

Higher County Tax Rates?

Coles Residents,

I hate to be the bearer of more bad news at such a difficult time as this, but I believe this is information you need to know and be aware of as you chart your own personal finances through COVID.



The Board of County Supervisors has approved an advertised residential tax rate of \$1.170, an increase from the current rate of \$1.125. I voted against this advertised increase in February but was overridden by the Board majority.

If adopted, this rate would make our homeowners the highest taxed (by rate) of any county in the entire Commonwealth of Virginia.

Countywide, the average increase over last year's tax bill would be \$351 per family for a home valued at approximately \$378,000. *The largest one year average increase in Prince William County's history.*

For zip codes within the Coles District the *average* increase from last year's bill would be as follows:

- * 20181 (Nokesville) - \$527
- * 20112 (Manassas) - \$379
- * 20111 (Manassas) - \$326
- * 22193 (Dale City) - \$296
- * 20110 (Manassas) - \$273

In the last four weeks, businesses have shuttered, investment and retirement portfolios have tanked, and over 25,000 residents have filed claims for unemployment.

Needless to say, now is not the time to be considering a record tax increase on our residents.

But while the advertised tax rate has almost always been adopted, **there is reason for a glimmer of hope.**

In February, the Board repealed a proposed tax on boat owners one week after being advertised in the face of major opposition from those in the boating community.

This coming Tuesday and Thursday (April 14th & 16th) you have a chance to make your voices heard during public comment time and public hearings on the budget and tax rates. You may attend the hearings in-person, but in light of COVID, residents are encouraged to participate remotely via phone or video by signing up at www.pwcgov.org/speakup. You can also watch live at - <https://www.pwcgov.org/government/bocs/Pages/Meeting-Room.aspx> or on television - Channel 23 (Comcast) or 37 (Verizon).

It should be noted that county revenue is projected to still be \$26 million more than last year even if we choose not to raise our property tax rates a penny. **Taxes do not need to be**

raised in order to increase our investments into education, social services, and public safety.

Elected officials in the surrounding jurisdictions of Fairfax, Stafford, Fauquier, Loudoun, and the City of Manassas are all eschewing the idea of increasing taxes on their residents in the midst of this incredibly difficult time.

I'm hopeful that a bipartisan majority of members in Prince William County will come together to remove this added burden on our residents' personal finances as we navigate our way through the economic turmoil brought on by COVID.

As always, please feel free to contact my office with any questions at colesdistrict@pwcgov.org or by phone at (703) 792-4620.

For Coles,

Yesli Vega
Coles District Supervisor