

MINUTES

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Santa Ynez Valley Marriott
555 McMurray Road
Buellton, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Salud Carbajal, Supervisor, First District; Susan Rose, Supervisor, Second District; Brooks Firestone, Supervisor, Third District; Joe Centeno (SBCAG Chair), Supervisor, Fifth District; Russ Hicks, Councilmember, City of Buellton (left at 12:30 p.m.); Donna Jordan, Councilmember, City of Carpinteria; Jonny Wallis (SBCAG Vice-Chair), Mayor, City of Goleta; John Sabedra, Councilmember, City of Guadalupe; Dick DeWees, Mayor, City of Lompoc; Marty Blum, Mayor, City of Santa Barbara; Marty Mariscal, Councilmember, City of Santa Maria; Ed Skytt, Councilmember, City of Solvang; Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5 Representative.

Members Absent: Joni Gray, Supervisor, Fourth District

Staff Members Present: Jim Kemp, Executive Director; Steve VanDenburgh, Deputy Director of Programs; Michael Powers, Deputy Director of Planning; Kent Epperson, TDM Program Administrator; Fred Luna, Transportation Engineer; Gregg Hart, Public Information/Government Affairs Coordinator; Jonathan Whitt, TDM Marketing Coordinator; Cathy Muneio, Board Clerk; Kevin E. Ready, Sr., Senior Deputy County Counsel.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lee Moldever shared that at 1:23 pm it would be the 1:23 of the fourth month of the fifth day of the sixth year.

3. REVIEW OF MEASURE D RENEWAL STRATEGIES

Chair Centeno requested that the public respect the time constraints for speaking to allow everyone a chance to comment.

Jim Kemp provided an overview of the workshop meeting and emphasized that it was important for the board to engage and provide input on the proposed expenditure plan that the board has targeted for the November 2006 election. He said that there needs to be a consensus among the board members on the overall strategy for moving forward. Mr. Tramutola would be speaking about the various strategies available and a powerpoint presentation would be made on the A plus B plan that is being recommended. Mr. Kemp noted that changes had been made to the plan based upon the public input process and pointed out that there would be an opportunity to receive public input. Mr. Kemp said that Mr. Tramutola would be discussing the options and Gregg Hart would be summarizing the result of the public meetings.

Supervisor Firestone asked what the deadline was for placing a measure on the November ballot.

Mr. Kemp responded that the Board of Supervisors would need receive a request from SBCAG to place the ballot measure on the agenda in late June and a ballot request would then be acted on by the board of supervisors, but prior to that this the expenditure plan would need to be approved by the individual jurisdictions. The expenditure plan must be approved by the board of supervisors and a majority of the cities representing a majority of the incorporated area population.

Chair Centeno requested that the board allow Mr. Tramutola to make his presentation prior to asking questions.

Mr. Tramutola thanked the board and staff for the opportunity to be involved in one of the most challenging efforts he has seen in over 20 years. He said he received provocative input and found that people had a desire to work through the problems. He hoped that the voters would appreciate the amount of work it has taken to place this measure on the ballot. Mr. Tramutola said that polls were taken that showed transportation was considered the number one problem in the Santa Barbara County but that people did not agree how to solve these problems. Mr. Tramutola said that compromises will need to be made in order to pass this measure by 2/3 vote. He noted that measures usually fail from a lack of leadership rather than the due to the amount of the tax.

Mr. Tramutola reviewed the various options that had been discussed. The first option was to postpone the decision to move forward with the renewal measure for two years. He did not think that this would be a wise decision because it would only delay the problem. Mr. Tramutola said that there currently is not enough revenue with renewing Measure D to fund many of the projects and delaying the ballot measure won't make this problem go away. In addition, delaying the measure could be taking a chance that certain matching funds may not be available in the future.

Option two would be to extend the measure with some adjustments to it but this would not bring in enough money to complete many of the necessary projects. Mr. Tramutola said he was not convinced that this renewal measure would receive 2/3 vote due to a disagreement on how the Measure D funds are being spent. He said while this seemed to be a simple solution it was actually quite risky.

A discussion began about increasing the tax measure amount by one-quarter cent. This then led to the discussion of renewing the current Measure D for one-half cent and having a new tax measure for one-quarter cent. He noted it was felt the one-quarter cent would be easy to explain to the voters and if they could get the board of supervisors and local leaders behind this it would remove objections from people who thought that there wasn't enough money for various purposes.

Mr. Tramutola said that the last option discussed was Measures A and B. He said he realized there was a discussion in the community about combining them into a three-quarter cent ballot measure that would be balanced and compatible with each other. He said that there was a good chance both would pass if the community embraced and fought to get them passed and that the advantage over the three-quarter cent measure would be that they would be able to articulate to the voters what projects their tax increase would pay for. But, he said, if the Board decided on a ¾ cent measure, that could be passed too if the board got behind it. Mr. Tramutola requested direction from the board and said that he thought that it might be good to have a poll taken on a ¾ cent measure if that is how the Board decided to proceed.

4. REVIEW OF PUBLIC OUTREACH

Gregg Hart presented this item. He said that over 600 people had attended either the city council meetings or workshops to hear about renewing Measure D and to hear about the process and the importance of this funding. Mr. Hart said that the public polling process showed that the public understood that this was a necessary tax measure but disagreed on how funds should be allocated.

Chair Centeno asked the board members if they had any questions.

Supervisor Rose said she thought that Measure D was previously not clearly understood by the public but it seemed they now had a better understanding of Measure D.

Supervisor Firestone stated to Mr. Tramutola that he did not feel that the consultants had interacted with the board enough.

Mr. Tramutola responded that he agreed that this was the case but that it was decided meeting with the board members individually would not be the best approach.

Chair Centeno said he had asked County Counsel if it would be a Brown Act violation for Mr. Tramutola to discuss the Measure D renewal serially with the individual board members and was told that it would be a violation and was told that discussions need to take place in open meetings.

Counsel Ready further stated that these individual discussions were considered serial meetings, legislative programs could not be created by meeting with individual members of the board and that the board takes the Brown Act very seriously.

Mr. Kemp said that he thought it was important to engage the board in discussion to hear the board's thoughts on the overall strategy that was laid out. He said a presentation would follow lunch.

Chair Centeno said he would like to hear staff's recommendations based on the meetings that were held with the public and public officials.

Councilmember Mariscal said that the City of Santa Maria was not heard and that he would reserve comments until they got to Item 6.

Mr. Kemp said they would highlight changes made from the previous Measure A plus B proposal and noted that not all comments had resulted in changes to the proposal.

Mayor Wallis requested that the public be heard prior to any decisions made by the board.

Councilmember Hicks expressed concern about having two measures on the ballot rather than one three-quarter cent measure.

Mr. Tramutola said that Measure A plus B had helped inform everyone in the county that there isn't not enough funding to complete all of the projects needed with a simple ½ cent renewal measure.

Councilmember Hicks asked if Mr. Tramutola was looking for a consensus from the board to either choose a single three-quarter cent measure or to chose Measures A plus B.

Mr. Tramutola responded that he thought that either of the measures would pass if there was board consensus.

Supervisor Carbajal said that they had come a long way and that they were almost there with a little adjustment but said he preferred combining the measures into a single three-quarter cent measure.

Supervisor Centeno said that there was consensus that the measures were balanced but he was concerned that Measure A would pass and Measure B would fail and reduce the funding for transit systems. He said he would like to hear from the public prior to making any decision.

Chair Centeno called for a lunch break at 12:15 p.m. to be reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Councilmember Hicks left the meeting.

Counsel Ready said that this was a social lunch and no discussions would take place relative to board business.

6. PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDED EXPENDITURE PLAN

Chair Centeno said that staff would give a presentation and then they would hear public comment and return to the board for a possible decision.

Mr. Kemp presented a staff report on the Measure A plus B expenditure plans and called for any questions relative to the local project portion of the presentation.

Mayor Skytt asked how alternative transportation percentages were derived.

Mr. Kemp responded that these figures were generated through the Expenditure Plan committee that consisted of public works directors. He said that the plan provides that local governments have to spend a certain amount of funds on alternative transportation.

Mayor DeWees asked how the Breeze service would be funded.

Mr. Kemp said it could be funded under the local regional bus service program.

Chair Centeno said he would like to hear from the public.

Monte Ward said when reviewing the numbers for all the transit projects they amounted to twice as much as widening Hwy 101. He said widening Hwy 101 to three lanes would allow for a large increase of cars on the highway and would cost about \$.80 per person rather than \$100 per person for the commuter rail service.

Michelle Nellis said she was a historian that had worked for the county of Santa Barbara conducting historic surveys on roads, culverts and bridges. She requested that any work done on the infrastructure be placed into a database so that this information could be made available to other agencies.

Joyce Kaiseulian asked if the board had considered looking at hydrogen fuel cell for buses.

Chair Centeno stated that the projects expected to be funded from the measure were listed in the expenditure plan and that this would be a question for the transit operators.

Mr. Kemp said that this meeting was to see how funds get allocated by developing an expenditure plan and a determination will be made as to what projects will be included in the plan.

Sally Fohse, with the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, requested that they be a stakeholder in developing the expenditure plan. She said that this was a golden opportunity to look at historic sites and structures that are subject to the impacts of transportation plans.

Janice Keller said that she had provided the board with a letter and that she was speaking about transportation on behalf of the Santa Barbara County Economic Vitality Committee. She read the policy statement that was developed and distributed to the board. She said they supported efforts to continue Measure D funding and requested continuation of the Breeze service.

Lee Moldever said he supported a combined three-quarter cent measure.

Sherrie Fisher, General Manager with the MTD urged that the board combine Measures A and B since this would be positive for transit and for roads. She said that MTD would lose money if just Measure A passed.

Barry Siegel, representing the Montecito Association, said they supported a modified version of Measure A and requested that the widening of Hwy 101 and commuter rail be delayed. He said that most of the Montecito Association board does not believe that just widening Hwy 101 will fix the problem.

Viriana Saavedra thanked the consultants and SBCAG staff for coming to Santa Maria to make a presentation on Measure D. She said that she was a member of the Coalition for a Fair Measure D and that they would like a fair share of funding for alternative transportation. She said that SMAT had grown by 25 percent since last year. She noted that the average citizen would need more education to understand Measure D and requested that whoever oversees the funds makes sure that alternative transportation gets its fair share.

Eva Inbar said there were nine speakers with her from various organizations that had come together to form the Coalition for a Fair Measure D. She said that they were picking up more north county support and since Measure D is not a gas tax but a sales tax it needs to support all types of transportation.

Alex Pujo, secretary of COAST and a member of the Coalition for a Fair Measure D thanked SBCAG for its effort. He gave a brief explanation on the Measure D 70/30 split. He requested that the board pay attention to the conditions that will allow voters to have some safeguards.

Chair Centeno reminded the public they would have another chance to speak on April 20.

Mark Bradley said he wanted to combine Measures A and B into one three-quarter cent measure. He said that the two measures might allow Measure A to pass without B but that he felt a consensus was more important. When the Santa Barbara City Transportation and Circulation Committee looked at this plan they were confused by it and felt it was not balanced.

Dennis Story, a member of the Coalition for a Fair Measure D and Chair of Coast Rail Now, said he still thinks that commuter rail is viable transportation and in order for it to be successful they would have to follow the rail assessment. He said he supported the three-quarter cent tax

measure because there would not be enough funds available for regional projects if SBCAG only continued the one-half cent tax.

Kate Bechtel, Coalition for a Fair Measure D and a member of COAST, said she supported the three-quarter cent sales tax measure and the percentage of funding for local jurisdictions for alternative transportation.

Harley Augustino, Coalition for a Fair Measure D and a member of Pueblo, requested additional funding for transit. He supported combining of Measures A plus B and expressed his concern that the north county was not using all of their TDA funds for transit.

Ralph Fertig, Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, said they were in support of combining the two measures into a single three-quarter cent measure and was in support of the Complete Streets policy that had passed in seven states.

Kalon Kelly, Coalition for a fair Measure D and a member of the Citizens Planning Association, supported the SBCAG TDM Program (Traffic Solutions). He said it was the most cost effective program to reduce congestion and requested that funding for TDM programs be increased to a total of \$45 million over the thirty year life of the expenditure plan.

Mark Chytilo said he was the concluding speaker for the Coalition for a Fair Measure D. He said the coalition was formed very quickly after the Expenditure Plan developed by the city managers and public works directors was offered by SBCAG to the public. He said the Coalition for a Fair Measure D was formed so that there would not be a repeat of the last Measure D. He said they were in support of a measure that is balanced and meets the needs of the county. Mr. Chytilo said that since there was a demand for additional funding he would support combining Measures A plus B into a single measure.

Greg Helms, Coalition for a Fair Measure D and a member of SBCAN, emphasized investing in transit and other alternative transportation to maximize the public investment in infrastructure and urged the board not to place the majority of alternative transportation in Measure B but to reconfigure the measures or combine them into one measure.

Fred Koval requested that the board hold off on approving any measure renewal since there were four years left to decide which direction to go. He said the one thing that was missing were the housing mandates. He said that SBCAG was responsible for that mandate and he didn't see any connection to it and was concerned about the big picture.

TK Chang, an architect, explained her idea about a cable car system for the county.

A spokesperson for Max Anders requested transit funding for UCSB students. He said that there were 20,000 voters at UCSB and that their needs should be considered.

Raphaela Moreno with Pueblo requested a combined three-quarter cent measure with local agencies determining what projects should be funded.

Candace Corbani with Fix 101.Org submitted a letter that supports the renewal of the current Measure D.

Jean Blois said that she had lived in this community for many years and that the perception when the original Measure D was approved was that it was going to be used for widening Hwy

101. She encouraged the board to have Measures A plus B separate and that it would be difficult to get an increase passed.

Joe Rodriguez-Flores, a student from UCSB and a member of the Coalition for a Fair Measure D, said that there was a lack of adequate alternative transportation at UCSB. He said a lot of students work in Santa Barbara and Goleta and that the bus service was sporadic and puts a lot of strain on the students since it reduces the number of classes they can take and the number of activities they can participate in.

Chair Centeno said that there were no more public comments and requested a ten-minute break.

When the Board reconvened at 3:20 pm Chair Centeno said he would like to look at the choices and narrow them down.

Supervisor Firestone suggested taking off the table discussion of not doing anything to renew the measure at this time.

Chair Centeno said that he would like the board to come to a consensus on what measure they would like to pursue.

Mayor Blum moved to take remove the renewal of the Measure D one-half cent sales tax in its current structure off the table. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Carbajal. The measure carried 8-3 with Supervisor Firestone and Councilmembers Skytt and Mariscal opposed.

Councilmember Mariscal said he would like to speak to Item 6 prior to the board making any decisions. He requested clarification on the direct funding for transit providers and the definition of Complete Streets.

Mr. Kemp said that with COLT and SMAT, the cities were the transit operators and he read the complete streets principle in the expenditure plan.

Councilmember Mariscal said that the city of Santa Maria had put forth an alternative A plus B plan that included additional funding for regional highway projects in Santa Maria and distributed copies of the proposal. He said throughout the Measure D process there has been the recognition that substantial growth would take place in the Santa Maria Valley. He said that the alternative version contained two other components besides a change in regional funding. He said that there is a perception that a commuter rail system would not be perceived positively in the north county and there was a concern that Hwy 101 did not get widened with the last measure. Councilmember Mariscal said that the city of Santa Maria was proposing that if a rail system is found not to work that the funds for that system be put back into the regional pot for local agencies. He said that TDA funds are used only for transit needs that are reasonable to meet and requested the remaining TDA funds continue to be allowed for road repairs. Mr. Mariscal added that after talking with Mayor DeWees he would like to amend the Santa Maria proposal as it is written to retain funding for the Central Avenue extension project in Lompoc and reduce the amount requested for the 166 bypass by a like amount.

Supervisor Carbajal asked where the shift in regional funding would come from and said it sounded like Santa Maria had its own program. He expressed serious concerns with the Santa Maria proposal.

Councilmember Mariscal said that they believe in the use of local funds and funds could come from the regional bike program, safe routes to school and regional transit.

Chair Centeno asked the board which concept they would like to support.

Mayor Wallis said that Measures A plus B was difficult to explain but that the amount generated by both measures passing was necessary. She said she would like to see a conceptual commitment to one ballot measure and requested that the consultants poll on the single combined measure before the April meeting.

Supervisor Centeno said he represented a district that was primarily rural in nature outside of Santa Maria and that he did not have a lot of control within the city limits. He said the rural area needs to have roads maintained and asked how roads that use TDA funds could be maintained if they lost those funds. He said he would be willing to discuss leaving the TDA process out of the expenditure plan and was willing to combine Measures A plus B. He also commented that the people in the north county were not very supportive of commuter rail.

Supervisor Carbajal said he was willing to compromise on the TDA issue since there was support for a compromise on combining Measures A plus B.

Mayor Wallis asked how quickly a poll could be taken.

Mr. Tramutola responded it could be done with results back in about ten days.

Mr. Kemp said that the board would need to authorize additional funding to complete a poll.

Mayor DeWees congratulated staff and the consultants for incorporating what they had learned and for building a consensus. He said he was in favor of Measures A plus B at this time but was not in favor of increasing taxes. He said he was willing to reduce the 70/30 split to 60/40 to allow for the regional projects to be completed and said that just adding a lane for the widening of Hwy 101 from Milpas to the Ventura County line won't work alone. He said he liked the idea of giving people the option to vote for the renewal of Measure D and the extra one-quarter cent if they so desired.

Mayor Wallis said that there seemed to be a consensus for moving forward which also shows a strong support for alternative transportation. She said she found Measures A plus B dangerous because she did not think they were balanced when it comes to alternative transportation. She said she was pleased with the public comments she had heard today.

Supervisor Carbajal commended staff, the public and the board. He said combining both measures would provide the opportunity to accomplish the goals laid out. He said he was willing to compromise since the TDA provision which was difficult for Santa Maria to accept and not moving forward would squander an opportunity. He said he supported the combining of Measures A plus B into one single three-quarter cent tax.

Mayor Blum said she had come into this concerned about people who would vote no on any new tax increase but at the same time was concerned about people who are commuting and want the highway congestion to be alleviated. She said she would be supportive of combining Measures A and B.

Supervisor Carbajal said if they move forward with the three-quarter cent sales tax and if in five years it was decided that commuter rail would not work the funds for that project should be used in the south county for alternative transit.

Supervisor Firestone said that the board should consider that Supervisor Gray and Councilmember Hicks were not at this meeting before making any decision. He also expressed concern about losing funds for maintaining roads and said a simple renewal might be an option.

Mayor DeWees said he would consider a 60/40 split and appreciated Supervisor Carbajal's compromise to allow using TDA funds for roads. He said he was apprehensive about cutting off the option of Measures A plus B.

Supervisor Rose asked how much discretion the board had relative to TDA funds and asked if this was a federal law.

Mr. Kemp said that state law requires that TDA funds are used for transit as a first priority and if the SBCAG Board determined there were no unmet transit needs that were reasonable to meet the remaining funds could then be used for roads.

Supervisor Centeno said that annual hearings are held for the transit needs assessment and that the constituents are heard at that time.

Supervisor Rose asked for a better understanding of the TDA fund process. She also asked if there was value in taking another poll.

Mr. Tramutola said he did not think it was a necessity to have a poll taken to move forward but that a quarter cent increase poll should be done. He said that people would respond to things that they will benefit from. Supervisor Rose said she was in favor of a combined Measure A plus B.

Councilmember Sabedra said that the people in Guadalupe would support a three-quarter cent sales tax measure because transportation was very important to Guadalupe.

Councilmember Mariscal said he would like to see two measures that had infrastructure projects in one and alternative transportation in the other. He stated that the position of Santa Maria two weeks ago was to not move ahead with any measure that did not meet the needs of the City of Santa Maria and that moving to combine the two measures into one measure could have long lasting effects.

Supervisor Centeno asked if Councilmember Mariscal would support a combined ballot.

Councilmember Mariscal said he would.

Councilmember Jordan said the bottom line was that the measure needed to get on the ballot and that they needed to have a measure that the voters would accept. She said she understood the reluctance of certain board members when it comes to a tax increase but said that the board should consider what the public has said in support of a combined measure. She said that down the road commuter rail will be addressed and if it is not found to be a feasible project a discussion will need to happen on what should be done with those funds but that she was in favor of leaving those funds in a transit pot and supported a combined measure.

Councilmember Skytt complimented Mayor DeWees. He said Solvang is a little fish in a big pond and that its input wouldn't swing the decision one way or the other. He said Solvang city council has discussed Measures A plus B and they would like to maintain the current 70/30 split and were not in favor of the extra quarter cent tax increase. He said they could go along with the 60/40 and said he would prefer the A plus B measures.

Rich Krumholz said that he had been involved with this process over the last several months and that it was pretty clear that there was consensus on moving forward with the transportation sales tax renewal and Caltrans would support SBCAG's efforts to the extent possible. He said the most acute problem was in the south county which will influence how problems are address thirty years down the road. He said he keeps telling the constituents in south San Luis Obispo county to keep its eyes on south Santa Barbara County because they are going to face similar issues in the future. Mr. Krumholz stated that Caltrans needed SBCAG's help because traditional funding mechanisms no longer work and that he hoped Santa Barbara County continues to be a self-help county.

Supervisor Centeno said he would support the combined measure if the board would accommodate the TDA funding issue. He said the one issue that they constantly hear being discussed is the widening of Hwy 101 on the south coast and commuter rail and that the only way to solve the problem is by combining the two measures.

Supervisor Carbajal made a motion to approve the concept of preparing a combined ballot measure that will include a one-quarter cent tax increase. Supervisor Rose seconded that motion.

Supervisor Firestone said he was willing to support this concept.

Mr. Kemp said that any modifications being requested could be addressed.

Mayor DeWees requested that consistent wording be used to describe the project to improve the connection from Lompoc to Highway 246., and on page 9 said that Lompoc would like to include under maintaining existing structure, roadway drainage.

Supervisor Rose asked that the request relative to historic preservation be discussed at the next meeting.

The motion carried 9-2 with Mayor DeWees and Councilmember Skytt opposed.

Supervisor Rose said she would like a little more understanding of what will happen with TDA funds.

Supervisor Carbajal said that a compromise had been made that not all TDA funds need to be used for transit.

Supervisor Centeno said that the rail issue was open ended and if rail was deemed a project that would not work then something needed to be done with that funding.

Councilmember Mariscal said that this was a concern for the north county and the south county and requested that staff meet with the city and county public works engineering staff.

Supervisor Carbajal said that Councilmember Jordan had put forth a procedure for performance measures that might become a potential method for distribution of rail funds.

Supervisor Centeno said he appreciated the public's input and wanted to convey to the Tramutola and Terrain consultants and to the SBCAG staff the board's appreciation. He said that they had done a good job on a very difficult complex issue.

Supervisor Centeno said he did not think a poll would be necessary.

Mayor Wallis said she would defer to the other board members on that issue.

Supervisor Rose said that they did not need any more gray areas and preferred not to do polling.

Mr. Tramutola said this was a very difficult decision and that they would be more confident if a poll was taken for the additional one-quarter cent tax increase but understood it was a financial decision.

Supervisor Carbajal said they had come so far they didn't want to go back by taking a poll.

Supervisor Centeno said there wouldn't be a poll.
The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.