

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: May 16, 2005

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: FUTURE LIBRARY FUNDING TASK FORCE

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Pasadena Library Commission to establish a task force to review the impact of the current library tax measure, which expires July 1, 2008, and develop recommendations on future funding options for the Library.

BACKGROUND

In March 1997, the citizens of Pasadena, through a special municipal election, passed an ordinance authorizing the extension of a special library tax which was originally passed in 1993, for the purpose of funding a portion of the maintenance and operation costs of the Central Library and all branch libraries. The annual tax presently provides 1.6 million dollars and represents approximately 18% of the Library's annual operating budget. The ordinance contains a limitation on the power to levy the Library Special Tax if certain General Fund commitments to the Library are not made and sunsets after ten years.

The Library is currently entering the eighth year of the ten year special tax that has allowed for full restoration of library services at the 1989 level to all residents of the City of Pasadena. The measure expires on July 1, 2008. As of that date, the levy may only be extended with the approval of 66% of the voters at a subsequent municipal election called for that purpose.

Therefore, at its March 9, 2005 meeting, the Pasadena Library Commission voted unanimously to request authorization from City Council to establish a task force to review the impact of the current library tax measure and develop recommendations on future funding options for the Library.

PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE

The Library Commission has, as a part of this year's workplan, the task of recommending options for future funding for the Library and has established a sub-committee to deal with the issue. In order to gather information, the Library Commission is asking City Council for authorization to appoint a task force with the charter of carefully studying the impact and future of the Library Special Tax as well as alternative funding mechanisms that may be available, in light of current fiscal situations facing the city.

The goals of the study group will be to:

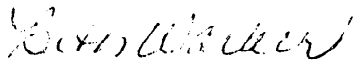
1. Examine the service impact of the special tax.
2. Gather citizen input on the level of satisfaction with current library services.
3. Review options for future library funding.
4. Present recommendations to the City Council on future funding for the Library.

Members for the task force will be selected to reflect diverse community interests and constituencies and may include representatives from the legal, business, financial and educational community. It is our intent to ask some members from the 1993 or 1997 task force on Alternative Funding to serve on this panel to lend experience and expertise on the matter. Representatives from the Library's support groups including the Friends of the Library and Pasadena Library Foundation, the Library Commission Chair and the Library Director will serve on the selection team.

FISCAL IMPACT

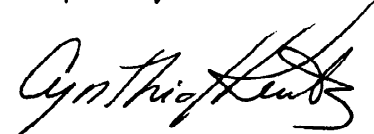
Funds to support the work of the task force, including the report, public forums and citizen survey will be borne by the Department of Information Services as part of an overall customer service assessment program.

Prepared by:



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Respectfully Submitted:



Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager