

Citizen's Review Panel  
May 7, 2008

Members present: Mike Wyrick, Robert Speechly, Sallie Mook, Jan Kafton, Deborah Ikeda  
Members absent: Sharon Thomas  
Others present: Pat Pondexter, Steve Nitta, Karen Bosch Cobb, Elida Mendoza, Fitz Kelly

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Wyrick.
2. Introductions: Fitz Kelly, a farmer in Reedley and a member of the Reedley Friends of the Library, attended today's meeting to get an idea of what the Citizen's Review Panel to help him decide if he wants to submit an application for appointment to the Panel.
3. Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted as submitted.
4. Approval of Minutes of March 5: The minutes were approved as submitted.
5. Attendance Roster and Discussion About Attendance: The Board of Supervisors attendance policy was reviewed, and an attendance report was distributed with the meeting materials.
6. Report on Tracking Poll Results: Karen presented a summary of the results of the tracking poll, and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on April 8. The poll consisted of 800 telephone surveys of people likely to vote in the November 2008 general election. The poll was conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (FMMA). Voter turnout in November is expected to be high, and the consultant's advice is that this would be a good time to take this measure to the voters. If the sales tax is approved, it will replace the current tax. Following are highlights of the report and other comments:
  - Key findings are that voters prefer a library sales tax rather than a bond. After voters received additional information, support increased, and most voters said they would be willing to pay to increase the number of books available. Initial support was 63% support sales tax. 57% support a bond measure.
  - 78% perceive public libraries play a critical role in strengthening education.
  - In response to a question about whether things are on the right/wrong track, the numbers improved from the Measure C (conducted by FMMA) June 2006 poll.
  - The polling firm is working with staff to come up with the sales tax language.
  - The sales tax revenues would be used for both operations and facility development.

- The tax would replace the 1/8<sup>th</sup> tax with 1/4<sup>th</sup> and would require independent audits.
- 2/3rds is needed for approval.
- Tested the length of the sales tax, and 16 years received more approval than 12 or 8 years.
- Strongest supporters are women: 71%
- All bond language wording relates to buildings. A bond would be a \$5 million general obligation bond. Adding books is a strong priority, but cannot be done with a bond.
- In order to shape the campaign, the poll included questions on what people agree or disagree on. 64% want a branch library convenient to their home.
- The theme of working with schools received strong support, as well as the theme of education. Strong support for creating more space for after school programs.
- Key words found in the survey were repairing, improving, upgrading, and providing a healthy and safe environment. There was also a strong emphasis on services. People were more inclined to support a sales tax measure because it will repair and upgrade libraries and provide a healthy environment.

**Comment [k1]:** Can you check your notes. I think the statement was \_\_\_% say a branch is convenient to them.

Karen's recommendation to the Board of Supervisors was to direct her to draft a sales tax ordinance and develop a projects list for all libraries throughout the County.

7. Review Projected Income and Projects List: A draft list of upgrades, improvements, and safety measure projects for all libraries was distributed for discussion. A separate list of building projects divided into Phases I, II, and III was also distributed. Expansion and new building projects in Phases II and III include an 8% cost increase per year as recommended by Public Works. If a community does not get a new building or an expansion, they will get some other library improvement. Some of the items on the list include wireless access for large branches, energy efficiency, space and equipment for improved services, and more technology to improve efficiency. The cost estimates provided do not include increased staff for new facilities, and projected revenue increase is only for the additional 1/8 cent tax.

Citizen's Review Panel members were pleased with the proposed list of projects. The next step will be for staff to discuss the list with the Board of Supervisors, and once Board approval is received, it will be presented at a public meeting.

8. Provide direction to staff on Ballot and Ordinance Language: Mike suggested deleting the words "computer technology" and replacing them with "technology." Concerns were voiced about the importance of people understanding that the Central Library is a branch library. Panel members felt that a motion to this effect was in order, and it was moved by Debbie Ikeda, seconded by Bob Speechly, and carried that during this process and any other processes that this committee undertakes that the Central Library be included when talking about branch libraries.

Karen provided a copy of the applicable State Revenue and Tax Code sections. She explained that this time the measure will not be referred to as a successor tax because it is coming prior to the end of the current Measure B in 2013.

Steve commented that since the Library is not a General Fund department, it is important to protect the Library from future charges for routine county services currently provided at no cost. Language will be included in the ordinance to cover this. The group agreed that the ballot language and ordinance language should be kept simple, and it should not be too different from the last one. They also agreed that staff should move forward with the next steps for approval to place it on the ballot.

9. Provide direction to staff on use of Measure B to pay for successor tax: Measure B funds were used to pay for election costs in 2004. Panel members agreed per the ordinance that Measure B funds can be used again to pay for the 2008 costs.

10. Provide direction to staff on Review Panel for Measure L: Panel members discussed how the Panel was established to oversee expenditure of Measure B funds. They agreed that they would like to continue as the committee to oversee expenditure of Measure L funds. It was moved by Jan Kafton, seconded by Debbie Ikeda, that the County Librarian recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Citizen's Review Panel transition as the review committee for Measure L if approved by the voters. Motion carried.

11. Next Meeting: June 4, 2008

12. Adjourn: There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.