

## **ITEM 9.B.**

### **MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

**TO:** The Honorable City Council

**FROM:** Ron Ahlers, Finance Director 

**DATE:** February 14, 2013 (CC Meeting of February 20, 2013)

**SUBJECT:** Consider Hiring a Consultant to Provide a Citizen Opinion Survey

#### **SUMMARY**

The Finance, Administration and Public Safety (FAPS) Committee met on Wednesday, February 6, 2013. The FAPS Committee recommends to the City Council that we retain a consultant to conduct a voter opinion survey to determine the feasibility of increasing taxes or assessments.

#### **BACKGROUND**

During September 2007 the City conducted a Voter Opinion Survey. The survey asked questions regarding voter satisfaction with Parks, Traffic and their willingness to support an increase in taxes to support city services. The survey results showed insufficient voter support for either a bond measure or a business license tax. A special assessment might be an option to consider.

These past few years, the City's General Fund has been under increasing pressure to reduce costs and/or increase revenues. The City's property taxes, sales taxes, property taxes in lieu of vehicle license fees and interest earnings have remained flat-lined. However, costs continue to increase each year. The City's contract with the Sheriff's department has increased each year. Health insurance costs continue to grow and we shall be experiencing increased costs for retirement benefits with CalPERS. The Community Development Fund and Parks Maintenance Fund each require approximately \$1 million annually from the General Fund.

Staff is recommending that the City conduct another survey to ascertain if there is voter support for an increase in the parks assessment or some other revenue enhancement measure. If the Council concurs, staff will solicit proposals from a number of qualified firms and present them to the City Council with a recommendation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Staff estimates the cost of the Voter Opinion to not exceed \$20,000. An appropriation should not be needed at this time since there is savings in certain administrative budgets of the City Council and the City Manager.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Direct staff to obtain proposals from qualified consulting firms to conduct a voter opinion survey.