

There have been comments in the media that I may have run on lowering or cutting taxes, actually I ran on fiscal responsibility, and there is a big difference.

Also, there needs to be some clarification to the Citizens about Muscatine's Tax Rates and Tax Levies.

By adding the new Emergency Management Fund Levy we actually add to our Property Tax Rate by .46141 per 1,000 of assessed value.

The lower Property Tax Rate that advocates speak of actually comes from lowering the following City Tax Levies:

Transit System, Tort Liability, Police & Fire Dept. Retirement, Fica & Ipers, and Employee Benefits, of which we have very little control and can fluctuate over time.

The point being, once you have the new Emergency Management Tax Levy in place, and balance your budget with this new Tax, the likelihood of ever eliminating it is almost non-existent. A few years back, the City initiated our current Emergency Tax Levy of .27 per 1,000 - it is still with us today. And if we add this new levy, once the reduced levies begin rising again, you have those increases plus this new levy. Not to mention the increase in our Debt Service Levy. The potential of a large tax increase looms in our future. There is a big difference in "Balancing the Budget", and "Living within a Budget".

God has blessed this decision making body with \$250,000 in revenue growth, and we should use this additional money to balance our budget along with constructive fiscal management as we did by shifting Incremental Tax values. Not by raising Taxes.

And above all, we must remember we are in this together for the betterment of our City and its citizens. We are a team, but all ran on specific principles at one time or another, and our constituents expect us to stick with those principles. And we as a Council along with City staff should respect each other along the way. And the idea that somehow this process should be easy is not in the definition of Leadership!