




City of Sierra Madre Agenda Report

John Capoccia, Mayor
Gene Goss, Mayor Pro Tem
Rachelle Arizmendi, Council Member
Denise Delmar, Council Member
John Harabedian, Council Member

Nancy Shollenberger, City Clerk
Richard Mays, City Treasurer

TO: Honorable Mayor Capoccia and Members of the City Council

FROM: Elaine I. Aguilar, City Manager 

DATE: November 24, 2015

SUBJECT: **Discussion Regarding UUT Ballot Question, and Other Election Related Direction**

SUMMARY

There is Council consensus to place a 10% Utility Users Tax (UUT) ballot measure on the ballot at the April 2016 municipal election. The various election resolutions will be returning to the December 8th meeting, but in the meantime there are a few items where Council direction can be obtained before December 8th. The first is the wording of the ballot question and the second is submittal of ballot arguments.

ANALYSIS

The Council can provide staff with direction regarding the question that will appear on the ballot, regarding the Utility Users Tax. This "question" will be included in the election resolutions that are returning to the December 8th meeting. The City attorney has prepared the following draft question for the Council's consideration:

Utility Users Tax Extension

To maintain City services, such as Public Safety, Paramedic and Library services, shall an Ordinance be adopted to:

1. **Increase the City's current 8% Utility User Tax to a maximum of 10% for all utilities, to be effective on July 1, 2016; and**
2. **Extend and stabilize the funding by eliminating the "sunset" clause; and**
3. **Provide an exemption from the UUT for very low income households?**

The legal limit regarding the number of words is 75. Staff is seeking Council direction regarding the specific wording of the ballot question for inclusion in the election related resolutions.

Secondly, the Council can determine whether Council Members will be authorized to submit arguments for or against the measure, and whether all five Council Members will be signing the argument(s) and rebuttal argument(s).

The Council has a few alternatives to consider. If all five Council Members will be signing the arguments, either two Council Members can draft the argument, and the others will sign the argument, without being involved in the drafting of the argument. Or, in order to permit more than two City Council members to participate in the drafting of the argument, it may be necessary to schedule a special Council meeting, depending upon when the City Clerk establishes the argument submittal deadlines. (In 2013, the deadline to submit arguments to the City Clerk was Tuesday, December 24, 2013 for the April 2014 election.)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

There are no financial impacts associated with the preparation of this report other than staff time. The City's FY 2015/2016 budget includes \$51,500 for the April 2016 municipal election.

PUBLIC NOTICE PROCESS

This item has been noticed through the regular agenda notification process. Copies of this report are available at the City Hall public counter, on the City's website, and at the Sierra Madre Public Library.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives are:

1. The City Council could provide direction regarding the UUT Ballot question, and designate the Council Members who will be authorized to submit ballot arguments.
2. The Council could request additional information and direct that this item be returned to the next meeting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council provide staff with direction.