



Council Agenda Report

To: Mayor Pierson and the Honorable Members of the City Council

Prepared by: Christine Wood, Deputy City Attorney

Approved by: Reva Feldman, City Manager

Date prepared: September 23, 2020 Meeting date: October 12, 2020

Subject: Update on School District Separation (Councilmember Farrer and Councilmember Mullen)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: At the request of Councilmembers Farrer and Mullen 1) Receive an update from the School District Separation Ad Hoc Committee and 2) Provide direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

WORK PLAN: This item was included as item 3.a. in the Adopted Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

DISCUSSION: On September 16, 2015, the Malibu City Council adopted Resolution No. 15-60 authorizing transmission of a petition for unification of a Malibu Unified School District (MUSD) to the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools.

On November 25, 2015 the Council authorized the Mayor to send a letter to Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) Board of Education requesting that it place an item on an upcoming agenda as quickly as possible, in support of placing the unification of a MUSD on the ballot for the next available SMMUSD Election and in support of forming a committee to settle SMMUSD separation.

In January 2016, the formation of a Malibu Unification Negotiations Committee (MUNC) was ratified by the Council and the SMMUSD Board of Education. The purpose of MUNC was to engage in negotiations in an effort to resolve financial concerns regarding unification of a separate MUSD.

On August 28, 2017, the Council directed the City Manager to submit the petition to the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization as authorized by Resolution No. 15-60.

On November 29, 2017, the Council revised the City's school district separation petition to consider a reasonable financial proposal for an orderly transition period and authorized requesting the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization to postpone the preliminary meeting to discuss the City's petition for unification of a MUSD until after February 15, 2018 as requested by the SMMUSD Board of Education.

On April 9, 2018, the Council directed staff to send a letter to the Los Angeles County Office of Education requesting formal acceptance of the City's petition and suspension of the petition pending the outcome of negotiation efforts with SMMUSD. The Council also designated the City Manager and the City Attorney to pursue negotiations with SMMUSD under the guidance of the School District Ad Hoc Committee and accepted, in principle, the framework for school district separation recommended by the SMMUSD Board of Education at its March 20, 2018, meeting.

On September 11, 2019, the SMMUSD asserted that successful negotiations were contingent upon resolving the question of whether the District and MUSD would be able to keep the Measure R parcel tax because it was necessary to the financial stability of both Districts after separation.

On September 23, 2019, after recognizing that negotiations with the District appeared to be stalled, the Council directed the School District Separation Ad Hoc Committee, City Manager Feldman and City Attorney Hogin to 1) develop a plan to pursue Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) separation with the Los Angeles County Office of Education; 2) consider any other options to facilitate separation; and 3) continue considering negotiations with SMMUSD, including the pursuit of special legislation that will insure the continuation of the Measure R parcel tax.

On March 5, 2020, the SMMUSD Board of Education considered and rejected a formal declaration of its support of the special legislation in support of the parcel tax funding measure, despite the parcel tax being a prerequisite to the successful negotiation of a revenue sharing agreement, and asked for an update at the next Board meeting.

On March 9, 2020, the Council considered and endorsed a formal declaration of its support of special legislation that provides for the continuation of the Measure R parcel tax after separation of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

Since that time negotiations have stalled.

The Ad Hoc Committee will provide a verbal update on the status of continued negotiations and additional School District Separation Ad Hoc Committee activities.

ATTACHMENTS: None.