

## The floor is now open | Editorial

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Hats off to the Land Bank Commission and to the Renew Our Land Bank committee as well.

They made their pitch, stood their ground, took the heat and weathered the storm. Now they want to hear from you.

It might have been understandable if either had been content to proceed with business as usual, given that voters opted, in the end, to renew the Land Bank's principal funding source for another 12 years, through 2026.

That 1 percent tax on local real estate sales, paid by the buyer, will generate more than \$1 million a year even when transaction numbers are modest, like in 2010. It's produced as much as \$3 million in years when the market has been hot. That's a lot of ammunition to work with.

Still, neither group appears to be content with letting a narrow victory at the polls pass by, not without trying to understand the slump in support for one of the islands' more popular institutions. Prop. 1 passed with 52.8 percent of the vote, which means 3,726 voters, 47.2 percent, cast a ballot against it.

The commission has thrown out the welcome mat with the hope of hearing from those who voted against renewal of the REET. San Juan's commissioners have even gone so far as to provide the public with their phone number and email address (See 'Letters', *"They'd like to hear from you,"* pg. 6). That's an invitation that islanders — pro or con — should accept.

Vigorous debate is not always pretty, particularly at election time, but it can help clear the air and it often becomes a catalyst for reconciliation and for change.

The commission meets at least once a month; meetings are listed in the "Public Meetings" section of the Journal, and at [www.sjclandbank.org](http://www.sjclandbank.org).