



Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation

Non-Profit Advocate Of Lower Property Taxes In Atlanta/Fulton County

501(c)3 Non-Profit Advocate of Lower Property Taxes in Atlanta/Fulton

July 2009

The Huge Increase In Atlanta's Tax Plus Another Increase in Atlanta's Water Fees Will Result In An Exodus of the Poor & Moderate-Income!

"It is better for the public to procure at the market whatever the market can supply; because there it is by competition kept up in its quality and reduced to its minimum price."

Thomas Jefferson, 1808

In spite of pockets of affluence, the City of Atlanta is one of the poorest in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (latest figures), *Atlanta has the fifth highest "Concentrated Poverty Rate" in the United States*, with a "Concentrated Poverty Rate" of 35.8% living in 28 Category IV Tracts. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau, *Atlanta has the highest percent of children living in poverty, 48.1%!*

The Exodus of The Poor & Moderate-Income Residents

When, on June 29th, the City Council voted to approve a huge tax rate increase of 42% and on July 1st, increased the Water & Sewer Rates by 12.5%, the results are bound to be an exodus of the poor and moderate-income residents who simply cannot afford the increased taxes and water fees. This will apply not only to the poor and moderate-income homeowners, but to the poor and moderate-income tenants as well because landlords will be forced to increase rents to compensate for the 42% increase in the tax rate and the further increases in water and sewer rates.

Who Are The Council Members Who Voted For This Huge Increase?

On a close vote of 8-7 in favor of the 42% increase in the tax rate, accountability demands that the Taxpayers Foundation list the Council Members who voted in favor of the increase:

1. Carla Smith, District 1, cssmith@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6039
2. Ivory Lee Young, District 3, ilyoung@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6046
3. Natalyn Archibong, District 5, narchibong@atlantaga.gov, (404)330-6048
4. Anne Fauver, District 6, afauver@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6049
5. Felicia Moore, District 9, fmoore@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6044
6. C.T. Martin, District 10, cmartin@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6055
7. Joyce Shepherd, District 12, jmsheperd@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6053
8. Ceasar Mitchell, At-Large Post 1, cmitchell@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6052

Those with courage and leadership voted against the increase:

1. Kwanza Hall, District 2, khall@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6038
2. Cleta Winslow, District 4, cwinslow@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6047
3. Howard Shook, District 7, hshook@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6050
4. Clair Muller, District 8, cmuller@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6051
5. Jim Maddox, District 11, jmaddox@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6054
6. Mary Norwood, At-Large Post 2, mnorwood@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6302
7. Lamar Willis, At-Large Post 3, hlwillis@atlantaga.gov, (404) 330-6041

Officers

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The Taxpayers Foundation has received hundreds of letters, emails and phone calls protesting the huge 42% increase in the tax millage. Some quotes are worth repeating:

"Clearly the city needs better leadership to even consider the present problems. There were many other good alternatives available that would provide a more permanent fix. But if we had good leadership we would not have the present problems. The problem was never about Police and Firemen who risk their lives every day while the Atlanta City Council remains seated"

"Thanks for this info. To add salt to the wound of a higher mil rate, I just got my tax assessors notice and they DOUBLED my fair market value (in a falling market no less). Next the water bill. Watch all the defaults on property taxes arise. A new wave of foreclosures are coming and the ones that can pay their taxes, will soon have to subsidize for those that can't."

"Thanks for your great contribution to all of the citizen of Atlanta. We are happy that we now have a voice. The taxes in Atlanta are higher than even NYC without any of the benefit. I think we should be grateful for the weekly garbage pick up from street in front of our homes.

After 47 years I am being forced to move out of Atlanta but unfortunately we can not sell anything even one half of their assessed values."

"We need to know who voted for it and make sure we don't vote for them in the upcoming election!"

What Is The Solution For The Taxpayers?

In six more months, a newly-elected Mayor and City Council will be sworn into office. What a moment to begin **"A New Future For Atlanta"** with the newly-elected administration considering and adopting the following best practices:

Managed Competition: Every city service should be bid by both the employees and the private sector. These include Garbage Pick-Up, Fleet Management & Maintenance, Information Systems, Airport Management & Operations, Parks & Recreation, Non-Sworn Policing, Road Maintenance, Water, etc. There must be a well-trained Procurement Staff, a centralized Managed Competition Unit, Performance Measures, Reliable Cost Comparisons, Performance-Based Contracts, and Vigilant Monitoring & Evaluation. The new administration could save over \$100 million annually through Managed Competition.

Performance-Based Metrics: Anyone who has had dealings with the City will confirm the fact that there are simply too many city employees who are under-performing in their job. Performance-based metrics will enable the new administration to release those under-performing employees.

Unite the Fight To Bring Better Government to Atlanta and Fulton County!

I enclose my annual membership of:

\$25 Senior___ \$50 Family___ \$100 Patron___ \$200 Corporate___ \$1000 Champion___

In addition, I enclose a **tax-deductible** contribution of: \$100___ \$500___ Other___

If you prefer, you can charge your membership or a donation online at www.fctf.org

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

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<http://www.fctf.org>

Professional Oversight Over Every Department: The recent audits of the Finance Department, the Fleet Management, the Watershed Management, etc. proved that there is a desperate need for more professional department managers as well as independent professional oversight. Professional Engineers have approached the Taxpayers Foundation, offering to value engineer the \$4 billion Water & Sewer Infrastructure with the offer of their services pro-bono. Sadly, their offer was refused by the Mayor. The new administration should consider more professional managers as well as professional oversight of every department.

More Transparency in Government: The new administration must be far more frank and candid with the taxpayers.

New Mayor/New City Council: The new Mayor must have closer relations with the newly-elected members of the City Council.

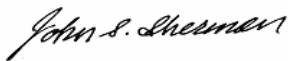
New Mayor/New City Council/Taxpayers: The voice of the people must be heard by the newly-elected Mayor and Council, not ignored, with monthly Town Hall meetings.

“It is the policy of the government to rely on commercial sources to supply the products and the services the government needs. The government shall not start or carry on any activity to provide a commercial product or service if the product or service can be procured more economically from a commercial source.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1955

Conclusion

The City of Atlanta has the potential for greatness. To achieve greatness, the City needs courageous leadership and highly professional management. It is most important for every taxpayer in the City of Atlanta to carefully consider the qualities of each candidate and vote their choice on November 3rd.



President

Save The Date: October 10, 2009

The Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation cordially invites you to a black-tie dinner/dance on Saturday evening, October 10th, at the Capital City Club – Brookhaven. Any proceeds will benefit the Taxpayers Foundation, a non-profit community organization, Cost of tickets, including a three-course dinner, dinner wine, dance music and valet parking is \$100, tables of 10, \$1000. Seating is extremely limited.

Cash bars will open at 7PM, dinner at 8PM.

The theme of the evening will be “A New Future For Atlanta.” Guest Speakers will be John Sherman, President, Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation, Angela Speir Phelps, Senior Director, GeorgiaWatch, and Phil Kent, TV Commentator & CEO, Phil Kent Consulting. The evening honoree will be Charles Loudermilk.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Please join us for a fun evening!