



Agenda Date: 5/15/2007
Agenda Placement: 8A
Set Time: 9:00 AM PUBLIC HEARING
Estimated Report Time: 15 Minutes

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Martha Burdick for Peterson, Robert - Director
Public Works
REPORT BY: Don Ridenhour, Asst Director, Public Works/Asst District Engineer, 259-8321
SUBJECT: Adoption of a resolution to establish the South St. Helena Highway Underground Utilities District

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Public Works requests adoption of a resolution with the following actions regarding the removal and undergrounding of poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures:

1. Rescinds Resolution 93-124, establishing the Galleron Undergrounding Utility District; and
2. Establishes the South St. Helena Highway Underground Utility District, effective immediately.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resolution 93-124, whose purpose was to establish the Galleron Underground Utility District, was never finalized due to a procedural error. The proposed resolution would rescind Resolution 93-124, and establish the South St. Helena Highway Underground Utility District (SSHH). This District would encompass State Route 29 from Galleron Lane to Lewelling Avenue/Chaix Lane. Approval to establish this special district will be the initial step in the project that will ultimately place all overhead utilities underground; a project that is funded by Utility tariffs.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	Roads Department.

The majority of the cost for undergrounding the utilities in the proposed district will be covered by tariffs collected by PG&E for for this purpose. There will be a minor cost of the administration and management of the construction contracts to modify individual property owner electrical meter boxes and to

process the necessary claims to be reimbursed by PG&E and possible collection of funds from private property owners if the costs of construction exceed the reimbursement from PG&E. Administration, management, and minor easement acquisition is expected to be less than \$50,000 over the next three years.

Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? Discretionary

Discretionary Justification: This project will extend underground utilities to the St. Helena city limits, with the majority of funding being generated from Utility tariffs.

Is the general fund affected? No

Future fiscal impact: The County will incur costs for administration of this project, and potential Right of Way costs. Funding is included in the current year's approved Road budget which will be rolled over into future fiscal year budgets as necessary for the duration of the project. Upon completion, additional costs will cease as the Utilities will be responsible for maintenance.

Consequences if not approved: Utilities will remain overhead.

Additional Information:

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

It has been determined that adoption of this Resolution is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to:

- | CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 (d) (Class 2), which consists of conversion of overhead electric utility distribution system facilities to underground including connection to existing overhead electric utility distribution lines where the surface is restored to the condition existing prior to the undergrounding; and
- | CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(d) (Class 1) which consists of repair, maintenance and minor alteration of existing facilities.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

In 1993, the Board adopted Resolution 93-124 which created the Galleron Underground Utility District. Due to a procedural error, that Resolution was never formalized. Approval of the requested resolution will rescind Resolution 93-124 and form the South St. Helena Highway Underground District. It also sets the date when the property owners shall be ready to receive underground utility services.

The formation of the South St. Helena Highway Underground Utility District is proposed with the specific purpose of undergrounding utility lines and eliminating overhead utility poles along the South St. Helena Highway from Galleron Lane to the southern city limits of St. Helena. The District would include all parcels fronting State Route 29 between Galleron Lane and Lewelling Avenue/Chaix Lane.

Approval of the resolution will begin the process that will culminate in the underground installation of utilities. The development of plans, anticipated to take several years, will continue that process.

An informational joint public meeting with the City of St. Helena was held at the St. Helena Fire Station at 7:00 PM on May 2, 2007, to provide information to the affected citizens and included an open question and answer

session. Three members of the public attended, including two whose property would be included in the district. Those owners indicated enthusiastic support for the undergrounding project.

This Board of Supervisors meeting shall serve as the Public Hearing on this matter.

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) sets aside a small portion of all ratepayers' monthly payment for the stated purpose of underground projects (Rule 20A). These funds are converted into "work credits", which must be applied in the same geographic area in which they were collected. These credits have been accruing since the 1980's, when the power lines were undergrounded along Highway 29 south of Galleron Lane. The credits accrued in the Rule 20A Program for the County have accumulated sufficiently to install the next underground segment, from Galleron Lane to the city limits of St. Helena. The City of St Helena intends to continue the underground portion from the City limits, north to Dowdell Lane, and will utilize Rule 20A funds allocated by PG&E for the City of St. Helena. American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) and the Cable TV company (Comcast) pay their own costs as required by their Franchise Agreements with the County.

The Rule 20A Program, and its AT&T and Comcast equivalents, will provide the funding for the majority of the costs of undergrounding. It is possible, however, that a portion of the cost of the new underground service lines may be the responsibility of individual property owners. PG& E will fund the first one hundred (100) feet of the lateral service trench, and up to one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) for electric panel conversion at each service drop (residence or business). Any costs in excess of these limits will be borne by the property owner. The property owner will have the option of continuing the underground utilities to his facility, or to have the meter set at the 100 foot limit. An owner who opts to have the meter set at 100 feet, assumes ownership and maintenance responsibilities of the Utility, from the meter to the home, facility or other structure(s).

The County will incur minor costs that are not reimbursable by PG&E or the private property owners. These costs include administration and management of the contract to convert electrical panels and to recover construction costs from PG&E as well as the possible recovery of costs from individual property owners. The County will also incur minor costs for underground utility easements where there are currently overhead utility easements. The total cost to the County is currently unknown, but is not expected to exceed \$50,000 over the next three years.

The utilities will begin construction in early 2010, with the work to be completed in the three to four months thereafter. It is anticipated that ninety (90) days will be allowed for conversion of existing overhead services by property owners after junction boxes are installed during the utility companies' construction activities. The date of April 15, 2010 has been set as the deadline for individual electrical panels to be ready to receive underground services.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . St. Helena Highway Underground District Reso
- B . Attachment "A" - Map

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi