



Legislation Details (With Text)

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FROM:

Linda M. Kenton, Assistant Town Manager/Town Librarian

SUBJECT:

Receive report regarding the Library Parcel Tax renewal and provide direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Town Council receive a report on the Library Parcel Tax renewal and provide direction to staff. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

BACKGROUND

On June 8, 2010, the voters of San Anselmo passed Measure B.

<https://www.marincounty.org/-/media/files/departments/rv/elections/past/2010/june/ballot-measures/measureb.pdf> with 75.8% majority of the vote, establishing a \$49.00 Library Parcel Tax. The ballot initiative, prepared by Library supporters, called for the Town to increase San Anselmo Library open hours, improve children's services at the library including hiring a special Children's Librarian, and enhance general Library services. The tax was slated to last five years, expiring in June 2015. Three Marin library jurisdictions sought support from their respective voters in June 2010. The San Anselmo Public Library joined the Marin County Free Library and the San Rafael Public Library by each asking for a \$49.00 parcel tax. San Anselmo and the County asked for a five-year tax while San Rafael asked for seven years. All measures passed with San Anselmo by 75.8%, Marin County Free Library by 74.8% and San Rafael Public Library by 70.2%.

The Town Council established the Library Parcel Tax Oversight Committee in November 2010 to ensure accountability and transparency for these funds. The committee has reported to the Town Council each year that the tax funds are being spent according to the ballot language and the will of the people.

In anticipation of the June 2015 expiration and in consultation with Marin County Free Library it was recommended to pursue a ballot measure in June 2014 due to the expected heft of the November 2014 ballot

and the presumed expectation that it could negatively impact a library tax renewal.

Council approved placing the Library Parcel Tax renewal on the June 2014 ballot.

<https://www.marincounty.org/-/media/files/departments/rv/elections/past/2014/june-2014/ballot-measures/measuree.pdf> . Measure E increased the tax to \$54.00, with a 3% cost of living increase each year.

The tax passed with 72.73% of the vote.

The expected revenues were as follows:

| \$54.00, 9-Year Parcel tax with 3.00% Cost of Living (COLA) annual percentage increase | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--|------------|--|----------------|
| | | | TAX | | REVENUE |
| Year 1 | 2015-16 | | \$54.00 | | \$254,82 |
| Year 2 | 2016-17 | | \$55.62 | | \$262,47 |
| Year 3 | 2017-18 | | \$57.29 | | \$270,34 |
| Year 4 | 2018-19 | | \$59.01 | | \$278,45 |
| Year 5 | 2019-20 | | \$60.78 | | \$286,80 |
| Year 6 | 2020-21 | | \$62.60 | | \$295,41 |
| Year 7 | 2021-22 | | \$64.48 | | \$304,27 |
| Year 8 | 2022-23 | | \$66.41 | | \$313,38 |
| Year 9 | 2023-24 | | \$68.40 | | \$322,77 |

DISCUSSION

The funds generated by the Library Parcel Tax are a critical component of the Library's operation. It pays for the Children's Librarian, funds additional hours of operation and augments general library services.

Over the life of the parcel tax enhancements have included:

Youth Services

1. Fully developed Youth Services Program including multiple weekly storytimes
2. Summer Reading Programs
3. Additional shelving for more materials
4. Special events like Gingerbread House making, Things that Go festival, Storytelling festival
5. Grab and Go crafts
6. A literacy computer for children
7. Book groups for various ages
8. Poetry writing workshops

9. Read to a Dog
10. French and Spanish language collections started
11. Expanded easy chapter book collection
12. Created “Young Teen” collection

General

1. Library open hours increased from 36 to 51 hours per week pre-pandemic
2. High speed Wi-Fi through CENIC
3. An increasingly important and growing eBook/eAudio/digital magazines collection
4. Link+ a statewide materials sharing service (historically called interlibrary loan)
5. Take & Make collection
6. Book Bundles for all ages
7. Self-checkout stations
8. the Eureka! bestseller collection
9. Drive-by book drop on Library Place
10. Improved computer access
11. Discover & Go museum pass program
12. the Hoot eNewsletter
13. Additional shelving for more materials

Adult

1. Art Talks
2. Master Gardener presentations
3. Alzheimer’s memory kits
4. Travelogues
5. Alzheimer’s Outreach programs

6. Tunstead Live after-hours Friday night adult programming
7. Saturday afternoon lecture series
8. Wired Wednesdays technology help

Some program expenses are shared with the Friends of the San Anselmo Public Library.

ANALYSIS

Renewal in November of 2022

Staff is recommending that the Town Council consider placing a renewal of the Library Parcel Tax on the November 2022 General Election ballot. A renewal of the Library Parcel Tax would maintain the gains made by the 2010 and 2014 Library Parcel Taxes. The Children's Librarian and resulting Youth Services programs, the additional open hours, and enhanced services have become essential elements the library provides for the community which is directly due to the parcel tax.

A citizen group has not yet officially convened to prepare and execute a campaign but is in the process of forming.

It is expected that the Library Parcel Tax renewal will share the November 2022 ballot with the Town's Measure D renewal. The former requires two-thirds voter approval while the latter needs 50% plus one. It is recommended that the two measures have staggered expirations so as not to compete on future ballots. It is not yet clear what other tax measures may appear on said ballot.

Marin County Free Library (MCFL) will also renew their library parcel tax in November. San Anselmo Public Library and MCFL have approached voters jointly for both the original parcel tax measure (2010) and for the renewal in 2014. We believe this creates good synergy around libraries in our communities with positive outcomes for voter approval of the tax measures.

FISCAL IMPACT

Today there are 4,793 parcels in San Anselmo. The current Library Parcel Tax amounts to less than projected due to exemptions. This revenue is budgeted and spent to fulfill the intent of the ballot measure.

The special Library Parcel Tax requires that the tax funding augment, not displace, funding provided by the Town. To that end, the ordinance requires that the tax continues to be levied only if the Town funding of the Library remains above 90% of the amount budgeted.

The Library has strong purchasing power as part of the MARINet Consortium. We have been able to acquire eBooks, eMagazines, join Link+ and other important sources of information, but these are ongoing costs. In addition, we continue to consider new products/services and purchase those that are best and fit with our community.

Two regular (the Children's Librarian and Library Assistant I) and a number of extra-hire employees were hired because of the parcel tax and are paid from the Library tax fund. These employees support the extra open hours and the expanded children's program enacted after the passage of the tax as well as enhanced services

for adults.

CEQA AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Council's discussion of this item is not a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act, because it does not involve an activity which has the potential to cause a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21065).

CONCLUSION

The need to renew the Library Parcel Tax is clear. The improved services and programs available at the Library meet and exceed the expectations and intent of San Anselmo residents. The parcel tax enables the robust Library programs and services not only to continue but to grow.