

POST EDITORIAL

A closer look at BART tax votes needed

It is disappointing to see that the challenge to Measure B — the 1/8th cent increase in sales tax for Santa Clara County — was quickly dismissed by San Francisco Judge Peter Busch, especially because it was done so on a questionable ruling.

Now county residents will never quite know if the scant margin of victory — 66.78 percent of voter approval for Measure B that needed 66.67 percent to pass — was really an accurate vote tally, especially since the measure lost election night but then managed to sprint ahead because an inordinately large number (more than percent) of the provisional and final mail-in ballots were posted in the “yes” column.

More reasons for skepticism

Adding to our skepticism is the fact that despite this pending lawsuit, the County Registrar of Voters Jesse Durazo certified the election results early Tuesday morning — several hours before the judge ruled that the lawsuit targeting the secretary of state and the county registrar of voters came too late. One would think that the county registrar’s office would have deferred to the courts, but it didn’t. It’s almost as if some county officials were determined that Measure B pass.

In Santa Clara County, the county supervisors appoint the registrar of voters. And the supervisors backed the tax increase. In fact, Supervisor Liz Kniss even signed the “for” ballot argument. A conflict of interest?

Larger issues at stake

While Busch’s ruling is legal, he could have been more flexible and looked at the forest instead of the trees. At stake here was a county tax increase that will last for the next

[See BART TAX, next page]



LETTERS

Wrong target?

Dear Editor: Walmart, and possibly even citizen-financed police, are subject to a lawsuit after Walmart doors were crashed prior to the store opening. Why don’t we hear about those unruly, greedy marauders being sued for their damages to Walmart, the police, local citizens and those that suffered injury from their actions?

Charles M. Atchison
Palo Alto

Bad leadership

Dear Editor: Diana Diamond is absolutely right: Palo Alto leadership continues to live in another world, isolated from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, initiating ill-conceived projects, tragically mismanaging excellent projects such as the Children’s Theater finances and being unable to make decisions without endless time-consuming study.

The last issue that Ms. Diamond mentions (Post, Thursday), how to spend \$32 million of surplus money raised by a utility surcharge, for a specific purpose that no longer exists, is a typical case in point.

We print letters

Email: letters@baydailypost.com
Include your address and phone number for verification. Shorter letters are printed first and edited least. Limit: 250 words.

Jane Ratchye, assistant director of the long-embattled Utility Department suggests that the money be used to lower utility costs, already raised 14 percent this year and set to go up 10 and 12 percent in the next few months, thus returning the money to those who were originally taxed. Perhaps even the Palo Alto semi-rich might welcome some relief in view of job uncertainty and the collapse of the stock market. The council’s finance committee opposes this idea: Its members’ suggestions range from looking for a big project to spend the money on, buying “smart meters” and buying land that the utility company currently rents from the city (what does this mean?). Also, of course, form an advisory committee to decide how to spend the money, thus using a few months of staff time and

probably hiring a consultant to assist in the decision-making.

How about looking for ways to save money rather than spend it and start making decisions that help individual citizens rather than coddling city staff and agencies who seem to be able to get anything they want out of the City Council.

Jodie and Chris Arnold
Palo Alto

Story missed it

Dear Editor: The front-page story in Wednesday’s Daily Post entitled “Lower utility rates nixed” by reporter Ian S. Port, really missed the mark. The City Council Finance Committee discussion held Tuesday was not about rates, as the story reported; it was about how to most cost-effectively manage one of the city of Palo Alto’s Electric Utility’s reserve funds for the benefit of the city’s electric ratepayers.

On Tuesday, the Finance Committee considered potential short- and long-term use of reserve funds. The focus of the discussion was on identifying the best way to leverage the investment of the funds that

[See LETTERS, next page]

 <p>2005 Volkswagen New Beetle Convertible 1 Owner, Diamond Certified,</p> <p>\$14,988</p> <p>Gls Turbo, Leather, Silver, Automatic, 1.8L L4 PFI DOHC Turbo 20,000 Miles</p>	<p>2 years</p>  <p>Independently Rated Highest in Quality</p>	 <p>2006 Volkswagen Passat 2.0T Sedan 1 Owner, Diamond Certified,</p> <p>\$14,980</p> <p>Warranty 9/09, Leather, Moon Roof, Gray, 6 Spd, Automatic 2.0L L4 FI Turbo 23,000 miles</p>
<p>We can find any make or model</p> <p>Over 80 Cars In-Stock: complete inventory on-line www.certifiedmotorsonline.com</p>		
<p>Direct: 408.590.0567 Office: 650.962.1155 2598 W. Middlefield Rd, Mountain View</p>  <p>MAGNIFICENT CERTIFIED MOTORS</p>		

Award Winning Teaching Professionals

Joby Ross • Mick Soli • Janet Coles • Stuart Brownlee • Mark Cato

MARINERS POINT

Professional Golf Instructors



Call Today
(650) 573 7888
2401 E. Third Ave, Foster City
www.MarinersPoint.com

GOLF LESSONS

3 LESSONS ONLY \$99

SAVE \$81

Computer Swing Analysis Included

Expires 12/24/08 Reg. \$180

Equipment recommendation included
Range balls included with lesson