COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO
WEEK OF JULY 16 - 22, 2017

THIS WEEK

LOS OSOS DELINQUENT SEWER BILLS TO GO ON PROPERTY TAX BILLS

A LITTLE REGULATORY RELIEF ON GUEST HOUSES/2ND UNITS
(YOU WON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN THE OTHER HOUSE OR BUILD A NEW ROAD)

LAST WEEK

NEW EMPLOYEE DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN APPROVED/BUT WHAT DID THE PUBLIC GET?

COUNTYWIDE WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM HAS FEW TAKERS/BOS EXPANDS IT ANYHOW
(PEOPLE AREN'T LINING UP TO REMOVE THEIR GRASS AND GET FREE APPLIANCES)

MEANWHILE PEOPLE WHO SEEK A NEW HOME WILL KEEP BEING SHAKEN DOWN FOR WATER MITIGATION "FEES"

SLO COLAB IN DEPTH

(SEE PAGE 7)

Jerry Brown wants to be global climate change leader, but has a problem in California

By Dan Walters

Wind and Solar Energy Are Dead Ends

By SPENCER MORRISON

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, July 18, 2017 (Scheduled)

Item 19 - Hearing on a Resolution to Authorize Collection of Delinquent Sewer Service Charges for Customers of the Los Osos Waste Water Treatment System by Adding the Charges to their Property Tax Bills For fiscal year 2017. Approximately 651 property owners are in arrears on their Los Osos sewer use bills. The staff recommends that these amounts be placed on the respective owners' property tax bills. Failure to pay the regular taxes and the added amounts attributable to the sewer use would result in penalties and, if eventually not paid, County foreclosure of the properties.

The total amount owed is $326,903. The item does not indicate how many total properties have hooked up to the system and how many were billed. In April it was reported that about 3,000 properties were mandated to hook up, of which about 700 (23%) had not yet been connected. This item says 88% have connected but some of those could be very near term. Thus the number that had received a bill for FY 2016 -17 might be about 2,300. With 651 not paying, the delinquency rate in terms of customer's numbers would be 28%, which is very high.

The write-up states that on a financial basis this "represents 14% of the total revenues for the sewer services provided."

a. How often does the County bill the owners - monthly, bi monthly or what?

b. Have the people been sent a notice that they are in default?

c. What efforts have been made to collect the money – telephone calls, a letter, a door hanger, a visit, etc.?

d. What is the deadline for getting the liens on the 2017-18 tax bills?

e. What is the total annual budgeted in FY 2016-17 for the annual sewer service charge? How much has been paid and what are the remaining accounts receivable?

f. What are the people already being charged on their tax bills for the system debt - also called the sewer service charge?

Item 20 - Amending County Rules Regulating Secondary Dwelling Units to Conform with State Statute. Per the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board will consider removing certain arbitrary restrictions on 2nd residential units. The impetus for the proposed changes first came from the State Legislature, which has begun to remove certain artificial barriers to the creation of housing. In this case it has required that cities and counties make it easier to create residential 2nd units. Accordingly, the Board will consider eliminating:

Section 22.30.470.B.2 (Title 22) – "Occupancy of primary and secondary units restricted", which requires that the property owner must occupy one unit as their primary residence.
* *Section 22.30.470.F.1 (Title 22) – "Type of Road Surface" requirement, which requires paving*

The provision will pertain to both the inland and coastal zones (same wording for the Coastal zone, which is Section 23).

The fact that such restrictions even exist evinces how out of touch and unreasonable much of the land use regulatory scheme has become over the years. Just which idiots thought that if you have a house and a guest house, you - the owner must occupy one of them in order to rent the other? Suppose you have a job in Houston or serve in the military or whatever. While this move is good, it just demonstrates how outrageous and encroaching on private property rights the mindset of government officials has become.

At the moment there does not seem to be any public opposition. Of course we'll wait with baited breath to see how Gibson and Hill may seek to screw it up.

Background: The State Legislature and Governor are beginning to realize that the overall architecture of State and local land use regulation has created a housing catastrophe. The Legislature is blaming the cities and counties for the problem, even though it created the enabling legislation that allowed the localities to double down on the situation and deprive the upcoming generations of owning or renting a decent home at a reasonable cost in terms of the economy and incomes. It is estimated that there are around 103 Bills pending in the current session of the Legislature related to this issue.

The specific issue in this instance pertains to current County requirements for secondary dwelling units located on the same property as the main home. Currently, County ordinances require that the owner reside in the main house and that the driveway to the secondary unit be paved. The Legislature figured out that these types of restrictions were simply arbitrary tools to prevent the construction or habitation of secondary units. The Commission recommended elimination of these requirements to the Board of Supervisors.

There are many other arbitrary barriers that should also be removed. The Board of Supervisors has directed that the Planning Department work on these as a priority project.

The Board needs to set some tough time deadlines and tell executive management to get it done or they will be replaced. COLAB pointed out that the Commissioners, staff, Board of Supervisors, and everyone else involved needs to change their mindset about planning and zoning. They are driving our children and grandchildren out of the State. How can young families with a few children afford old worn out 1950's and '60's apartments for $3,500 per month? This is what the State and the cities and counties have wrought by their acquiescence to the Enviro-Socialists.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, July 11, 2017 (Completed)

In General: The agenda contained a number of housekeeping items related to retirement and deferred compensation. These are not huge policy items but do provide a window into some of the County benefits. Items 7, 8, and 28 below are all inter-related. The 3 items were all adopted on the consent calendar.

Item 6 - Request to approve an agreement for the advance payment of the County's employer retirement and employer paid portion of employee normal retirement contributions to the Pension Trust. This item authorized the Auditor Controller to pay the County's full required contribution to the Pension Trust at the start of the fiscal year. This actually has the effect of lowering the County's unfunded actuarial liability by $1.5 million because the Pension System will be able to invest all the money for a full year. Some jurisdictions pay monthly because they don't have the cash.

Item 7 - Deferred Compensation Plan. In addition to the regular retirement system, the County offers the employees a voluntary tax deferred compensation plan. This item established a management committee to help review and manage the system. Heretofore it has largely been run by the County Treasurer. The Plan has 1800 participants and $150 million in assets.

Item 8 - Request to approve a contract with Sage View Advisory Group for professional services associated with transitioning to a new provider for the Deferred Compensation Plan and to authorize a related budget adjustment in the amount of $15,000 from reimbursements to Fund Center. This one would authorize the County to hire a consultant to assist it with the switch from one deferred compensation plan to another. (See item 28 below for details of the actual switch.)

Item 28 - Submittal of a resolution to replace the current provider of the County's deferred compensation plan with Nationwide Retirement Services and request to approve a contract with Nationwide Retirement Services. Apparently the employees were unhappy with their current deferred comp administrator/investor, Empower of Denver, and have determined to recommend that the Board authorize contracting with Nationwide Retirement Services. The Board letter states in part:

The County, under the instruction of its Treasurer and its County Administrative Officer has reviewed the firm that provides recordkeeping and investment options for the Deferred Compensation Plan. This review is consistent with modern fiduciary best practices in the administration of defined contribution savings plans. A Request for Proposal for Deferred Compensation Plan provider services was issued in 2016 and eight highly competitive responses were received including one from the incumbent provider. The responses were evaluated by an employee committee selected and directed by the County Treasurer in his role as Plan Administrator for the Deferred Compensation Plan. Extensive finalist interviews were held with three of the respondents. The recommendation is to hire Nationwide Retirement Services to replace the incumbent Deferred Compensation Plan provider.

Idea: What if the bureaucracy would pay as much attention to your permitting costs, fees, and delays as they do to their and their staff's deferred comp. After all, they took the effort to compare costs, customer service, rates, alternative vendors, and all manner of issues related to this investment plan. Why wouldn't they do this on your behalf in a systematic review of all the services which they provide?

Item 18 - Request to 1) adopt a revised policy that Public Education and Government Trust Funds be allocated 50/50 to Education Access and Government Access programs; 2) approve an agreement with the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education for a cable TV access grant; and 3) authorize an associated budget adjustment, in the amount of $508,365, using Public Education and Government Access Fees. This one went through accompanied by a few comments about how the education channel provides such great vignettes of school programs. It is not clear from the item, but does this mean that the total annual franchise fee is $1.012 million? Could a piece of this be used to restore the radio broadcast of the County Supervisor board meetings? Or should the whole thing be thrown out and the money be used for a more clear and organized presentation of agenda materials and live presentation than the fragmented system, which uses different providers for different agencies, etc.?

Item 28 - County Urban Irrigation Restrictions and Incentives Not Working So Well. Unfortunately, **t**he Board voted unanimously to approve the expansion of the program.

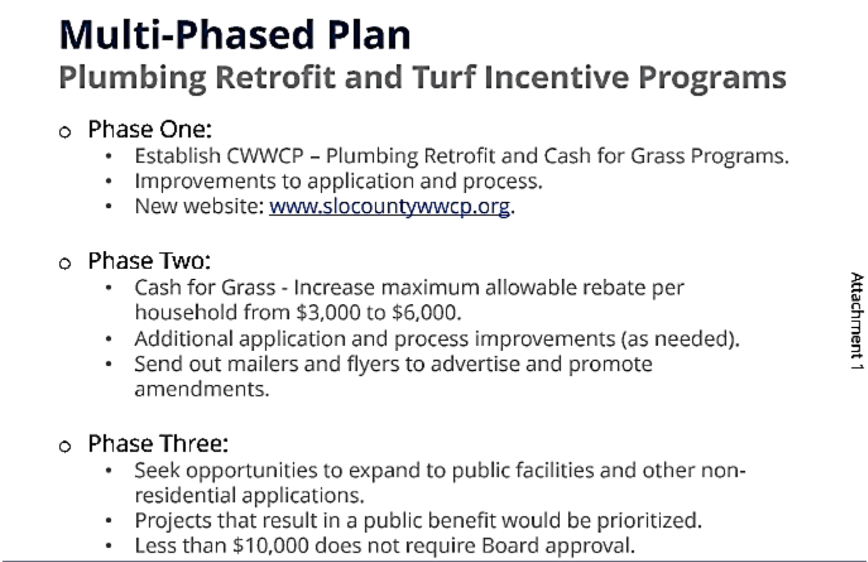
Background: Over the past 4 years the County adopted water use restrictions on new home and commercial development in the Nipomo Water Conservation Area and the Paso Basin. Essentially a property owner is required to show net water use neutrality in order to receive a permit. One way of meeting the requirement is to purchase water credits from the County. These are apparently sold for $16.18 per gallon. Revenue from the credits is bundled into a cash incentive program that pays property owners to remove their turf and/or to buy water efficient appliances. The funding is extracted from the property owners by means of the $16.18 fee.

As expected, there are not enough customers to use all of the fee revenue created. Accordingly and in true bureaucratic fashion, the staff wants to expand the failed program by increasing the incentives.

The write-up stated:

The reasons the County has available surplus is due to a number of factors. The programs are reliant solely on public participation and County has seen a decline in participation in the program over time. Decline in participation rates based on staff's observations, have been related low financial incentives, and strict program requirements. In addition, the programs have no flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. Staff has evaluated the Cash for Grass and Plumbing Retrofit Program and has formulated recommended amendments to resolve these issues. Since these programs were adopted by the Board, staff must receive Board approval to make any changes.

Accordingly the staff proposes literally doubling down:



Multi-Phased Plan

Plumbing Retrofit and Turf Incentive Programs

- Phase One:
  - Establish CWWCP – Plumbing Retrofit and Cash for Grass Programs.
  - Improvements to application and process.
  - New website: www.slocountywwcp.org.
- Phase Two:
  - Cash for Grass - Increase maximum allowable rebate per household from $3,000 to $6,000.
  - Additional application and process improvements (as needed).
  - Send out mailers and flyers to advertise and promote amendments.
- Phase Three:
  - Seek opportunities to expand to public facilities and other non-residential applications.
  - Projects that result in a public benefit would be prioritized.
  - Less than $10,000 does not require Board approval.

Attachment 1

This is just another social engineering boondoggle which the Board should have terminated. Party A is being taxed to use water under his land. The proceeds are being used to pay party B to remove her grass and plant rocks and cactus, and then buy a new dishwasher, clothes washer, and low flow toilets.

Planning Commission of Thursday, July 13, 2017 (Completed)

In General: There were no items of general policy magnitude, but a number of property owners seeking to build a house, put in a solar array, create a small subdivision, install a cell tower (disguised as a "broadleaf tree"), and add an aging care facility into a planned community were all going through the expensive and time consuming process. Some have been back to the Commission several times.

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES AND FORCES

Jerry Brown wants to be global climate change leader, but has a problem in California

By Dan Walters

"Desperate" may be too strong a word, but Gov. Jerry Brown, who aspires to global leadership of the climate change movement, very badly needs to renew "cap-and-trade" controls on California's greenhouse gas emissions that will expire in 2020.

It's one thing for Brown to join international leaders in issuing high-minded declarations on existential climate change perils, or to be treated as a head of state in Beijing, but quite another to persuade 81 state legislators in Sacramento to see things his way. They, unlike the soon-to-retire governor, will face whatever political consequences a more ambitious cap-and-trade system brings.

Brown's evident eagerness to get it done stems from several factors, including the potential embarrassment if an aspiring global leader can't sell it to his own Legislature.

And, of course, there's the financial angle.

The state auctions emission allowances each quarter and recent proceeds have been spotty at best. Reauthorization, particularly before the next auction in August, would generate more action.

The state has been counting on about $2.5 billion a year from its share of the bid pool and spending it looms large. Indeed, divvying up future proceeds is a major factor in backroom negotiations over renewal.

Brown has a particular interest in maximizing auction results because his pet bullet train project is highly dependent on cap-and-trade money, without which it probably dies.

All of that said, Brown has found that writing something that will garner the requisite two-thirds legislative votes is a tough slog. Self-imposed deadlines have come and gone, with the latest being the Legislature's summer recess nine days hence. With that in mind, Brown and legislative leaders unveiled an extension bill late Monday, hoping to have votes on Thursday.

Democrats have 27 seats in the Senate, and 54 in the Assembly, the exact number of votes Brown needs. Democratic Assemblyman Jimmy Gomez departed this week to take the Los Angeles congressional seat he won in a special election.

However, Brown has not had unanimous Democratic support because the issue divides his party. Its resurgent left wing doesn't like cap and trade, saying it does not do enough to force business compliance with tight emission controls, not only for carbon emissions but other pollutants as well. A new companion bill addresses other forms of pollution in hopes of shoring up Democratic support.

Business wants fairly loose rules, important because to get to the magic number of legislative votes. Brown probably needs at least a few Republicans who back business and have demands of their own, one of which—a suspension of a controversial firefighting fee on rural property—is included in the new cap-and-trade bill.

Meanwhile, the Republican right is telling GOP members to back off and let the Democrats fashion an emission control program by themselves. As Jon Fleischman, publisher of the influential FlashReport, wrote, "Let them announce it, let them own it, and let them campaign on it."

Underlying Fleischman's warning to Republicans, and the reluctance of some Democrats to join Brown, is uncertainty about the political fallout as emission allowances become more expensive and costs make their way into consumer prices.

The current program adds about a dime a gallon to gasoline costs, but that will increase sharply if it is renewed and the state works toward more ambitious carbon reduction goals for 2030 and beyond. So, too, will the effects on utility rates and other consumer items.

Democratic legislators have already voted this year for Brown's plan to sharply increase direct gas taxes, a plan that polls say is unpopular with voters. A repeal measure could be on the ballot next year and one Democratic senator who voted for gas taxes, Sen. Josh Newman, faces a recall campaign.

Brown evidently believes the new bill will overcome all of that and give him the symbolic win he so earnestly, and perhaps desperately, wants.

This article first appeared in the July 12, 2017 Cal Matters Commentary. Dan Walters is a life - long commentator on the California Political and societal scene. He was syndicated in hundreds of publications prior to his retirement earlier this year.

Wind and Solar Energy Are Dead Ends

By SPENCER MORRISON

Renewable energy is the way of the future, we are told. It is inevitable. Some renewable energy advocates boldly claim that the world could be powered by renewable energy as early as 2030 – with enough government subsidies, that is. And of course, the mainstream media play their part, hyping up the virtues of solar and wind energy as the solution to climate change.

In one regard, they are quite right: in terms of generational capacity, wind and solar have grown by leaps and bounds in the last three decades (wind by 24.3% per year since 1990, solar by 46.2% per year since 1990). However, there are two questions worth asking: (i) are renewable energies making a difference, and (ii) are they sustainable?

To answer the first question: No, wind and solar energy have not made a dent in global energy consumption, despite their rapid growth. In fact, after thirty years of beefy government subsidies, wind power still meets just 0.46% of earth's total energy demands, according to data from the International Energy Agency (IEA). The data include not only electrical energy, but also energy consumed via liquid fuels for transportation, heating, cooking, etc. Solar generates even less energy. Even combined, the figures are minuscule: wind and solar energy together contribute less than 1% of Earth's energy output.

Bottom line: Renewables are not making a difference. It would be far more cost-effective and reasonable to simply invest in more energy-efficient technology. But of course, doing so would not line the pockets of billionaires like Elon Musk.

To answer the second question: Is renewable energy sustainable? Is the future wind- and solar-powered?

No.

Looking first at wind energy: Between 2013 and 2014, again using IEA data, global energy demand grew by 2,000 terawatt-hours. In order to meet this demand, we would need to build 350,000 new 2-megawatt wind turbines – enough to entirely blanket the British Isles. For context, that is 50% more turbines than have been built globally since the year 2000. Wind power is not the future; there is simply not enough extraditable energy. Unfortunately, better technology cannot overcome this problem: turbines can become only so efficient due to the Betz limit, which specifies how much energy can be extracted from a moving fluid. Wind turbines are very close to that physical limit.

The state of solar energy is only slightly more promising. Recent findings suggest that humanity would need to cover an equatorial region the size of Spain with solar panels in order to generate enough electricity to meet global demand by 2030. Not only is this an enormous amount of land that could otherwise be used for agriculture, or left pristine, but it also underestimates the size of the ecological footprint, since only 20% of mankind's energy consumption takes the form of electricity. Were we to switch to electric vehicles, the area needed would be five times as large.

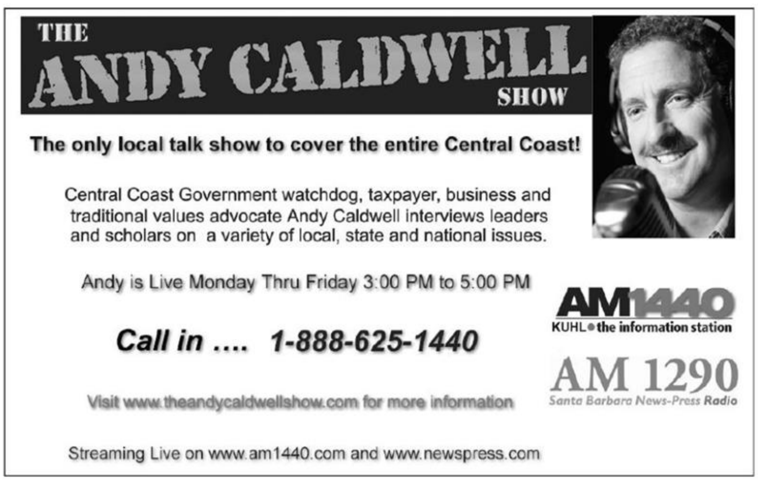
Even if the world agreed to take this project on, it would not be possible due to resource limitations. For example, each 1.8-square meter solar panel requires 20 grams of silver to build. Since there are 1 million square meters in a square kilometer, 11.1 tons of silver is needed per square kilometer of solar panels. Spain is 506,000 square kilometers. Covering this much space with solar panels would require 5,616,600 tons of silver. As it turns out, that is 7.2 times as much silver as is estimated to exist in Earth's crust. Granted, new technology could mitigate the need for silver, but this same logic applies to dozens of other minerals present in solar panels. They are simply not feasible on a large scale because they are resource-hungry.

One must also remember that such massive investments in solar panels would inevitably contribute to resource scarcity: modern electronics require many of the same minerals as do solar panels. Increased competition for a finite supply of minerals would raise the prices of our electronic goods, as well as the price of electricity. Of course, this analysis wholly ignores the many other problems with solar and wind energy, such as the problem of intermittency and the hidden systemic risks it entails.

This is not to say wind and solar energy have no uses. In some cases, they may be preferable to other types of energy. For example, in remote locations townships and homesteads can benefit greatly from local electricity production, especially since renewable energy does not require fuel. However, wind and solar energy are unlikely to underpin the global energy supply, so long as more cost-effective and efficient options remain on the table.

This article first appeared in American thinker on July 12, 2017. Spencer Morrison is a writer, and independent intellectual with a focus on applied philosophy, empirical history, and practical economics. He is Editor in Chief of National Economics Editorial.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Greetings Growers and Agricultural Interested Parties

As many of you know, the current Agricultural Order (known as Ag Order 3.0) will expire on March 8, 2020. With this deadline in mind, Water Board staff must now begin the task of developing a new Ag Order.

We are holding three scoping meetings to discuss development of the next Ag Order. The goal of the meetings is generally to hear your perspective on Ag Order 3.0, and its predecessor, Ag Order 2.0.

The meetings will be listening sessions where you will have the opportunity to share with Water Board staff your perspective and experiences regarding the pros, cons, and ideas for potential improvement of the Ag Order. Discussion topics will include the structure of the Ag Order, such as tiering and enrollment, as well as monitoring and reporting requirements.

The meetings are scheduled as follows:

August 7, 2017: 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Agricultural Center Conference Room
U.C. Cooperative Extension
1432 Abbott Street
Salinas, CA 93901

August 10, 2017: 1:00-3:30 p.m.
Shepard Hall
Santa Maria Public Library
421 South McClelland
Santa Maria, CA 93454

August 15, 2017: 1:00-3:30 p.m.
Watsonville Public Library
275 Main Street, Suite 100Meeting Room (2nd floor),Watsonville, CA 95076

A forum bringing together elected officials, key County, city and community leaders, wine growers and tourism experts to explore the long-term viability of the Wine and Tourism sectors in our county.

ECON ALLIANCE

Event Partner

SANTA BARBARA VINTNERS

Event Sponsor

Pacific Gas and Electric Company

AERA

PROGRAM

1:30 p.m. Welcome/Opening Remarks
Steve Pepe, *President, EconAlliance*

1:40 p.m. Keynote: Facts of Life About Direct to Consumer Sales
Robert McMillan, *VP/Founder, Silicon Valley Bank Wine Division*

2:15 p.m. Panel: Direct to Consumer Sales - Key to Financial Sustainability?
Moderator: Robert McMillan
Panelists:
Sonja Magdevski, *Owner, Casa Dumetz*
Katy Rogers, *Director of Direct to Consumer South Coast, Jackson Family Wines*
Third Panelist TBA

3:00 p.m. BREAK

3:15 p.m. Panel: Wine and Tourism – A Perfect Pairing?
Moderator: TBA
Panelists:
Gilda Cordova, *Explore Lompoc*
Jennifer Harrison, *Director of Tourism, Santa Maria Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau*
Shelby Sim, *Executive Director, Visit SYV*
Jennifer Walker, *Vice President Strategy & Marketing, Visit Santa Barbara*

4:00 p.m. Overview Presentation: Santa Barbara Vintners Good Neighbor Policy
SB Vintners Board Member - TBA

4:30 p.m. Panel: Wine, Visitors, Venues and Regulations
Moderator: Mike Brown, *former Santa Barbara County CEO*
Panelists:
Steve Lavagnino, *5th District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County*
Das Williams, *1st District Supervisor, Santa Barbara County*
John Peschong, *1st District Supervisor, San Luis Obispo County*

5:15 p.m. Reception

TICKETS: $65 individual price
Registration link:
www.econalliancewineforum.eventbrite.com
For event, table and exhibit sponsorships, contact: **initiatives@EconAlliance.org** or **805-345-0688**
Table sponsorship of 8 people (6 seats to sponsors, 2 seats to EconAlliance for VIPs, speakers or students)

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San Luis Obispo County
"Your Property – Your Taxes – Our Future"
PO Box 13601 – San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 / Phone: 805.548-0340
Email: colabslo@gmail.com / Website: colabslo.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

General Member: $100 – $249 ❑ $ _______ **Voting Member: $250 - $5,000 ❑ $ _______**

Sustaining Member: $5,000 +❑ $ _______
(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)

General members will receive all COLAB updates and newsletters. Voting privileges are limited to Voting Members and Sustainable Members with one vote per membership.

MEMBER INFORMATION:

Name: ____

Company: ____

Address: ____

City: ______________________ State: ____________ Zip: __________

Phone: ______________ Fax: ______________ Email: ____________________

How Did You Hear About COLAB?

Radio ❑ Internet ❑ Public Hearing ❑ Friend ❑

COLAB Member(s) /Sponsor(s): ____

NON MEMBER DONATION/CONTRIBUTION OPTION:

For those who choose not to join as a member but would like to support COLAB via a contribution/donation.
I would like to contribute $ ____________ to COLAB and my check or credit card information is enclosed/provided.

Donations/Contributions do not require membership though it is encouraged in order to provide updates and information.
Memberships and donation will be kept confidential if that is your preference.
Confidential Donation/Contribution/Membership ❑

PAYMENT METHOD:

Check ❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover ❑ Amex NOT accepted.

Cardholder Name: ______________________ Signature: ______________________

Card Number:______________________ Exp Date: ___/___ Billing Zip Code: ______ CVV:____

TODAY'S DATE: ______________________

(Revised 2/2017)