



MINUTES
SOLVANG MEASURE U COMMITTEE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
3:00 PM TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Yarema called the workshop to order at 3:04 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, California.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Adelia Kehoe led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Henry Haugse, Adelia Kehoe, Frank Smithson, Char Yarema

Absent: Jamie Baker

Officials Present: Mayor David Brown, (left at 4:40 p.m.) Councilmembers Mark Infanti, Elizabeth Orona

Staff: City Manager Randy Murphy, Management Analyst Olivia Uribe-Mutal, Accounting Supervisor Jason Banta, City Clerk Annamarie Porter.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Staff Request for Assistance in Prioritizing Measure U Fund Expenditures

Discussions regarding the below ensued.

Prioritize city-identified projects and brainstorm additional projects for each category outlined in the ballot language of Measure U.

Potholes and street repair

Sidewalk and curb repair – The need for a condition assessment
Road maintenance

Flammable brush removal

HCA Park, goat weed abatement, supplemental brush clearance and tree trimming
Fire Safety
Additional suggestions for a Firewise Community, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Councilmember Elizabeth Orona to work with Joan Hartman regarding possible grants, Prop 4 and applying for fire protection grants, Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council, CalFire vs USDA, and community chipping program (City purchasing a chipper for community use).

911 Emergency response and neighborhood police patrols

Camera/video surveillance system
Supplemental police services beyond contracted services

Recreation programs

Parks and Recreation Masterplan
Pickleball Courts
Solvang Park Upgrades

General Government Use

Marketing
Parking improvements
Visitor bureau
Crossing guards

Public and Officials that commented were:

Ron Kamalian
Scott Coffman, Former Fire Chief
Hank Homburg
Elizabeth Orona
Mark Infanti

b. Staff Request for Committee Input to Develop Policy Guidelines

Members reviewed each of the below questions and answers.

Measure U Citizens Oversight Committee, City of Solvang
Questions and Proposed Answers to Establish Policy Guidance for Independent Oversight and
Accountability
Draft December 30, 2024

1. Should the Committee annually gather information on City needs in the Named Categories and review City plans for expenditures to meet those needs?

Yes. In setting up independent oversight, the voters should expect verification that the City is attending to needs in the Named Categories in a timely way.

2. Should the City generally prioritize measure expenditures on Named Categories?

Yes. Without limiting the discretion of the City Council to spend measure revenues in any way legally authorized, the Committee should encourage prioritization of spending to meet clear needs as they arise in each of the Named Categories, not simply as budgetary stopgaps. The Council's establishment of a track record of attention to these needs is essential to meet voter expectations.

3. Should measure revenue expended on Named Categories be spent primarily to cover costs in excess of spending in such categories at historical levels (as of election date)?

Yes. To the extent possible, the City's general fund should be used for the maintenance of effort in the Named Categories, focusing measure revenues on cost increases above the historical baseline, covering new programs, expanded scopes, inflation and other types of cost increases.

4. Should measure revenues be spent primarily for services benefitting residents, as opposed to supporting tourism?

The Committee sense is that Measure U generally was intended to prioritize spending for the benefit of residents.

5. Should the Committee's role be limited to clearly establishing categories for measure expenditures and leaving to staff the discretion to decide whether and to what extent a given expense is within

the spirit and letter of voter intent?

No. The Committee believes:

- such an approach would undermine voter expectations for independent oversight and strict accountability;
- any process inefficiencies can be minimized by early Committee involvement in City budget planning; and
- Committee recommendations on appropriateness of expenditures should limit the need and expense for it to perform, as authorized, independent audits.

6. Should measure revenue be spent primarily on services within Named Categories or should major capital expenses beyond repairs be actively considered?

Case by case. While the ballot materials focus on protecting and maintaining services in the Named Categories, the Committee understands that capital costs sometimes are needed to provide those services. The Committee cautions, however, that capital projects can be very expensive, often involve long term commitments and can handicap revenue availability to meet needed services in other Named Categories for multiple years. That consequential outcome should be considered in making any capital cost recommendations.

7. Should the Committee periodically review the extent to which the City followed the Committee's recommendations in the prior fiscal year?

Yes. the Committee should annually review the City's actual expenditures of measure revenues during the preceding fiscal year and render a report on its observations. The focus of the report should evolve over time, in cooperation with City staff, so the Committee serves the City in as valuable and efficient a role as possible. Possible inquiries could be:

- the extent to which the Council followed Committee recommendations;
- the extent to which the recommended expenditures were not in fact expended;
 - confirmation that measure expenditures were made without administrative overhead;
- recommendations, if any, to the Council to revise the guidelines, based on actual experience; and
- whether, when and for what purposes an independent audit is indicated and reservation of funding for same.

8. What role, if any, should the Committee play in making recommendations of specific amounts of monies that should be spent on planned measure expenditures?

Generally, the Committee feels staff should inform the Committee of amounts it expects to spend for the work items it is presenting to the Committee. In taking action, however, the Committee need not recommend specific caps on work items but should focus instead on the extent to which the City's use of measure revenues is meeting priority needs in the Named Categories.

The Committee recognizes that budget planning does not always reflect secured contract bids or even precise cost estimates; even when it does, change orders can occur. As a result, the Committee feels staff needs flexibility in managing ongoing and new work.

Nevertheless, the annual review of prior FY measure expenditures the Committee recommends and any audits the Committee deems appropriate could comment retrospectively on any such noteworthy issues for Council and staff review.

It was a consensus of the Committee to recommend that City Council adopt the FAQs.

The Committee then reviewed the anticipated meeting schedules to be set in January for review of past expenditures, mid-March or later for the budgeting process, and June for the Budget Adoption.

3. **COMMITTEE CLOSING COMMENTS**

4. **ADJOURNMENT** – 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

DocuSigned by:

Annamarie Porter

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Annamarie Porter, CMC
City Clerk