINE

The timeline for the ballot measure is set by the Marin County Registrar of Voters. The approved resolution is due on Friday, August 9 to the County. The Town Council has scheduled a special meeting for Monday, August 5, 2013 at 7 p.m. for final consideration of the measure, resolution and ordinance.

August 5	Special meeting date to consider resolution for ballot measure
August 9	Last day to submit resolutions for ballot measures to the Marin County Registrar of Voters.
August 10-19	Ten (10) day public examination period
August 19	Last day to submit ballot arguments and impartial analysis by Town Attorney.
August 20-29	Ten (10) day public examination period
August 26	Last day to submit rebuttal arguments
Aug. 27 – Sept. 5	Ten (10) day public examination period
November 5	Election

CONCLUSION

Staff seeks direction on the above issues so that the resolution and ordinance for the proposed ballot measure can be prepared and presented to the Council for approval at the special meeting scheduled for Monday, August 5.

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Stutsman
Town Manager