

TAX MATTERS

**MAY 14, 2009, Issue #09-19, by Bernard Ridens, Executive Director
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- 1. CITY PARKS MASTER PLAN**
- 2. WASTE TREATMENT PICKUP TRUCKS AUCTION**
- 3. GOVERNOR DANIELS' SIGNING OF THE LARGEST BUSINESS TAX IN STATE'S HISTORY WILL COST INDIANA JOBS**
- 4. PUBLIC MEETINGS**
- 5. SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

REVIEW OF PAST TAX MATTERS

MAY 7, 2009 (#09-18)

- **HOW TO FIGHT PROPERTY TAXES**
 - The National Taxpayers Union released a guide named "How to Fight Property Taxes: A Homeowner's Guide to Appealing an Unfair Property Tax Assessment."
- **SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS WANTED**
 - The Taxpayers web site is planning on going public July 1st. Prior to doing so, we would like a few people to test the site and let us know what does and does not work.

APRIL 30, 2009 (#09-17)

- **ANOTHER REVERSE AUCTION**
 - The Board of Public Works and Safety was asked to approve specifications for the purchase of three F-150 trucks (or equivalent), two F-350 pickup trucks (or equivalent) and one F-750 pickup truck (or equivalent) for wastewater utility purposes. The auction would take place May 14.
- **UCLA REPORT ON NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**
 - A new report from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA finds that some of the basic assumptions of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) are not working and may well be making things worse.
- **GOOD, BETTER, BEST – NEVER LET IT REST**
 - The TA Annual Meeting held last week at Idle Creek Banquet Center was the best attended over the past five years.

The Taxpayers Association is a not-for-profit organization supported by membership dues. Any citizen or group of citizens in Vigo County may be a member.

1. CITY PARKS MASTER PLAN

On Wednesday, May 27, the Terre Haute Parks and Recreation Department will take a final vote on their master plan for 2009-2013. This 119-page document is intended to “serve as a toolkit to guide the park system’s management.” This master plan was prepared by Hannum, Wagle & Cline Engineering. The department will accept public comments on the master plan until Friday. It is available on the city parks web site at <http://www.terrehaute.in.gov/departments/parks/parks-and-recreation-master-plan-2009-2013>.

2. WASTE TREATMENT PICKUP TRUCKS AUCTION

The Board of Public Works and Safety was asked to approve specifications for the purchase of three F-150 trucks (or equivalent), two F-350 pickup trucks (or equivalent) and one F-750 pickup truck (or equivalent) for wastewater utility purposes. Bidding on these trucks commenced at 2:00 PM today. The reverse auction was still going on during press time, and we will report the results next week.

3. GOVERNOR DANIELS' SIGNING OF THE LARGEST BUSINESS TAX IN STATE'S HISTORY WILL COST INDIANA JOBS

(On Wednesday), May 13, 2009, Governor Daniels signed into law HB 1379, the unemployment insurance bill that contains the largest single business tax increase in Indiana’s history. HB 1379 is estimated to cost Indiana employers more than \$700 million in increased state unemployment insurance taxes over the next two years. Employers should expect the federal unemployment tax to increase by more than \$60 million in 2010 as well because the state has no current plan to pay back federal loans. These will be the first of many tax increases employers can expect in the future unless HB 1379 is fixed with a more balanced approach.

According to Patrick Kiely, President of the Indiana Manufacturers Association, the governor’s action unfortunately falls way short of his own goals for a legislative fix. Mr. Kiely stated, “While it has been known for many years that the unemployment insurance trust fund was going to be insolvent and that Indiana would have to borrow funds from the federal government to pay unemployment benefits, the legislature and the administration failed to do anything until it was a crisis.”

Mr. Kiely added, “The entire discussion prior to the legislative session was about crafting a bill that would require a shared-pain, balanced approach to this enormous problem. The discussions centered on the three key areas: 1) eliminating fraud, abuse and mismanagement; 2) temporarily modifying future benefit levels that the governor himself called excessive and some of the most generous in the country; and 3) a moderate and measured increase in employers’ taxes to a level that would be affordable to Indiana employers and prospects during this historic period of economic downturn.”

In the end, the balanced approach was tossed out for a single approach containing only dramatic and devastating employer taxes at a time when most employers can least afford it. Sponsors of the legislation claim that language in the bill will cut costs by as much as \$300 million, which is a number without verification and in conflict with the bill’s own fiscal impact note. At no time was there a single meeting to discuss the bill's economic impact, nor how

heavily it punishes the state's manufacturing sector - the number-one generator of jobs and wages in Indiana.

Mr. Kiely also stated, "This devastating tax increase at this time will cause increased job loss and will make Indiana far less attractive for future investment. We agree with the governor, who has said that the legislation is flawed, imperfect and will not solve the problem. We encourage the governor and the legislature to rethink this damaging legislation and pass a more reasonable and balanced approach during the special legislative session, which will occur in June."

Source: Indiana Manufacturers Association

4. PUBLIC MEETINGS

The purpose of this calendar is to encourage taxpayers to attend public meetings. Taxpaying persons working at your business or living in your neighborhood should be encouraged to attend a meeting of their choice at least once per year. The date and time for the meetings listed below are always subject to change. **Organizations that are underlined have a web page that can be accessed by clicking on their respective hyperlinks.** The contact person is also listed. You should call the appropriate office and confirm the date and time if you plan to attend.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Public Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Contact Info</i>
Thur. May 14	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Regular Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375
Mon. May 18	5:30 pm	<u>Human Relations Commission</u>	Booker T. Washington Center	Jeff 232-0110
Mon. May 18	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County School Board</u>	VCSC Board Room	Judy 462-4216
Mon. May 18	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Public Library</u>	Library – Main Branch	Nancy 232-1113
Tue. May 19	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. May 19	10:00 am	<u>City Board of Sanitary Commissioners</u>	City Hall – 3 rd Floor	Sally 235-5458
Wed. May 20	9:30 am	Clay-Owen-Vigo Solid Waste District	109 E. Nat'l, Brazil IN	Janet 800-387-3380
Wed. May 20	4:00 pm	<u>City Redevelopment Commission</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Phenny 232-0018
Thur. May 21	2:00 pm	Tree Advisory Board	City Hall Mayor's Conf. Room	Jennifer 232-4028
Tue. May 26	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. May 26	2:00 pm	<u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Robin 232-4767
Tue. May 26	4:30 pm	<u>County Council</u>	County Annex	Auditor 462-3361
Wed. May 27	4:00 pm	<u>County Park Board</u>	County Annex	Julia 462-3391
Wed. May 27	4:30 pm	<u>City Park Board – Business Meeting</u>	Deming Park	Eddie 232-2727
Wed. May 27	5:30 pm	<u>Information Technology Advisory Board</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Brad 244-2316
Wed. May 27	7:00 pm	<u>Airport Authority</u>	Airport	Kara 877-2524
Mon. Jun. 1	4:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Drainage Board</u>	County Annex	David 898-2685
Mon. Jun. 1	6:30 pm	Riley Town Board	Riley Town Hall	Wanda 894-2410
Tue. Jun. 2	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. Jun. 2	10:00 am	<u>City Board of Sanitary Commissioners</u>	City Hall – 3 rd Floor	Sally 235-5458
Tue. Jun. 2	4:30 pm	Honey Creek Conservancy District	3241 S. 3 rd Place	Craig 232-4311
Wed. Jun. 3	9:00 am	<u>City Board of Zoning Appeals</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor Conf. Room	Judy 462-3367
Wed. Jun. 3	7:00 pm	<u>County Area Planning Commission</u>	County Annex	Vickie 462-3354
Thur. Jun. 4	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Sunshine Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375

5. SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Always keep your words soft and sweet,
Just in case you have to eat them.*

END

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