



Meeting Notes Meeting #10 – March 23, 2012

Participants: Jim Fraser, Sandy Donnell, George Rodericks, Wendi Kallins, Trisha Seyler, Peggy Curran, John Frick, Simon Coyle, Frank Doyle, Mike Cronin

1. *Report from Bus Tax Committee*

George briefed the group on the sub-committee's findings and provided a copy of an email which summarizes the findings and includes an attached spreadsheet of options for the group to consider. A copy of both the email and spreadsheet are attached for reference. Options for the group to consider include a parcel tax, requiring parents to pay the full cost of a bus pass, a City/Town/Voucher/Parcel tax split, and possible grant funding from the County. He indicated that the school district could not run the parcel tax because funds received would then have to be utilized for educational purposes. Therefore, the City/Town would have to adopt the parcel tax, and then funds would be given to the school district to operate the bus system. Not all of the funds would be allocated solely for buses and their operation. The funds would also be utilized for infrastructure improvements, crossing guards, education, etc.

The group discussed the different options provided in the spreadsheet and discussed how well a parcel tax measure would fair in both Belvedere and Tiburon. Belvedere residents would not likely vote for it because a majority of the population is senior and on limited retirement incomes. A special tax (requiring a 2/3 vote) may be submitted to the voters at any time. A general tax, for which this may not qualify, requires only a majority plus one vote, but must be consolidated with the elections for each council, which are not simultaneous for Belvedere and Tiburon. Tiburon's next election is in November of 2013. Taxing all residents equally could be construed as a general tax although at first look it could be considered a special tax. A suggestion of a trial period was discussed where the parcel tax would sunset if it was evident that not enough funding was being produced or not enough children were taking advantage of the extra buses.

In order to make a decision on which of the alternatives shown on the spreadsheet could work well for this community, the group decided that more research and information was needed. Looking for other examples of communities with similar geography and demographics would help aid in this decision.

2. *City of Danville Program*

Chief Cronin reported back to the group regarding how Danville was able to remove numerous vehicles off the roadways and provide additional buses for the local school district. The school district has thirty-five (35) schools but only seven (7) buses. Staggering school start times was considered and implemented, and in the end the city

passed a ½ cent sales tax measure that was combined with other transportation related issues, called Measure S. The school district now has sixteen (16) school buses with thirty-two (32) routes (2 trips). There are approximately 1,400 students now riding the bus to and from school. A JPA was created in order to oversee the collection of the funding and operation of the buses, of which the City is a member of. The buses have been running for about 2 years and have substantially reduced the number of vehicle trips in the community. It was clear that a great deal of prep work was performed in order to get parents on board with first changing the school start times and then allowing their children to ride the additional buses.

3. *Further Research*

The group brainstormed the following to be researched or looked into in order to make an informed decision on how to move forward regarding a parcel tax (these ideas were just floated for consideration – no decisions were made as to their appropriateness or feasibility):

- Report back to the parents on the survey results acquired
- Obtain the survey and data information from San Ramon
- Create an informational campaign
- Consider a joint meeting of City/Town Councils to discuss the issues
- Find success stories like San Ramon and Palo Alto
- Determine ramifications of changing bell times – discuss with Joint Rec about providing before and after school programs
- Seek comparative financial information i.e. the cost of an infrastructure improvement which would cost more than the parcel tax
- Determine baseline traffic counts during peak times and during spring break (cost approximately \$10,000-15,000)
- Determine ways to maximize use of existing school buses

Next Steps

- Chief Cronin, Simon, and Nick Nguyen will work together on determining the cost of traffic counts and implementation of them
- Isolde and John will work together on maximizing school buses and will speak with Marin Transit
- John will look into school start times
- Peggy and George will look into the implications of a general tax vs. a special tax
- Chief Seyler will contact Palo Alto for more information on their success with reducing traffic
- Sandy will contact TAM to find out if there's any Measure A funding available
- Frank will work with Wendi on gathering Bike Pool data and success stories

Prepared by Laurie Tyler, Associate Planner for Tiburon
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