

Dear Council Members and Katie Davis,

I hope you are well.

I am writing in regard to recent discussions concerning the need to expand the Sebastopol Area Senior Center.

I am glad that the Senior Center is so successful. It is a wonderful West County resource.

I am writing because I was confused by the proposal that the City would sell the Senior Center and give the sale proceeds to the Senior Center.

The Senior Center is owned by the City of Sebastopol and its residents. The building is not owned by the Senior Center. The Senior Center rents the building for \$1 per year, which is a great deal.

The Senior Center has no rights over the building and no rights over any monies that would be collected from the sale of the building.

If the building is sold, the money goes back to the City and the residents of Sebastopol.

Sebastopol is in a fiscal crisis and has huge amounts of outstanding infrastructure debt. For instance, a recent pavement report showed \$20,000,000 worth of road work needed. If the building is sold, the money should be put back into the City's roads as there are very little targeted funds for pavement work.

Recent City budget projections show Sebastopol moving toward insolvency within the next 5-10 years unless there is a significant uptick in revenue. Therefore, the City does not have money to fund any financially intensive building projects.

The Senior Center serves people from across West County. I'm sure the Center could collect data on use by people within City Limits and outside of City Limits. The Center could probably use A.I. to look at membership addresses and class sign ups to determine what percentage of use is by people living within City Limits. This would be valuable information.

I would suggest that the Senior Center start working with the County to find a new space and to fund a new building.

Looking at church lots like the Christian Science Church or some of the others along 116 might be a great start.

St. Vincent DuPaul might also be a partner as they have the lot on 116 and have not started building on it. While it is designated as Homekey Permanent housing, perhaps with the changes in federal funding Homekey is no longer financially viable, there would be grants and

partnership opportunities to make it a senior center, which would align with St. Vincent's core missions.

I support the expansion of the Senior Center and know it is a vital community resource. Given Sebastopol's dire financial situation, it is unrealistic that the citizens of Sebastopol would be able to give the proceeds from sale of the building on High Street to the Senior Center as the money is solely needed for basic City services like roads.

Sebastopol only gets 14 cents of every property tax dollar while the County gets 22 cents or 63% more property than Sebastopol. Given this situation, the County not the City of Sebastopol should be the primary funder for the Senior Center. If you collect data from your membership and classes, perhaps you can make a case for more active involvement from the County and for funding from District 5 funds.

Best,  
Kate Haug