

You Spoke. We listened.

Let's partner to preserve our values!

Name of Group: Hampton Clean City Commission

Date: 3/14/2011

in Attendance: 10

Attendee comments:

- I understand tax equalization. The value of my house has decreased. What happens if my assessment goes back up? Will I then pay more?
A: Council decreased the tax significantly in the years that assessments were increasing.
- Would it be a yearly option to go up and down in the tax rate?
- If the tax is increased, will we still have to reduce or eliminate services?
- Employee benefits, what is going up?
- My husband works for federal government and he has to pay into his retirement.
- Combining services with Newport News has been discussed. What is the status of this option?
- York and Poquoson recent combined police services. How is this going? May be a good example of the feasibility of joint efforts.
- Is it correct that the state and localities have to balance their budgets?
- Western VA at one point considered combining several cities. Would the savings would be largely administrative.
- Has anyone estimated what kind of cost savings are possible from joint efforts?
- There is much emotion and identity involved.
- Would combining cities increase the funding from the state?
- Is the decrease of \$638,000 to schools because of the funding formula?
- Does having fewer students affect the funding we pay to schools?
- Results from polling meetings have been reported in the press recently. Is it true that most people favored a tax increase?
- Reduction in the schools. Will that translate into fewer teachers?
- What percentage of citizen input are you looking for to determine if the tax increase is necessary or favored?
- Response rate to survey sounds surprisingly low
- The problem has been identified. The City appears to have a solution in the tax increase. Why not go ahead and decide?
- Everyone needs to realize that we need to sacrifice. I would be willing to pay more because I have an interest in my home and the City. I don't see how it could hurt that much since the assessment is lower.
- How much additional revenue would a 4 cent increase bring in?
- When doing a presentation, it would help to include how much is mandated. Would give citizens a better perspective about how much is out of the City's control. Most people don't know this.
- Running a City is very complicated; may be more than we can expect people to follow.
- Healthy Families is innovative. Prevention is important. There was some talk about combining with Newport News; hope this does not happen.
- Do we have the authority to issue bonds to raise revenue?

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- Many people are against the courthouse, but they do not understand that the cost of borrowing and constructing is lower now
- I'm not opposed to the courthouse either way, but people think, if we are already struggling, why buy a new car instead of repairing it?
- Many of the services that we depend on and enjoy are not mandated or as obvious as trash pickup, and public safety.
- The City can reduce costs through taking a long-term view and pursuing green efforts.
- HCCC is important to the City; much return for the dollars invested.
- Efficiency is very important; I see City trucks running unnecessarily. Also, look at periodic maintenance to extend the life of equipment.
- The more we build on quality of life, the more positively it impacts the City and coming generations. Puts us ahead of other cities.
- Would be helpful to focus web pages on the reasons that department exists, which programs contribute to what, their reason for being. Communicate this not just at budget time.
- HCCC is the very frugal. We need to help employees think before they act; as in, "Should I make this trip? Is this essential? Is a higher priced position doing what someone at a lower salary should be doing?"
- Is the City doing systems analysis city-wide? This could save a lot of money.
- We could have a group of citizen volunteers review efficiencies.
- Can departments set aside cost savings instead of spending leftover money at the end of the budget cycle?
- DEQ fines for hazardous waste disposal could cost the city and it should be included in the budget. A fund for emergencies would be a good idea.

Answers to the following questions will be provided to attendees through Debbie Blanton:

- How many respondents to last year's poll?

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