

County of Santa Clara
Board of Supervisors
Supervisory District Three
Supervisor Dave Cortese




BOSD308 040709

Reviewed by: Rabia Chaudhry
Chief Board Aide

DATE: April 7, 2009

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: 
Liz Kniss
Supervisor, District 5


Dave Cortese
Supervisor, District 3

SUBJECT: Major League Baseball's Territorial Rights for Santa Clara County.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to Major League Baseball's Territorial Rights for Santa Clara County.

Possible action:

- a. Adopt Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara requesting Major League Baseball act on the territorial rights in the County of Santa Clara. (Roll Call Vote)

- b. Approve letter regarding Major League Baseball's (MLB) Santa Clara County Territorial Rights and direct Clerk of the Board to forward letter to MLB Commissioner Bud Selig.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Much of the proposed Oakland Athletics move to the County of Santa Clara hinges on Major League Baseball ruling on a territorial rights issue. This Resolution and letter advocate on behalf of the Oakland Athletics and the County stating that Major League Baseball should release the territorial rights to the Oakland Athletics. This will send a clear message to the Commissioner of Major League Baseball that Santa Clara County and the City of San Jose are united in the goal of bringing the Athletics to the South Bay.

Having a Major League Baseball franchise located in the County of Santa Clara will bring significant benefits to the region including, jobs, sales tax revenues and many other economic benefits.

At the behest of Supervisor Cortese, Mayor Reed will be requesting authorization from the San Jose City Council at the April 7, 2009 meeting to send a letter to Commissioner Bud Selig in support of Major League Baseball allowing the Oakland Athletics access to the County of Santa Clara and requesting a similar resolution to be brought back to the City Council for consideration.

BACKGROUND

In 1992, the San Francisco Giants were entertaining the idea of relocating to Silicon Valley. In order to clear the way, the Oakland Athletics cooperated with Major League Baseball and the Giants in allowing the territorial rights to the County of Santa Clara to be given to the Giants and did not seek compensation for losing access to the County. Despite the failed attempt to move south, the San Francisco Giants have retained the territorial rights for the past 17 years.

Currently, the Oakland Athletics are searching for new city to relocate their franchise. After the proactive and failed attempt to build a stadium in Fremont, Lew Wolff, owner of the Oakland Athletics, gave a clear signal in a March 27, 2009 article in the San Jose Mercury News that the City of San Jose is leading the list of potential sites.

The addition of a Major League Baseball franchise in the South Bay would reap significant economic benefits for both the City and the County, similar to the revitalization of San Francisco following the erection of the Giants's new ballpark.

However the major hurdle for the Oakland Athletics to move to the County of Santa Clara is the retention of the territorial rights to the County by the Giants. While there may be valid reasons within the organization for Major League

Baseball to issue territorial rights, there is no need for Major League Baseball and the Giants to continue to hinder the efforts of the City of San Jose or the County of Santa Clara from independently negotiating contracts, pursuing development, and forming associations to bolster the local economy for its citizens.

Furthermore, there is well documented local support for a Major League Baseball franchise in San Jose, including two local grassroots organizations, Baseball San Jose and Pro Baseball for San Jose, Inc.

Finally, Major League Baseball has just formed a blue-ribbon panel of stadium experts to study the stadium options available for the Oakland Athletics, including those in San Jose and Santa Clara County. This letter and resolution will reinforce the fact that the City of San Jose and County of Santa Clara are in agreement that the best possible location for the Oakland Athletics and Major League Baseball is in the County of Santa Clara.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution
- Letter to Commissioner Bud Selig