

City of Pacifica
Financing City Services Taskforce
Minutes – February 7, 2012

1. Call to Order: 6:30 by Chair Bruce Banco. Attending: Mary Ellen Carroll, Pete Shoemaker, Karen Ervin, Sue Vaterlaus, Greg Cochran, Joe Kell, Councilmember Len Stone and Councilmember Mary Ann Nihart.
Staff: Steve Rhodes, Ann Ritzma
Excused: Omar Saleh and Bill Bent
2. Minutes: Feb 1, 2012 minutes were approved 6-0.

Staff handed out information that had been requested at the last meeting. The handouts included:

- a. Total compensation survey for police officer and deputy sheriff
 - b. Median Household income for each city in San Mateo County (from Sustainable San Mateo County)
 - c. Per capita revenue for each city in San Mateo County
 - d. Nine years of taxable sales for the City of Pacifica
3. Discussion on Development of New Five Year Plan

Staff presented handouts on Options A-G. The options for A-C remain the same from the prior meeting although reformatted into distinct revenue and expenditures. Options D – F are variations on options A-C. Option G is a new option that includes a sales tax measure that would be on the November ballot. Because of the November timing, Option G would generate less revenue (sales tax) the first year and require temporary expenditure reductions during the first part of the fiscal year until sales tax revenue (one quarter only) began. The group discussed the handouts for three Options A, B and C. Additionally, staff provided a five year projection for each option and the reserve amount for each year under each option. These reserves were then graphed as requested in the prior meeting.

There was a question regarding the increase in expenditures for FY15/16 and FY16/17 (as opposed to flat in the first three years of the projection). Staff explained that the original plan assumed no increases in expenditures in the original five year plan (FY 2010/11 through FY 14/15) but did allow for some increase (2%) after the initial five year “freeze/reduction” in expenditures.

Task Force members noted that Options B and E were subject to change when more concrete numbers are available from the Sheriff’s Department. Many members felt that a recommendation could not be made on any of the options until there was more information on the contracting out police number. Once there were firmer numbers that would determine whether to pursue the sales tax and then in which timeframe (Nov or June). Staff felt that more information would be available from the Sheriff by the next meeting on February 15. One member asked how the County proposal could save money when the County paid more (total compensation) than the City. Discussion on how overhead is spread over a large

organization like the County and often how that was difficult in a small organization like a City. Another member asked if the police building was paid for or if the city was still paying on it. The building is still being paid for and was initially a community project with strong community fundraising and support. Other members asked if there was any feedback (either staff or Council) from the City of San Carlos. Staff and Council members said the feedback on County Sheriff services had been positive.

Task Force members categorized the Options into 1) with sales tax A, D&G 2) contract police services B&E and 3) without either sales tax or police contracting C & F. There was discussion concerning sales tax and the need for more time to educate public and to have a group step forward to manage the election.

Task Force members expressed additional observations about contracting out police services – moving too fast, protecting local jobs and services, concern about Pacifica’s geographic limitations and population in regards to service delivery, can’t go back once contracted out (too expensive) . . .

Other issues regarding the options included: Perhaps taking a “breather” until November would allow for better advocacy for the City’s position; avoid the rushed timeframe of the Fire Assessment; June might be better for a sales tax but it’s a tight window; November would be a better ballot time because of more education and organization; the City needs a dedicated source of revenue (sales tax); there are volunteers ready to work for a sales tax in June; November is when two Councilmember seats will be open and competing sales tax measures from the State; caution “the longer the escrow . . the more that can go wrong . . . the less likely to close”; Pacifica needs to step out of the “poverty consciousness” ; Pacifica has never been flush and always has cobbled it together – employee benefits come and go; the survey was not scientific.

4. Public comment:

Bill Glasgo (POA) – would recommend that the Sheriff’s numbers be shared and the details of how service will be provided.

Peter Olinger – If you can’t develop a campaign or put it together now it is better to wait until November. Define “quality of life” – you need Police, Fire and Public Works. Need copy of minutes – good ideas in minutes. Can’t lose the institutional knowledge – essential.

Susan Vellone. – Wanted to let Task Force know that the business community was ok with the sales tax measure.

Aren Clark – “Would the Sheriff enforce local ordinances?” (like no jet skis at the beach)

Melissa Mondragon – The half cent sales tax is important. Losing the police department would have impacts on the local business community – example tow companies (3) that might not have the business with the Sheriff.

Camden (Pacifica Patch) – invited individuals to submit op ed pieces to Patch.

Jim Tasa – Realizing the survey is not scientific but public was given a voice and 1,500 responded. Conclusion: ½ cent sales tax and no contracting out of police (or

any city service). Caution – do your due diligence on the County proposal – it will be a menu of services with associated cost.

Fernie Realyvasquez – With department for 25 years + volunteer and wanted Task Force to know that having a police department is a quality of life issue. Giving up officers that know community or public works crews that work tirelessly would be a significant loss.

Josh McFall – Have worked with the Sheriff's staff on special assignment – good, professional safety officers. Don't want to lose the institutional knowledge – example a 911 call where victim gives description of trail location. A dispatcher from another area and a Deputy Sheriff are not going to be able to respond because they don't have the knowledge of the area or access to locked gates, etc.

Joe Spanheimer – Initially a city won't lose the institutional knowledge (San Carlos officers were assigned by the County to San Carlos). But over time, as personnel take on new assignments, there will be less and less dedicated, knowledgeable personnel who work in a specific city.

Dan Steidle – Piggy backing on the other comments, loss of institutional knowledge and buy in to community are critical. Outsourcing will lose 25 years of experience and you won't get it back. Deputies will not know you and will just come into Pacifica to take care of business and leave.

Task Force:

Group determined that they would not need a unanimous vote on options but only a majority. Given that there was a meeting scheduled for next Wednesday (Feb 15) and there would be more information regarding police option, the group could wait on making recommendations. In regards to deliverable from the group, the charge is a 5 year financial plan (as was done prior and handed out in the meeting). The only timeline for the group is the June ballot deadline which requires a Feb 27th City Council ordinance – should that be in the Option being recommended. Developing the plan, outside of the June ballot, can take more time although staff did remind the group that a budget needs to be developed for FY 2012/13 (which will need to be developed in March for April budget work sessions).

5. The group adjourned at 8:14pm. The next meeting is February 15, 2012 at 6:30 pm.