

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
May 10, 2016

"For all items NOT on the agenda"

(Each Speaker Limited to 3 Minutes)

Voluntary Sign-In Sheet
(Public Appearances – 1:30 pm)



- 1A - Dr Jutela
- 1B Charles L. Ciancio
2. Jerry Martien
3. Vivian Helliwell
4. Kristi Wrigley
5. RONALD URBINA
- 6.
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- 14.
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- 16.

Date: 5/3/16
To: Anyone
Subject: Why Trump?

As a rural and working person, forester for fifty plus years, and registered Democrat voter, I am for anyone but Hillary and Bernie. I have been forced into retirement, but I do still vote. Like many older working folks, especially in the timber and coal business, I have come to the realization I am going to vote for Trump.

I have been lead to believe Trump is a rich SOB (like Hillary) who misses a lot of world's truths (especially in the rural world), but I have worked for a lot of SOBs like Trump all my life, and seen them get a lot done.

Despite all that is against him, Trump and even Bernie are exposing a lot of things that are wrong. Way delegates for Republican and Democrat parties and how a voting minority and establishment controls what happens are examples.

I have heard Trump supports the working person, and their input is not shown in the polls and minority populous voting. Those in control like most politicians are not working people

I have a problem finding Trump is winning due to popular vote, but shaking things up is needed to show the insiders and populous voting minority they do not control, and the average person still has a say in what happens to this country. At my age of seventy plus years, I have finally learned the difference between democracy and inexperienced popular vote. A Democratic Republic is suppose to give geographical areas, like rural areas, some control.

I have some hope eminent domain will be fixed which often let's some private property improperly be purchased by governmental bodies.

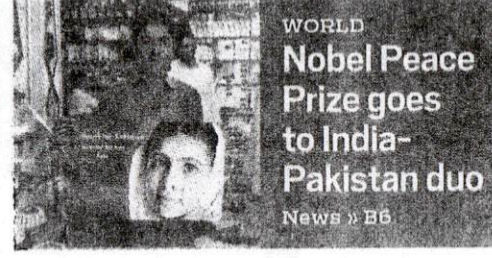
Hi-tech and computers have their place and we cannot do without it, but I do **not** think the average person properly uses hi-tech and understands all that is thrown at them.

Locally things may change. **Some how** destruction of the timber industry will be avoided, water will be properly collected, local private economy will be promoted increasing tax revenues and reducing the fifty percent of the economy being supported by the taxpayers, and National Forests will not be managed to burn

I want to be wrong about World War III and the bad place I see us headed locally, countrywide, and worldwide. I have written and self-published at my expense two books which outline the good and bad things I have learned in my lifetime, and I see those in control **do not** pay attention to us older folks.

Charles L. Ciancio
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HUMBOLDT COUNTY

Measure Z would raise sales tax

County cites public safety needs, taxpayer's league questions timing

By Will Houston
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Humboldt County officials are calling Measure Z — a proposed countywide half-percent general sales tax on the November ballot — crucial to improving public safety services.

If passed, Measure Z, also known as the Humboldt County

Public Safety/Essential Services Measure, is estimated to generate \$6 million annually until it sunsets in 2020. The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously in July to place the measure on the ballot after an outcry from the public concerning the lack of law enforcement presence and an increase in crime in the county's outlying areas.

The tax is proposed to raise funds for a broad spectrum of public safety services such as fire departments, the county sheriff's office, probation department and district attorney's office. Spending is proposed to be overseen by a citizen's advisory committee, which would also include annual independent audits.

But with four similar municipi-
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A Humboldt County Sheriff's Office SUV patrols near the Manila Community Center on Tuesday.

SHAUN WALKER
— THE TIMES-STANDARD

Tax

FROM PAGE 1

pal measures on the ballot, some question whether taxpayers should bear the costs for both the county and city where they live.

Undersheriff Bill Honsal said 15 deputy and sergeant positions and 19 correctional facility positions have been frozen over the last six years due to a lack of funding. Deputies are centralized in the greater Eureka area, McKinleyville and the Eel River Valley, making response times to areas like Willow Creek and Shelter Cove take up to an hour-and-a-half.

"The number one deterrent to crime is a deputy patrolling in the area," Honsal said. "When we don't have sheriff's deputies patrolling in the area, there could be people that take advantage. ... When anyone calls 911 in the county, we will respond — it's just how long is it going take for us to get there is really the true question."

Should the measure pass, Honsal said the goal for the sheriff's office would be to unfreeze several of the positions and fully staff the Hoopa-Willow Creek and Garberville substations to restore 24-hour coverage.

With four other local cities — Fortuna, Eureka, Rio Dell and Blue Lake — also having tax measures on the ballot in addition to some school bonds, Humboldt Taxpayer's League Executive Director Cliff Chapman said the combination has created a "perfect storm of taxes" due to a lack of communication between the county and the municipalities.

"There needs to be some coordination," he said. "I don't doubt there is a need for additional taxes, but this is not the approach to take in my mind and the taxpayers' mind either."

Crafting a measure

The supervisors began seriously considering drafting a tax measure in April after hiring a firm to conduct a poll on the different tax options. The discussions centered around two choices — a utility users tax or sales tax — and the board ultimately chose a general sales tax.

The board originally planned to limit the tax to unincorporated areas, but that option ran into legal issues. Regardless, 3rd District Supervisor Mark Lovelace said poll results indicated voters weren't as amenable to a restricted implementation.

"The public was much less willing to support the item if it only applied to the unincorporated areas," he said.

The supervisors also considered having the tax's revenue divvied up between

the county and cities, but staff determined there would not be enough time to coordinate the details by the July 22 deadline to submit the measure to the elections office.

The board placed a similar-sales tax measure called Measure L on the November 2004 ballot, which would have implemented a countywide 1 percent sales tax dedicating about 40 percent of the revenue to cities and 60 percent to the county. The measure lost heavily, with about 70 percent of voters voting against it.

County government officials are not allowed to use public resources or money to advocate for the measure, Lovelace said, but that does not prohibit them from taking a stance. As a result, several county officials have appeared on Yes on Measure Z video spots and ads as well as touring different communities in an educational campaign.

"I know that I've heard it solidly from the people that public safety has to be number one," Lovelace said, clarifying that he was being interviewed on his personal cellphone. "When we have the revenue in place, people want to see this fund a broad definition of public safety."

A taxing question

Chapman said the latest tax measure is "cherry picking off the backs of the cities" by pulling in about \$4 million from Eureka and \$700,000 from Fortuna each year.

"It's our opinion that the redundant tax rakes over \$6 million out of the local economy, mostly from the incorporated cities with very little return to those cities, which also have their own concerns," he said. "The cities get some services from the DA's office and the jail and a few other county services, but they certainly don't get a proportionate share."

The Yes on Measure Z campaign states that sales tax revenue would also be generated from tourism. As the money would go to county services, Lovelace said the benefits would be felt countywide.

"City services benefit people who live within the city. The county provides services to everyone," Lovelace said. "There is more to public safety than putting more cops on the

street. Cities do not have district attorneys, cities do not have to run the jail, cities do not have anything else that goes into corrections and the probation department, and there are often related factors, such as drug and alcohol treatment. Cities don't have to deal with all of those things."

With county fire agencies receiving 2 percent of the county's Proposition 172 funds — the statewide half-percent sales tax for public safety services approved in 1993 — the Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association made sure to let the board know that the 41 agencies would not be left out of obtaining Measure Z funds.

"That's nothing, that's a drop in the bucket," Humboldt Bay Fire Chief Ken Woods, the association's president, said on the Proposition 172 funds. "That's about \$200,000 and spread that out between those 41 agencies. It's nothing."

During one of the board's discussions on the measure, Woods said the association would "actively oppose" Measure Z if the board did not give the agencies a fair cut of the revenue — about 20 percent. The association has since chosen to endorse the measure.

"That's with the caveat

that we will be a recipient of funds once that passes," he said. "The board of supervisors has not committed to a specific amount but have committed in the campaign material that some of that funds will go to support regional and rural fire agencies."

Tough times, more measures

While the state as a whole has been climbing out of the recession, College of the Redwoods political science professor Ryan Emenaker said Humboldt County has just begun to feel the effects in the last few years.

"This is a fairly common struggle throughout the state," Emenaker said. "A couple of things are happening, one of which is the state partially helped balance its budget by shifting some of the costs to the counties. For example, having more inmates kept in county jails rather

than in state prisons. ... The other thing is obviously the county had been, basically over the last several years, spending down its resources. You can only do that for so long. We're starting to feel 2008 and 2009, and all those effects are now coming up for us. We haven't felt the effects as acutely because we've had this piggy bank to go back to that has now dried up."

The Yes on Measure Z committee states that \$286 million has been taken from the county's revenue sources since 1992. Tax revenue was taken for the state's education revenue augmentation funds, which shifted allocations of local property tax revenues from local governments to support schools, according to the League of California Cities. About \$19 million in property tax revenue was taken from the county during the 2013-2014 fiscal year, with over \$15 million being taken each year since 2006.

Lovelace said the county has also taken other financial hits from the state, such as from prison realignment, increase in retirement and healthcare costs and workers compensation.

"Through no action of our own, we saw significant costs added on including ... a \$1.4 million hit we took for workers comp rates," he said. "While we've been trying to reduce our spending locally, there are a lot of things what we couldn't control that had gone up. We've had significant cuts. Across the board 8 percent one year."

Humboldt County Probation Department Chief Officer Bill Damiano said he has had to freeze 10 of 125 positions in the last two years due to the cuts and he is not alone. Damiano is part of the county's speaker bureau that travels to different communities and organizations to provide an educational presentation about the measure.

"Some people are concerned about multiple tax measures, and the reality is it just boils down (to) do

you like having any county services and do you like them at the level they're at now," he said. "Because if you don't get more revenue, you'll get cuts next year and an imbalance in next year's budget."

Chapman said placing the financial burden to pay for the services on people in an already burdened local economy will not help improve the economic state of the county. Instead of this method, Chapman said the county could make cuts in other areas, redirect services and come up with a more balanced spending plan.

"The big elephant in the room is the payroll, and you've just got to look over at who makes over \$100,000 a year in a county where the single person median income is \$27,000 and the joint family income is \$48,000 per year," he said.

Lovelace said the county has already made several cuts and that salaries are bound by contract.

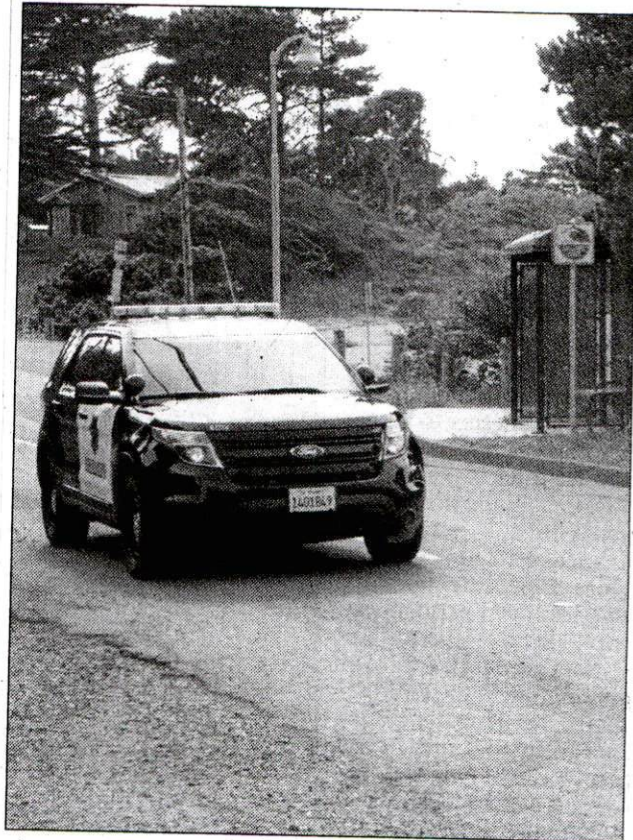
"We can't single-handedly reduce the deficit by cutting salaries," he said, adding that he has waived a raise in his salary for three years.

Emenaker said implementing more cuts to certain services like law enforcement would be "unpalatable" to some people.

He said he expects to see some difference in support for cities that have two tax measures on the ballot, but the voter demographic for this election may not be favorable for the measure.

"We're going to have pretty low turnout for the election," he said. "Generally, in low turnout elections, the people that go to vote tend to be older, more conservative voters. If this ballot measures was going on a presidential ballot, like in 2012 and 2016, I don't think I would question if it was going to pass. Without having a presidential election or race that is really interesting, we're probably going to have a low turnout."

Will Houston can be reached at 707-441-0504.



SHAUN WALKER — THE TIMES-STANDARD

A Humboldt County Sheriff's Office SUV patrols near the Manila Community Center on Tuesday. Measure Z, a proposed countywide half-percent sales tax on the November ballot, would help fund public safety services like the sheriff's office.