

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 6/21/06
Department Name: Board of Supervisors
Department No.: 011
Agenda Date: 7/18/06
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time: 10 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Supervisor Brooks Firestone, Third District
Supervisor Joni Gray, Fourth District

STAFF CONTACT: Kelley Kaufmann, 568-2192

SUBJECT: Creation of a Zone of Benefit within County Service Area No. 45 (Library Services) for the Vandenberg Village Area, Third and Fourth Districts

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

A. Adopt on July 18, 2006 the attached resolution initiating the proceedings to create a zone of benefit within the County Service Area No. 45 (Library Services) for Vandenberg Village based on the boundaries of the Vandenberg Village Community Services District to fund library services within Vandenberg Village and authorizing the levy of a special tax rate on parcels within this proposed zone;

B. Adopt on July 18, 2006 the attached resolution requesting that the special election for the creation of the zone of benefit within County Service Area 45 be consolidated with the general election to be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2006;

C. On July 18, 2006 determine that forming a zone of benefit will have no significant environment impacts and is categorically exempt from CEQA (Class 20);

D. Set a public hearing on the departmental agenda for August 8, 2006 to introduce the first reading of an ordinance creating a zone of benefit for Vandenberg Village within County Service Area No. 45 for library services and levying a special tax rate for library services;

E. Direct the Clerk of the Board to properly notice the hearings for the creation of a zone of benefit and the levying of a special tax rate therein;

F. Set a public hearing on the departmental agenda for September 12, 2006 for the second reading of the above ordinance to:

1. Receive testimony regarding written protests that have been filed, if any;
2. Adopt the ordinance (second reading) entitled "An Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara Creating a New Zone of Benefit for Vandenberg Village and Authorizing the Levying of Special Taxes Therein." The Ordinance will become effective if there is majority support (2/3 of registered voters) based on the results of the ballots received as part of the November 7, 2006 general election.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 5.A High Quality of Life for All Residents.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

The Vandenberg Village library operates on the funds it receives from the County and the state. It does not receive municipal funding like the cities of Buellton and Lompoc. The County provides library services to the residents of Vandenberg Village through a contract with the City of Lompoc. The service area of the branch library includes the unincorporated areas of Vandenberg Village, Vandenberg Air Force Base, Mission Hills and Mesa Oaks. It is staffed by the City of Lompoc. Its primary user base consists of the residents in Vandenberg Village.

Library service for the Vandenberg Village area was initially provided through County of Santa Barbara allocated funds in 1974. The County purchased a site and constructed a 1,500 square foot "branch" library that was officially opened in March 1976. In 2001, the Vandenberg Village Library was expanded to 3,760 square feet to address the library service needs of an area that had grown threefold since the library began operating in 1976, reopening in April 2002.

The County will provide \$447,922 to Zone 2, Lompoc, for library services in fiscal year 2006-2007. This amount includes \$429,922 plus an additional \$18,000 which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on June 16, 2006. However, the library requires an additional \$50,050 to operate at an enhanced level of service that would improve service levels and hours of operations. One such way to secure ongoing funds to provide enhanced service levels at the library is through a County Service Area. County Service Areas are districts created pursuant to Government Code §25210 and governed by Boards of Supervisors. The law allows such districts to provide a variety of public services including "Extended library facilities and services" (§25210.4 (e)). County Service Area 45 was formed in 1992 as a mechanism to support enhanced library services in the overall Lompoc area. District voters, however, defeated a proposed special tax and the district remains inactive. It has no assets or sources of revenue. A boundary map is enclosed as Exhibit A.

Although voters within CSA 45 previously rejected a special tax to fund library services, there is a sense that residents of the Vandenberg Village area are willing to support a revenue enhancement to have greater library hours and improved services. A significant amount of research has been undertaken by residents of Vandenberg Village, including the library staff, who feel this is a necessary and timely method to improve services. Therefore, the proposal before the Board today is to create a zone of benefit within the CSA #45 that would only include the Vandenberg Village Area. It is proposed that the zone reflect the boundary of the

Vandenberg Village Community Services District, which includes the Vandenberg Village branch library. A current map of this District, which was formed in 1988, is enclosed as Exhibit B.

Funding for the Vandenberg Village library would be through a special tax rate levies on parcels within the zone, similar to the CSA 3 in the Goleta Valley. This CSA levies a special tax rate on 7,645 parcels. The assessment amounts vary based on parcel usage. There are nine land use categories. The assessment for unimproved land is \$8.78 a year, for single family homes it is \$17.61 and for duplexes and triplexes the charge is \$35. In addition, a County administrative fee of \$1.00 per parcel is also charged to collect and allocate the funds. Approximately \$144,000 is generated annually from these assessments.

Based on this methodology, a special tax rate to fund library services would be levied on 2,396 parcels within the Vandenberg Village area. The 2,396 parcels are based on the County Assessor records indicating that there are 2,406 parcels within the Vandenberg Village Community Services District, of which 37 are considered non-taxable. To support an enhanced level of service that would allow the library to be open an additional 8 hours per week, the library staff indicates an additional \$50,050 would need to be raised annually. Assuming all of the parcels were charged equally, spreading this cost over the 2,369 parcels would result in an annual benefit assessment of \$22.00; this would include a \$1.00 per parcel administrative fee payable to the County of Santa Barbara (Auditor-Controller). Each year, the tax rate would be escalated by the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) so the "buying power" of the tax rate is not diminished over time by inflation, but rather remain stable revenue source to allow the community's library service to be maintained.

To allow Vandenberg Village residents to decide this matter, it is necessary for the Board of Supervisors to create a zone of benefit within CSA 45. Government Code §25210.8 states:

"Notwithstanding any other provision in this chapter, the board of supervisors may establish zones within any county service area with tax rates, service charges, benefit assessments, fire suppression assessments, or connection charges varying with the extent of benefit to each zone derived from services provided to the property within each zone or with the availability of other funds within a zone."

The next steps in this process require the Board of Supervisors to adopt a resolution to initiate the creation proceedings, set public hearings to consider creating this zone and levying a special tax rate within the zone, determine if the zone requires environmental review and calling for an election of the respective landowners to authorize the special tax rate for library services.

Formation of a special district is a "project" under CEQA and requires environmental review. The same may be true of creating zones within existing districts. The creation of a zone may fall within the scope of Categorical Exemption Class 20 (Changes in Organization of Local Agencies), which CEQA Guidelines Section 15320 states:

"... Consists of changes in the organization or reorganization of local governmental agencies where the changes does not change the geographical area in which previously existing powers are exercised." (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15320)

The powers being exercised are library services. The zone of benefit within CSA 45 would be a means to finance that service. It is recommended that the environmental determination be made by the Board when the proposal to call the election is on the agenda and the matter can be properly noticed.

Mandates and Service Levels:

The Board of Supervisors' approval of the resolution initiating the creation of a zone and the levying of special taxes therein would provide a mechanism that would generate additional funding to enable the Vandenberg Village library to enhance the hours of operations and staffing levels of the library.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Adoption of the resolution initiating the creation of a zone will require an election among the registered voters within the Vandenberg Village Community Services District. The County's Election Division has not budgeted for this expense and will need to be reimbursed for the cost of the election. An approval by the voters of the creation of the zone and the levying of a special tax will generate approximately \$50,000 for the Vandenberg Village in the first year that the tax is levied. This results in a tax rate of about \$22 per parcel for the homes within the Vandenberg Village Community Services District.

Special Instructions:

- A. Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish notice of the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation for the creation of a zone benefit within the County Service Area No. 45 to fund library services and authorizing the levy of a special tax rate on parcels within Vandenberg Village at least one week prior to the hearing date of August 8, 2006.
- B. Direct the Clerk of the Board to mail a notice of the hearings to the parcel owners located within the proposed zone of benefit.

Notice to be published and mailed:

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS CONCERNING FORMATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES ZONE OF
BENEFIT AND LEVYING OF ANNUAL TAX RATE FOR LIBRARY SERVICES**

Notice is hereby given that public hearings will be held by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, on August 8, 2006 at 9:00 a.m., or shortly thereafter, and again on September 12, 2006 in the County Board of Supervisors Hearing Room Betteravia Government Center, 511 East Lakeside Parkway, Santa Maria, California, to take public testimony on creating a new zone of benefit and levying a special tax rate on parcels within Vandenberg Village for library services. A copy of the ordinance and exhibits may be seen during business hours at the Third District Supervisor's Office, 1745 Mission drive, Solvang, California.

Any objections or protest to the adoption of the proposed ordinance may be filed with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors before the public hearings scheduled above. The address of the Clerk of the Board is 105 East Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, California 93101.

The purpose of the special tax is to pay for library services in the Vandenberg Village area. The basis of the tax rate was determined by the annual operating cost of \$50,050 needed to keep the library open an additional eight hours a week spread over the number of proposed parcels in the proposed zone of benefit within County Service Area 45. Each registered voter within the proposed zone of benefit may submit a ballot in support or opposition of the proposed tax rate as part of the November 7, 2006 election. The special tax rate shall be imposed if 2/3 of the registered voters are in favor of the levying of a special tax.

- C. Direct the Clerk of the Board to forward a certified minute order and completely executed copies of the resolution and ordinance to Kelley Kaufmann.

Attachments:

1. Exhibit A: Map of County Service Area 45
2. Exhibit B: Map of Vandenberg Village Community Services District
3. Resolution Initiating Proceedings to Create a Zone of County Service Area 45 and Authorizing the Levying of Special Taxes Therein
4. Resolution Calling and Giving Notice of the Holding of a Special Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2006 for the Creation of a Zone of County Service Area 45 and Authorizing the Levying of Special Taxes Therein
5. Ordinance Approving the Creation of a Zone within County Service Area 45 and Authorizing the Levying of Special Taxes Therein

Concurrence:

County Counsel

CC: Michael Ledbetter, County Counsel
Billie Alvarez, Elections
Gary Keefe, City Administrator, City of Lompoc
Molly Blaschke, Librarian, City of Lompoc