



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

For business meeting on August 21, 2015

Title	Agenda Item Type
Court Facilities: Naming Request for the Merced–New Los Banos Courthouse	Action Required
Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected	Effective Date
None	August 21, 2015
Recommended by	Date of Report
Court Facilities Advisory Committee Hon. Brad R. Hill, Chair Hon. Patricia M. Lucas, Vice-Chair	August 11, 2015
	Contact
	William J. Guerin, 415-865-7510 william.guerin@jud.ca.gov Kelly Quinn, 818-558-3078 kelly.quinn@jud.ca.gov

Executive Summary

The Court Facilities Advisory Committee recommends approving the request to name the new courthouse under construction in the City of Los Banos the *Robert M. Falasco Justice Center*. This approval simply shifts the name of the existing courthouse to the new courthouse.

Recommendation

The Court Facilities Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council, effective August 21, 2015, approve the request to name the new courthouse under construction in the City of Los Banos the *Robert M. Falasco Justice Center*.

Previous Council Action

The council has taken no previous action on this courthouse naming request. In April 2014, the council adopted its revised *Courthouse Naming Policy*, available at www.courts.ca.gov/documents/jc-20140425-itemJ.pdf.

Rationale for Recommendation

Currently, the Superior Court of California, County of Merced, has a courthouse in the City of Los Banos named the *Robert M. Falasco Justice Center*. This facility is planned for replacement by the new courthouse capital project that is currently under construction in the City of Los Banos. The superior court requests that the name be shifted from the existing courthouse to the new courthouse (see Attachment A). The local community supports this request, as expressed by both the mayor of the City of Los of Banos and the chair of the Merced County Board of Supervisors (see Attachments B and C, respectively). The completion of this new courthouse capital project is expected in fall 2016. Therefore, to incorporate the requested name into the signage for the new courthouse, staff must have council approval of the name now to timely prepare the signage design submittal for fabrication in fall 2015.

The advisory committee reviewed the naming request against section III.B.b of the council's *Courthouse Naming Policy* and found that it complies with all requirements except one: Judge Robert M. Falasco has been deceased for about 3 years, whereas the naming policy allows naming of a courthouse after individuals who have been deceased for a minimum of 10 years. The advisory committee recommends that the council approve this request with the exception, because doing so simply shifts the name of the existing courthouse to the new courthouse.

Comments, Alternatives Considered, and Policy Implications

Council staff did not solicit comments on the recommended council action. No alternatives to the recommended action were considered.

Per the council's naming policy, requests involving names of persons for court facilities require evaluation by the Court Facilities Advisory Committee's Subcommittee on Courthouse Names, with a recommendation to the full advisory committee. At this time, the position of chair of the Subcommittee on Courthouse Names is vacant, which is why the naming request was taken up directly by the full advisory committee at its meeting on July 16, 2015. In advance of that meeting, this naming request was posted for public comment on July 13, 2015, and no public comments were received.

Implementation Requirements, Costs, and Operational Impacts

The costs associated with the design and fabrication of the signage for the new courthouse planned in the City of Los Banos are paid from the project's Senate Bill 1407 capital-outlay budget.

Relevant Strategic Plan Goals and Operational Plan Objectives

The recommended council action supports Goal III, Modernization of Management and Administration, and Goal VI, Branchwide Infrastructure for Service Excellence.

Attachments

1. Attachment A: Courthouse naming request from Presiding Judge Brian L. McCabe, Superior Court of California, County of Merced, July 2, 2015

2. Attachment B: Letter supporting the naming request from Mayor Michael Villalta, City of Los Banos, June 29, 2015
3. Attachment C: Letter supporting the naming request from Supervisor John Pedrozo, Chair of the Merced County Board of Supervisors, June 25, 2015



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF MERCED

www.merced.courts.ca.gov

(209) 725-4172

FROM THE CHAMBERS
OF

BRIAN L. McCABE

PRESIDING JUDGE

July 2, 2015

Hon. Samuel K. Feng, Chair
Trial Court Facilities Subcommittee
445 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Courthouse Names

Dear Honorable Feng,

As you are aware, we recently held the groundbreaking ceremony for our new Los Banos Courthouse, which will be completed in the fall of 2016. The present Los Banos County Courthouse facility is named after one of our former Superior Court judges, Judge Robert Falasco. He was instrumental in the building of the current courthouse in 1980.

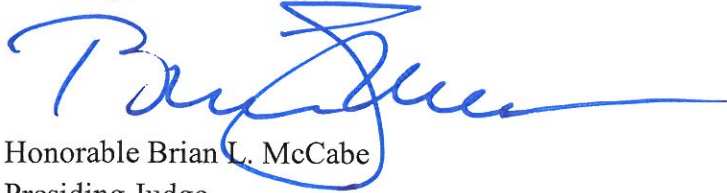
The Superior Court Judicial Officers, together with the Merced County Board of Supervisors and City of Los Banos, respectfully request that his name be transferred to the new Los Banos courthouse. Judge Falasco, was a native of Los Banos. He graduated from Santa Clara law school in 1951. He was elected to the Justice Court in 1958 and served in that capacity until 1977. In 1977 he was appointed to the Municipal Court bench until 1982. He was appointed to the Superior Court bench and finished his 26 continuous years as a judge in 1985. He served on various boards in the Los Banos community. He is credited for mentoring many jurists, attorneys and law enforcement officers throughout his career.

Judge Falasco passed away in 2012. He was revered by all who had the honor to know him. We realize that the policy on naming a courthouse states that the person must have been deceased for at least ten years. However, we would request that the committee make an exception to this policy and allow his name to remain on our new state courthouse.

Attached for your review are letters of support from the County Board of Supervisors and the City of Los Banos.

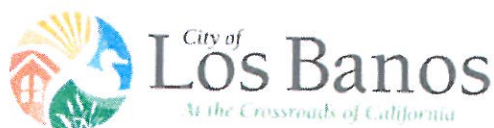
Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian McCabe", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Honorable Brian L. McCabe
Presiding Judge

Cc: Trial Court Facilities Subcommittee Members
Merced Superior Court Executive Committee
Linda Romero Soles, Court Executive Officer
Merced County Board of Supervisors
Michael Villalta, Mayor, City of Los Banos



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June 29, 2015

The Honorable Brian McCabe
Presiding Judge, Merced County Superior Court
627 West 21st Street
Merced, CA 95340

RE: NAMING OF LOS BANOS SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE

Dear Judge McCabe:

The City of Los Banos would like to express our support for the new Los Banos Superior Courthouse, currently under construction, to retain the name of "Robert M. Falasco Justice Center."

Robert Falasco, a retired superior court judge and Los Banos native, could always be relied upon to provide fair-minded and knowledgeable rulings. He served as a mentor, respected leader and a loyal friend and touched the lives of many in the San Joaquin Valley.

Some of his many accomplishments include 26 years as a judge, a trustee for the Los Banos Elementary School, a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps, director of the Merced County Fair Board, and being named a Papal Knight of the Order of St. Gregory by Pope John Paul VI. He was also instrumental in building both Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School and the Los Banos Memorial Hospital. His life's work culminated in 2008, when the Los Banos Division of the Merced County Superior Court was named after him.

Judge Falasco led an extraordinary life filled with compassion, stewardship, and a deep appreciation for the law, and the City of Los Banos believes it would be appropriate to keep his name on the new Los Banos Courthouse facility.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Michael Villalta
City of Los Banos



June 25, 2015

The Honorable Brian McCabe
Presiding Judge, Merced County Superior Court
627 West 21st Street
Merced, CA 95340

RE: NAMING OF LOS BANOS SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE

Dear Judge McCabe:

With construction of the new Los Banos Superior Courthouse underway, the Merced County Board of Supervisors would like to express its support for the new facility to retain the name of "Robert M. Falasco Justice Center."

Robert Falasco, a retired superior court judge and Los Banos native, was a true role model for the community. He exemplified compassion, fairness and toughness in the courtroom. Outside the courtroom, he was a family man with a witty sense of humor and a modest personality.

Some of his accomplishments include 26 years as a judge, a trustee for the Los Banos Elementary School, a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps, director of the Merced County Fair Board, and being named a Papal Knight of the Order of St. Gregory by Pope John Paul VI. His life's work culminated in 2008, when the Los Banos Division of the Merced County Superior Court was named after him.

For his actions inside and outside the courtroom, the Merced County Board of Supervisors believes it would be appropriate to keep his name on the new Los Banos courthouse facility.

Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Pedrozo, Chairman
Merced County Board of Supervisors

Board of Supervisors

John Pedrozo
Supervisor, District One

Hubert "Hub" Walsh, Jr.
Supervisor, District Two

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Supervisor, District Three

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James L. Brown
County Executive Officer

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