



#2 Late Dist.

February 14, 2011

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Joni L. Gray, Chair
County of Santa Barbara
Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Retirement Board Alternatives Presentation

Dear Chair Gray:

As the Board of Supervisors examine alternatives to the current employee pension structure for public safety personnel, we thought it would be useful to communicate to you information you may not be aware of.

As you know, the City of Goleta contracts for police services with the County Sheriff's Department. Since incorporation, the City has been and continues to be well served by the Department. In 2006, however, the Board approved a fundamental change to the retirement structure, increasing the retirement formula from 2% at 50, to 3% at 50. The City raised concerns at that time as to the fiscal impacts this adjustment might have but, despite our inquiries, the Department was never able to project changes in costs to our contract.

Our current 2011 situation: Due to rising costs at a time when revenues have decreased, the City has been forced to reduce our service levels. Two year's ago the City cut our Gang Deputy position and this past year we lost one of four Detective positions. The Sheriff's Department has now provided us preliminary contract cost estimates which suggest more than an 11% increase next fiscal year and an 8% increase the following year, for a combined 20% adjustment over the next two years. Needless to say, these increases will likely result in yet further reductions to our service levels. As a result, the City Council in December, asked staff to begin to examine alternatives to our contract as a possible means of reducing costs.

Goleta's contract with the Sheriff's Department is the largest contract within the Department. The relationship works to serve both of our organizations well, especially since Goleta sits within the larger unincorporated areas, including Isla Vista, which are patrolled and serviced by the Sheriff. As a result, we encourage any actions the Board can take which might work to reduce costs now and into the future. In that regard, we are concerned that the only option we have in the face of rising costs is to reduce service levels.

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We welcome further dialogue with the County on how we might work together to tackle these challenging issues.

Sincerely,



Margaret Connell
Mayor

cc: Goleta City Council
Sheriff Bill Brown