

½ Cent Sales Tax Initiative

(Prepared by Board Member Charles Van Zant)

Bottom Line up Front: I see the need for and support the CCSB going for the ½ cent sales tax.

My request is that we use a methodical, logical process, and pull in outside expertise and listen to them.

- Hire a consultant with a proven track record of getting initiatives passed (especially where they have been tried unsuccessfully before).
- Provide input to the consultant and let the consultant give the school board a realistic timeline, and logical process to come to the desired end.
- Put the ½ cent sales tax initiative on the ballot at a time suggested by the consultant and agreed upon by the board.

Challenges:

We must realize that there will certainly be folks opposed to this up front. Public trust of government in general is lower than normal, in large part due to factors beyond CCSB control, but those things will be in people's minds regardless.

These factors can likely be overcome by a good systematic education process that explains things such as:

- Why our growth issues can't be built on the same pace as a county, like St. Johns, whose tax base is 3 times Clay's.
- The impact of waiting on the legislature to do something different, and our legislative delegation's position that each county must do things within their means prior to being given consideration for more state dollars.
- The fact that our academic achievement ranks in the top 10% of the state with fewer dollars per pupil needs to be driven home, and repeated often.

Polling will likely need to be done, and public funds cannot be used. I suggest we explore builders, architects and engineers.