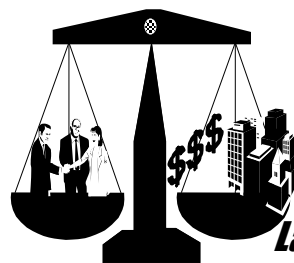


Citizens for Common Sense



Late Dec. 2008

Seeking government that is responsible and responsive to taxpayers in St. Joseph County, IN

YOU DID IT!

Citizen uproar was so intense at the South Bend Council meeting (loved that sea of red Grinch-like t-shirts!) that the City backed down the LOIT portion of the tax from a full 1% to only .5 %!

Then when the County Council started getting your e-mails and calls, they got serious about finding alternatives and listened to figures from Councilman Mark Root who knew they had the CREDIT funds to cover them for 2009. They canceled their Dec. 15 hearing!

A stunning victory for the citizens!!!!

www.citizensforcommonsense.info

Can we do it again?

YES, WE CAN!

The arguments against this tax are even worse then before – after the bombshell that was dropped by Governor Daniels and picked up on by both County Councilman Mark Root and WNDU TV. South Bend is sitting on **\$47 million** in unrestricted liquid investment funds!!! They have been investing our property tax and option taxes (lump sums they get from the state) and collecting the dividends off them for *decades*. These monies do not show up in their regular budget reports – just in an obscure Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. South Bend's report shows that they've stockpiled an outrageous \$47 million (**\$21.5 million of it in the General Fund**). **And they can't pay police and fire!?!?** The County's C.A.F.R. shows **\$27 million** in surplus monies. Surplus!

Can you believe the entrenched political leadership was keeping this info to themselves?

YOU DID IT!

Then They Did It to Us Again

Just days after the meeting was canceled, Council Pres. Rafael Morton suddenly announced that the hearing was back on – scheduled for Dec. 30. WHAT HAPPENED!?

Well, apparently the leadership of the entrenched political machine got back in town and scolded Council Democrats for thinking for themselves. "*We want this money!*" they probably demanded. (Or what? the Party will run people against them in the primaries next time to keep'em in line?)

Never mind that the County doesn't need the money;
Never mind that South Bend has alternative sources.
Never mind that the taxpayers are broke and struggling.

So, suddenly, the tax hearing is back on -- for Dec. 30.

Did You Know?

1) that the entrenched political machine that has been running South Bend and St. Joseph County for decades apparently did not even tell its own City or County Council members about this \$47 million in liquid investment funds they have stockpiled?

2) that six Democrat members of the South Bend Common Council voted FOR the tax despite an overflow crowd of citizens in opposition, and data from Republican member David Varner showing that the city could get by without the tax if they used existing funds and went for a Hotel/Motel tax?

3) that THREE South Bend Council members voted AGAINST the tax: lone Republican David Varner, and two Democrats, Henry Davis, Jr. and Derek Dieter (though Dieter voted FOR the Public Safety Tax once the LOIT tax had passed).

4) that it's rumored that Mayor Steve Luecke was chosen to spearhead this outlandish tax proposal because they want him to resign and make way for City Controller Catherine Fanello to take over as Mayor and be the incumbent in the next election?

5) that Controller Catherine Fanello is married to Joseph Zwierzinski, the President of DLZ (formerly Cole Associates), the architectural firm that gets most of the city and county building contracts and consulting jobs including the \$50 million jail?

6) that Butch Morgan, the Chairman of the local Democratic Party, is a Vice President at DLZ? He was reportedly out of town when County Council President Rafael Morton canceled the Dec. 15 hearing, but within days of his return the hearing was back on again for Dec. 30.

7) that just prior to the Dec. 15 scheduled hearing, County Auditor Pete Mullen sent a county e-mail to county department heads asking them to encourage their employees to attend the hearing in support of the option tax proposal?

8) that since most of the County employees get off at 4:30, if the meeting HAD occurred that evening, they could have filled the Council chambers before any of the working public could get there for the 5:30 hearing?

What You Can Do to Stop This

- *Get the word out. Tell neighbors, friends, and relatives who live in St. Joe County what a shameless play for our tax dollars is taking place.*
- *Write, call, or e-mail the County Councilmen. You can e-mail all nine at cocouncil@co.st-joseph.in.us. They need to hear from you!*
- *Send \$5 to Common Sense. If those who haven't sent anything yet would just send \$5, we'd be set for newsletters for over a year!*
- *Get your e-mail address to Common Sense. The only way we can get you an urgent update is thru e-mail. We will NOT share your address.*
- *Get a "No New Taxes" Sign for free at Frick's Dairy Queen at 3907 S. Michigan in South Bend. Sponsored by South Gateway Association.*
- *Plan to come early to the Dec. 30 hearing. We have dozens of bright red anti-tax t-shirts -- for all who want to show their opposition in red!*

Tuesday, Dec. 30 at 6pm --County-City Building (4th floor)