



County of Nevada
Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: March 27, 2018

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Tina Vernon, Treasurer & Tax Collector

SUBJECT: Resolution approving a Personal Services Contract with Godbe Research to conduct a survey of Nevada County voters in the maximum amount of \$28,340 and directing the Auditor-Controller to release fund balance in the amount of \$28,340 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance and to amend the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Treasurer & Tax Collector budget.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the attached resolution establishing a contract with Godbe Research to conduct a survey of Nevada County voters in the maximum amount of \$25,380 and amend the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Treasurer & Tax Collector and release General Fund fund balance.

FUNDING: Funding for this contract, not to exceed \$28,340 will impact the 2017/2018 Treasurer & Tax Collector budget and General Fund fund balance. A budget amendment is included in the resolution.

BACKGROUND:

On January 23-24, 2018 the Board of Supervisors discussed its annual objectives, including continuing to develop long term County cannabis regulations and exploration of a cannabis revenue measure for the November ballot. The Board then adopted its 2018 Board Objective at the February 13th, 2018 board meeting solidifying the Board's direction to staff to pursue a cannabis revenue measure.

On February 13th, 2018 the Board also held an extensive discussion on revisions to the County's cannabis ordinance and directed county counsel to begin drafting revisions to the current ordinance. The Board's direction included provisions to allow limited commercial cannabis businesses to operate legally in the County of Nevada under the revised ordinance, once adopted. Although the revised ordinance will likely include a permitting process for

cannabis businesses, permit fees can only legally be collected for the actual cost of issuing the permit, and may not include administrative or enforcement costs.

Nine California counties and more than sixty cities have implemented taxes on cannabis businesses in order to generate revenue for enforcement, public education, and general government operations. Several more jurisdictions are preparing ballot measures for the June election, including Nevada City who is preparing a revenue measure to collect taxes from medical cannabis businesses allowed to operate in the city limits.

The process of preparing a successful ballot measure includes extensive public opinion research, project management, public information and the scientific development of the specific measure language. The history of measures and public perspectives on cannabis in Nevada County suggests a highly contentious and polarizing issue. For this reason, staff recommends hiring an experienced pollster to conduct public opinion research through a voter survey to determine the viability of any potential revenue ballot measure and to assist in the development of the parameters of a measure in a manner that is responsive to the public's perspectives.

Godbe Research is a recognized leader in voter opinion research with over twenty-seven years of providing accurate and actionable voter polling for hundreds of local, county and regional government clients to support public policy decision making, ballot measure feasibility and other client needs. Godbe Research is recommended by Lew Edwards Group, the lead consultant for this project recommended by staff through a separate contract before your board today.

Through this Personal Services Contract, Godbe Research will collect extensive background information on Nevada County revenue measures and voter demographics, develop and test a survey instrument, and conduct approximate 15-18 minute telephone interviews with between 400 and 500 total voters in the County of Nevada for a 95% confidence level when looking at all Nevada County voters. The survey will also be available online to identified respondents. Godbe Research will analyze the data from the survey and produce a summary report of findings for County staff and related consultants.

Initiated and Approved by: Tina Vernon, Treasurer & Tax Collector

Submittal Date: March 15, 2018

Revision Date: