

From:

Subject:

Date:

City of Sebastopol - Increased Sales Tax - Public Comment - Item 10

Friday, July 14, 2023 2:09:44 PM

Dear Council,

My comment is on Agenda Item 10 the taxation options presented to Council for the 7/18/23.

I support a 0.25% sales tax exclusively for fire protection and police services in the City of Sebastopol, generating \$800,000 annually until 2044 (20 year period).

I support a tax specifically for fire and police. An increase of 1/4 percent would bring Sebastopol's sales tax to 9.50%, in line with the sales taxes in Cotati and Petaluma. It allows for future sales tax increases in the future. The current state-wide cap on sales taxes is 10.25%.

As the 0.25% would raise \$800,000 and the current need is \$404,000, there is plenty of headroom to increase staffing in both departments.

In addition, the City will need to raise additional public money for fire station upgrades, water, sewer and roads.

Due to extremely poor financial management by the previous Council, the City is looking at a multi-million dollar backlog of infrastructure repair.

The funding for public safety is urgent and I support a 0.25% sales tax exclusively for fire protection and police services in the City of Sebastopol. Yet, it is clear that we will need specific funding for infrastructure to come at a later date.

No monies raised by new taxes should go into the general fund as there are so many outstanding infrastructure needs that the City needs to start funding the rebuilding of the fire station, road repair, repairs to our water and sewer system and basic upgrades to our parks like ADA compliant pathways and new fencing in Ives and Libby Park.

Thank you,
Kate Haug