

Marin United Taxpayers Association

Winter 2009-2010 Newsletter

MUTA Annual Meeting – We're pleased to present Juliette Anthony, a renewable energy consultant with Californians for Renewable Energy. She will speak on a hot topic, Marin Clean Energy. Saturday, February 20, 2010, 10 a.m. until noon at the Tamalpais Bank Community Room, 575 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Greenbrae (near the Bon Air Center). Please plan to attend and get informed!

Marin Energy Authority (MEA) – MEA is going forward with its intention to sign a contract with Shell North America by Feb. 4. The cities of Corte Madera, Larkspur, Ross and Novato did not join MEA's Marin Clean Energy program. Does anyone know the difference between MEA's light green and dark green tiers other than their cost? MUTA opposes this new bureaucracy. Taxpayers will be on the hook if MEA gets into fiscal trouble.

Marin Municipal Water District – We've attended many water district meetings. We do not support desalination, as it is too expensive and detrimental to the environment. We've partnered with the Food and Water Watch group, as they are able to focus more intently on this than we can. However, we continue to monitor MMWD and oppose their giving \$800,000 to MEA for startup costs. Please sign the Marin Responsible Water Policy ballot initiative, which will force MMWD to allow the public to vote on the desalination plant.

SMART – We've long viewed this as a transportation solution seeking a problem. Recently, one of our board members has been working on a legal action that seeks to overturn the SMART district as illegal under the California constitution. Now it appears there is not enough tax revenue to finish the line by 2014.

Marin General Hospital – MUTA supports a community hospital here in Marin. Sutter, a private concern, has run MGH since 1985. Sutter has removed funds from MGH -- \$120 million since 1995.

College of Marin – COM's principal purpose has shifted from preparing students for transfer to a university to finish their education, to a focus on courses for ESL students and seniors. More than half the bond money has been spent and construction of the new buildings has not begun.

Ross Valley Flood District – Most of MUTA's time has been spent on this flawed election because we, and our president, Basia Crane, are parties to the suit. We hope this will be resolved soon, releasing our time to devote to other needs.

Now, about you! We'd like to update our records to make sure we can reach you with announcements, especially when we need your advocacy on issues. Please complete the information below and mail it back to us. We know that many of you are on a tight budget. However, if you can make a minimal contribution of \$10.00, that will keep us working for you in the coming year. Thank you for your continued support!

Name	_____	Phone	_____
Address	_____	Fax	_____
City	_____	Zip	_____
E-Mail	_____	Contribution	\$ _____

Mail to: Marin United Taxpayers Assn, P. O. Box 2214, Mill Valley, CA 94942

Phone: 415-456-7910

Help! – We need hands-on help from MUTA members. The projects we might do depend on people power. More people = more projects = more impact! If you can attend meetings, work on outreach projects, coordinate a committee, serve on our board of directors or “you name it”, we’d love to hear from you! Your presence as a MUTA “reporter” at government meetings helps us to understand better what is happening with your tax dollars.

Finances – In 2009 we closed our San Rafael office to cut expenses. We had a few difficulties with our phone system which are now resolved. MUTA is in satisfactory financial condition. However, we have to be careful with our spending. Postage costs are now significant, so a mailing to members is always a carefully budgeted decision.

Thanks for your support in 2009! Your Board of Directors – Basia Crane, President, Don Erbel, Vice President & Acting Secretary, Michael Hartnett, Treasurer, Dennis Fishwick, Board Member, Nancy McCarthy, Board Member

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MUTA Objectives:

Better government – more efficient, less bureaucracy, less redundancies

Prudent spending – less spending, waste elimination, reducing deficits

Government change – stopping unneeded programs, better new programs

Lower taxes – property, sales, income (local, state, federal)

Supporting spending control – support for Proposition 13 spending rules

Proposition 13 benefits **every** citizen – owner (new or old), renter and taxpayer