

## COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES – Voting Information

Hello, again. After giving you a month to think about and discuss the aim, the situation and the factors surrounding the proposed new Public Safety Facilities for Gila County, I'd like to take up where we left off.

In this article I will discuss the voter information pamphlets currently being mailed to our registered voters and visit about the voting process.

If you or anyone in your household is a registered voter in Gila County, this week and next you will be receiving two (2) Voter Informational Pamphlets – one for the General Obligation Bond Question and one for the Sales Tax Question.

Why two?

Arizona State Law requires that a **Bond** Question Pamphlet be mailed no later than 35 days prior its election, and a **Sales Tax** Question Pamphlet be mailed no earlier than 30 days prior to its election. And so, there is a 5-day legal barrier preventing these two issues from being included in one pamphlet and in one mailing. (No, we didn't foul up; no, we aren't arbitrarily wasting mailing dollars; no, we aren't trying to deliberately confuse you ..... I've already heard these, can you tell?)

PLEASE take the time to read each pamphlet. They tell you exactly what you are being asked to decide in the November 6, 2007 election. They are written in as plain and simple language as possible given the complex nature of the topics. If you need clarification on any part of it – please contact our elections department at 928-402-8708 or my office at 928-474-7100.

For instance, in the case of the Bond Question, it tells you that you are being asked to authorize the sale and issuance of bonds not to exceed \$20,000,000, and it tells you exactly what the money can only be used for.

It tells you what the estimated Debt Service and the Projected Impact on the Secondary Tax Rate will be. It tells you what the estimated taxpayer cost will be.

It tells you that Gila County has no other bond debt outstanding (referred to as "ad valorem property tax debt"). (For those of you interested, I believe this is yet another indication of the sound financial management this county has experienced over the last number of years.)

And it tells you that in any case, Gila County may not issue bonds (i.e. go into debt) greater than 15% of the total assessed value of the property in the County.

Since the 2007-08 total assessed property value for Gila County is right at \$478 million then the 15% bonding (debt) limitation is equal to \$71.6 million – which is well above the \$20,000,000 being asked for in this election.

You will also find arguments being made by some of your neighbors both for and against the authorization of these bonds. Again, please read them. These folks took the time to express their positions for your added information and they are well worth reading.

You will find different arguments for and against the sales tax question in its pamphlet, too, because each pamphlet deals with each issue separately. (And, yes, they are both in English and in Spanish as required by Arizona State Law.)

The pamphlets tell you the location of all the polling places, and on the back of your pamphlet next to your address, it also tells you specifically where YOUR polling place is.

Other information includes how and where you may vote an early ballot or an absentee ballot either in person or by mail. (Early voting began on Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> and ends on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. You may vote early at the County Recorder's Office in either Globe or Payson between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The Globe Office is located at 1400 E. Ash and the Payson office is located at 201 W. Frontier.)

If you choose to go to the polls instead, the polling place hours on November 6<sup>th</sup> are from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, and the pamphlet tells you what identification is required of electors before they can receive a ballot (if you plan to vote at the polls, be sure and read this part).

Finally, it gives you the exact text of the official ballot and shows you that when you get right down to it your choices will be either **For the Bonds** or **Against the Bonds – For the Sales Tax** or **Against the Sales Tax**. They are very straight forward decisions - nothing fancy, nothing tricky.

Over the next few weeks I will be re-capping for you the basic elements to the decisions you will make by November 6<sup>th</sup> as well as attempt to answer some of the questions you have raised with me this last month.

In the meantime – check your mail for your pamphlets.