

Kush, Larry A.
Kush, Mary C.
874 Bird Bay Way 200 BLD 33
Venice Fl.
August 3, 2017

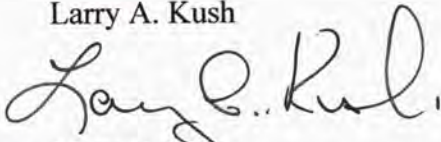
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice Fl. 34285

Attn: City Council, Fire Protection Public Hearing August 21, 2017

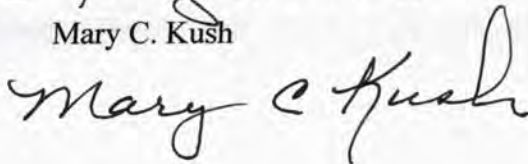
I and my wife are condo owners in Bird Bay Village, Snow Birds, spending several months in Florida during the cold and snow season up north. We are Florida tax payers year round, not utilizing most of the facilities that our tax dollars are providing on a year round basis. We have to live on a fixed budget and spend our money accordingly to what we have to spend. We believe the city of Venice needs to do the same budgeting with the fire dept using the current system of tax assessments and funding. Separating the two units would lead to higher assessments with little or no control over the amount taxed or who decides the assessed amounts. Having a special meeting in the middle of the summer, when a large amount of the tax payers (snow birds) cannot make the meeting does not help the assessment process. We would never get to have a good representation at these special meetings, it would be like "taxation without representation". **We do not want separate funding for the fire dept.**

Thank You,

Larry A. Kush



Mary C. Kush



August 3, 2017

CLERK 07AUG17 PM12:53

To the Council of The City of Venice

This letter is written in response to the notice of public hearing for a special fire protection assessments.

My number one area of concern is how this request is being presented. This proposal has been brought forward in August when many homeowners are not in Venice. This has the appearance of let's "sneak it through" without public full knowledge and input.

My number two area of concern is why is the money needed. Twelve million dollars in two years is a lot of money for what? There are no specific needs mentioned. Where has there been a short fall? Is this a case of "we can do it so let's go for more money." The idea that other cities have done this assessment does not give reason for the City of Venice to do it.

I am very much against this special assessment proposal as

presented. This proposal should be presented the first of year and more information is needed to assess the amount of money that is needed by the fire protection district.

Sincerely,
Nancy Vanderwall
190 Bird Bay Way
Venice, FL

City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL. 34285

August 4, 2017

Re: Proposed Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear City Council,

After a thorough review of your proposed special assessment, I must oppose the adoption of this proposal for several reasons:

1. I am opposed to the timing of this public hearing. Holding such an important meeting during the month of August when many property owners are spending their summers up north is quite unfair; whereas their only method of opposition is the writing of such a letter to the City Council in lieu of their attendance.
2. I also am opposed to the additional increase on my property tax bill that the adoption of this special assessment would impose. With many property owners living on a fixed income, this proposal is quite unfair.
3. I am not opposed to your Tier 1 assessment values, as maintaining a proper and functioning fire department and services is an important issue. However, I am opposed to the method used in calculating the Tier 2 proposed values. I have provided a description of non-ad valorem assessments as it appeared on our 2016 TRIM notices.
As you can see, these special assessments are not supposed to be based on property values.

Non-Ad Valorem & Special Assessment Districts

*The Truth-in-Millage Notice (TRIM Notice) our office mails out every August contains proposed property taxes (ad valorem taxes) and proposed or adopted non-ad valorem assessments. Non-ad valorem assessments are not based on property value. Instead, they are based on a **unit of measure determined by each levying authority**. The assessment periods vary and may not be based on the calendar year. Examples of non-ad valorem assessments include: fire and rescue, solid waste, navigable waterways, and storm water utility collections.*

I hope you will consider my oppositions and perhaps draft a new proposal that most property owners would find fair and a proposed special assessment they could approve.

Sincerely,



Wayne Rogers
Catherine Rogers
758 Village Cir, Apt 107
Venice, FL. 34292

Michael and Wendy West
3209 Sunset Lake Drive
Burnsville, MN 55337
August 3, 2017

CLERK 07AUG'17 PM12:53

City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Dear City of Venice,

We would like to object to the special assessments the city wants to pass for Fire Protection.

We own 2 properties in Venice and will be required to pay on both of them. This is not a little bit of money. Our taxes on one home alone will be going up 25% in a year and a half.

We would like to know why this only pertains to those of us who live in the City limits. What are all the new developments doing that they are not included? If they are still receiving the benefits of the Fire Department, they should be helping to pay for it.

A special assessment is usually put on your tax statement at a certain amount and shows how much interest you will pay for it over time. It also has an end date. To us, it looks like there is no end date in sight. If that is the case, it is not a special assessment.



The way you are going about this is unfair. You know that many of the residents of Venice are Snow Birds. Yet, you chose to have a meeting in the middle of the summer when most people are not in town. You also chose to have it during the day when those who are in town, are at work. I'm sure that it works out well for you, but not for the people you are representing.

The manner in which you wrote the letter is misleading and confusing. It is hard to understand exactly what Tier 2 means and how you came up with the units for a parcel. When looking further into the matter, you see that this is not a little tax but a humongous one! So not only will our home taxes go up, but everything we do in the City from Grocery shopping, to shopping and even going to Church will cost us a lot more.

The City is already receiving a lot of money each month for garbage and water, which, basically some snow birds never use. I have had homes in other cities that if I didn't need the water or garbage service, I would call up the city and they would stop requiring me to pay for it. In Venice, I pay \$69.78 each month that I am not there. I don't use a drop of water or put out any garbage but I must still pay it. So on top of this, you want me to pay an assessment that should have been funded a different way long ago so you can free up money for something else. It is just not right. What, exactly, do you want the money for? Aren't you supposed to be the City that everyone loves and wants to live in? Or do you want to get a bad reputation?

We urge you to vote against this and come up with a better plan.

Sincerely,

Michael and Wendy West

Amy L. Richard
Dennis J. Richard
624 Cornwell on the Gulf
Venice, FL 34285

August 4, 2017

City Council
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285

Re: Imposition and Collection of Fire Protection Special Assessments

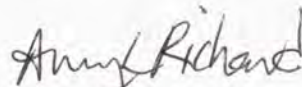
Dear Council Members:

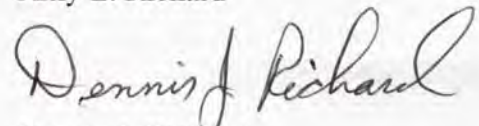
We are writing to express our extreme opposition to the new Fire Department tax.

It is a demonstration of the City's failure to appropriately budget and manage its responsibilities.

If this item is passed, we will determinedly oppose the reelection of any member who voted for it until they are all replaced.

Sincerely,


Amy L. Richard


Dennis J. Richard

Michael Wagner

758 Village Circle #206
Venice, Fl. 34292

August 5, 2017

Members of the City Council of Venice

I am writing to protest the imposition of the fire service tax as outlined in the letter dated July 20th, 2017 from the city of Venice. This came out of the blue. Why does the fire dept suddenly need such an enormous amount of money over and above what has already been budgeted for them? Did all the fire trucks suddenly wear out, or did the fire stations collapse? What justification is there for such a huge property tax increase?

The fact that some other cities in the state might use such a taxation method is irrelevant. In addition, the letter doesn't specify just what assessed value is to be used to calculate the tax for next or subsequent years, nor does it define exactly what is meant by an "improved" property. I also object to the tactic of this meeting and notice not occurring until all the snowbird owners are gone. So my position is that I am against the assessment being approved.



Michael Wagner

Charles G. & Marie J. Beckstrom
1041 Capri Isle Blvd., Unit 216
Venice, Florida 34285

August 2, 2017

Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 West Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Re: Notice of Imposition and Collection of Fire Protection Special Assessments

To Whom It May Concern:

As a property owner of a condo at Golf Green, 1041 Capri Isle Blvd., I was surprised to get notice of this special assessment. Not being aware of us voting on it as a community, it came as a bit of a shock. I will be out of town on August 21st so I cannot attend the public meeting but did want to voice my concerns to you directly.

This assessment seems out of line with my property taxes, since in future years it will potentially increase my taxes / assessment by 1/3 for one line item service. I do recognize the importance that the fire department plays in our community, but it seems a bit exorbitant to suddenly expect all property owners to increase their annual tax bill by a third. (I am assuming that if mine is increasing by that much, then so is everyone else's.)

Special assessments in condos generally have a one-time life span, not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

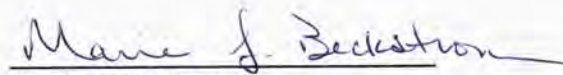
We have elderly people that live in this complex and live on a fixed income as many in Venice do. So, when you make this kind of increase suddenly, please be aware of what you are doing to the elderly people that live in our community. For many of them this is a big, unexpected increase coming at a time when none of their income changes, ever.

Given that there are 4 units in my condo building, this seems like an awfully big increase for just one of our buildings; \$3,200 per year in future years, for one building?

I ask that you reconsider this assessment and either bring it down to something more reasonable (cutting it in half); eliminate it altogether by considering one of three firehouses into two to cut costs; or levy higher assessments on all the new developments that continue to get approved by the council, which in turn increases costs for the community.

Thank you for your consideration.


Charles G. Beckstrom


Marie J. Beckstrom

"City of Venice"

CLERK 07AUG'17 PM12:53

We are writing in regard to the very discouraging letter we received in the mail regarding a fire protection special assessment.

We have owned a piece of property in Venice for 10 years and have enjoyed and loved every minute of it.

We are right now paying on another assessment on our property.

Now to add another assessment might put us over the top and might have to consider selling if this goes through. We have never dreamed this would happen and are very discouraged and are preparing this will be voted down!

"Thank you"
Bud and Linda Cassiday
Venice, Florida

From: entiff@gmail.com [mailto:entiff@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2017 1:23 PM
To: Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Letter to city of Venice

So if I read it correctly passing the special assessment and reducing the mill rate (not a sure thing Even if the assessment is passed) results in an increase in what we pay of \$190 this year (roughly) but subject to a very large increase in the following year. And it is not clear if this ever goes away.

This type of math is not exactly clear to the average citizen. Thank you for clearing it up. While a \$190 increase seems small, it is important to consider what it is for. I think the city is using

The fire service to hide behind an overall tax increase. By splitting out the fire service, it dedicates

Revenue to one service. This is a bad idea. The council should attempt to balance the budget Using fiscal restraint. If the fire service gets this extra revenue your plan speaks nothing to The surplus created by the extra revenue.

My advice, look at the fire service and all other services and see where budget shortfalls exist Then adjust accordingly. This special assessment is trickery at best that hides behind what the public

Perceives to be an untouchable service where budgets are concerned.

Respectfully
Laurence Sentiff

On Aug 7, 2017, at 12:51, Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com> wrote:

Good Morning Mr. Laurence

To address the mill rate from your letter: I have attached your parcel information from the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's (SCPA) website.

1) Your FY18 maximum fire assessment is \$247.84, calculated as follows:

Calculation of Fire Assessment for 811 Waterside Dr #206		
Property # 0406014024		
Per Parcel	Tier 1	93.92
Structure Value / 5,000 round down	Tier 2	153.92
	Total	247.84
Calculation of Tier 2 amount		
Structure Value is	163,300	
divided by	5,000	

= Equivalent Benefit Unit (EBU)	<u>32</u>
x \$4.81 per unit	
= Tier 2 amount	<u>153.92</u>

- 2) Your property tax for FY17 (excluding debt service) was \$563.76:

$\$156,600 \times 3.60 / 1000 = \563.76 . A copy of last years' TRIM notice is attached.

- 3) The maximum FY18 property tax that will show on your TRIM notice for FY18 is:

$\$163,300 \times 3.60 / 1000 = \587.88 You will receive this TRIM notice in the mail from the SCPA.

- 4) However, if the Fire Assessment is adopted at the level calculated in #1 above, it is expected that the millage Rate will be reduced by .50 mills (from 3.60 to 3.10) and your FY18 property tax will be \$506.23.

$\$163,300 \times 3.10 / 1000 = \506.23 (The TRIM notice will show the higher amount in case the Fire Assessment does Not pass)

- 5) Therefore, at the proposed levels of combined property tax plus fire assessment, your payment is expected to increase from \$563.76 (#2 above) in FY17 to \$754.07 (#1: \$247.84 + #4: \$506.23) in FY18. This represents an increase of \$190.31.

Thanks.

Linda Senne

PS: You will notice a "Venice Debt" line on your TRIM notice also. As you can see, this was .1660 mills in FY17 for \$26.00. It will be .6780 mills in FY18 for \$110.72 ($\$163,300 \times .6780 / 1000$). This increase is for the debt service on the public safety and road bond, issued in FY18, approved by the voter referendum in November 2016.

From: Lori Stelzer
Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 5:52 PM
To: Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>
Subject: FW: Letter to city of Venice

Here's another one that acts what the effect of the .5 millage reduction would look like – didn't know if you wanted to respond or not! See attached letter.

Lori Stelzer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
941-882-7390
941-480-3031 (FAX)

From: entiff@gmail.com [<mailto:entiff@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 5:39 PM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Letter to city of Venice

Hello,

I have attached a letter stating my opposition to the proposed special assessment tax for fire services. I am unable to attend the upcoming hearing but I would like my voice heard.

Should you have any questions regarding my opposition please feel free to contact me via email or my cell phone

Thank You

Laurence Sentiff
716-341-8369

James and Kathy Price
513 Valencia Rd
Venice FI 34285

City of Venice
401 W Venice Ave
Venice FI 34285

Aug 7, 2017

In your notice dated Aug July 20, 2017 we were given 20 days to provide written comments. Here they are -

1. We object to the proposed fire assessment.
2. We prefer the needs of the fire department remain included the Venice budget. If the fire department is segregated then what is next - library, engineering, building official, waste management, parks and recreation,,,,,,,,,,,,,?
3. More explanation and justification is required for the proposed action. There is no immediate need or rationale explained in the Notice. There is no described sense of urgency to motivate moving at the pace listed in your notice. Many of the town residents are not in the area at this time of year and the schedule you lay out for review, feedback, public hearing, and decision is inappropriate. In fact, it exposes the city to unnecessary future litigation by residents.
4. You have provided what seems to be a take it leave it option. What other options exist or have been considered to address the town's concerns for the fire department (et al) expenses.
5. There are numerous unaddressed and unanswered questions in the notice of public hearing. Here are a few -
 1. Does the assessment pay for ALL operating and maintenance costs, capital improvements, salaries and pensions of the fire department.
 2. What existing obligations will be carried into the assessment?
 3. Who will prepare, review, and approve the future fire department budget if the assessment passes?
 4. What public scrutiny, review, and comment will be allowed.
 5. How will the funds and expenses be audited?
 6. How will surpluses and deficits in fire assessment funds be handled that carry from to year be handled?
 7. IF approved, who are the accountable people for the fire department budget, are they elected by the residents paying the assessment or appointed officials, or employees of the department.
 8. What changes are required to the administration of the city - city charter, pay and benefits, pension obligations, insurance, etc.
 9. Is there any affect on city bonds or financial rating?
 10. If a major fire department capital investment is required how will it be funded?

James Price

Kathy Price

July 27, 2017

CLERK 07AUG'17 PM 2:47

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 W. Venice Ave
Venice, Fl. 34285

Re: Notice of imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments

As a property owner of a condo at Golf Green-1041 Capri Isles Blvd. I was surprised to get notice of this special assessment. Not being aware of us voting on it as a community, it came as a bit of a shock. I will be out of town on Aug. 21 so cannot attend the public meeting but did want to voice my concerns to you directly.

This assessment seems out of line with my property taxes, since in future years it will potentially increase my taxes/assessment by 1/3 for one line item service. I do recognize the importance that the fire department plays in our community but it seems a bit exorbitant to suddenly expect all property owners to increase their annual tax bill by a third. (I am assuming here that if mine is increasing by that much so is everyone else's.)

Special assessments in condos generally have a one time life span not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

We have elderly people that live in this complex and live on a fixed income as many in Venice do. So when you make this kind of increase suddenly, please be aware of what you are doing to the elderly people that live in our community. For many of them this is a big unexpected increase coming at a time when none of their income changes, ever.

Given that there are 8 units in my condo building this seems like an awfully big increase for just one of our buildings; \$3200 per year in future years, for one building?

I ask that you reconsider this assessment and either bring it down to something more reasonable (cutting it in half); eliminate it altogether by consolidating one of three firehouses into two to cut costs; or levy higher assessment's on all the new developments that continue to get approved by the council, which in turns increases costs for the community.

Thank you for your consideration

Andrea O'Connor
203

CLERK 07AUG'17 PM 3:20



Fax Cover Sheet

Date 8/7/17 Number of pages 3 (including cover page)

To:

Name MEMBERS OF VENICE COUNCIL

Company _____

Telephone 941-486-2626Fax 941-480-3031

From:

Name DONALD KUMMER

Company _____

Telephone 734-455-2778Comments PLS ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF
THIS LETTER
FAX 734-455-1034

Fax - Local Send



Fax - Domestic Send



Fax - International Send

fedex.com 1.800.GoFedEx 1.800.463.3339

© 2015 FedEx. All rights reserved. Products, services and hours vary by location. 615.0P00.002

001774SPM

Fwd:

Subject: Fwd:**From:** Donald Kummer <donkmmr@aol.com>**Date:** Mon, 07 Aug 2017 09:00:32 -0400**To:** usa0485@fedex.com

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Donald Kummer <donkmmr@aol.com>**Date:** August 6, 2017 at 1:12:28 PM EDT

8/6/2017

To: Members of the Venice City Council**Subject:** Venice Fire Assessment

The purpose of this letter is to register my objection to the fire protection assessments based on the limited information provided and to recommend they not be adopted by the Council.

The document covers almost entirely how taxpayers will be assessed rather than Describing specific projects and capital needs of the fire department. Why shouldn't the Fire Department compete with other departments capital needs? I do not doubt that other cities have "Fire Assessment Programs" but I do not know their circumstance or the amount of their assessment. Have resided in many communities in my lifetime and never had one impose a fire assessment program.

The proposed increase in tax appears excessive and I am bothered by the maximum assessment ,in outer years, being imposed without further notice. Our reputation as a nice place to retire may be tarnished if we become a tax and spend community.

I recognize that we must operate on a full year basis but I wonder why a major change in the way we are taxed is introduced in the middle of August when many property owners are elsewhere.

Will we subject ourselves to lawsuits from property owners exempt from ad valorem taxes when they find themselves taxed by this assessment?

Although I am not knowledgeable on fire protection needs Venice expansion undoubtably will increase tax revenue which I suspect you have included in your

forecasts.

I urge the Council to not adopt the fire protection assessments and to evaluate individual capital project on its merits as part of our total budget.

(Please acknowledge receipt of this letter, Thanks)

Respectfully,

Donald Kummer

239 Ponce de Leon Ave

Venice

734-455-2778

Donkmmr@aol.com

Sent from my iPad

CLERK 04AUG'17 Am11:50

August 1, 2017

To whom it may concern –

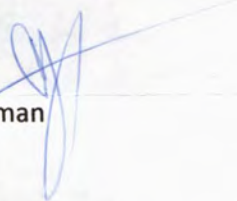
In follow up to the notice entitled "NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER IMPOSITION AND COLLECTION OF FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS" – please let this document serve as my "rejection" to the proposed assessment. I object to the proposal.

City of Venice Parcel No 0407142204

167 Tampa Ave E, 215 Venice Fl 34285

Respectfully,

Charles Krogman



8/1/2017

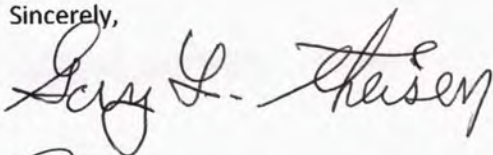
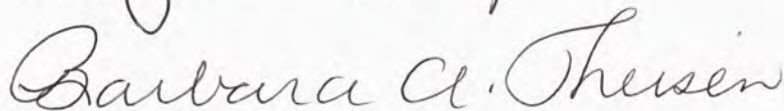
Gary L. & Barbara A. Theisen
City of Venice Parcel No.: 0404051044
500 Gardens Edge Dr. Unit 524
Venice, FL 34285

City Council
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285

Dear City Council:

We are providing in writing our strong opposition to the proposed implementation of a fire protection special assessment. This avenue for funding the fire protection revenue is totally out of line and costly to us as homeowners and we absolutely do not support this proposal. Using the structure value versus the taxable value for assessment values is way out of line. There is a strong possibility of the special assessment cost doubling over time and way too costly for home ownership. We have not been home owners for that long in Venice and would seriously consider moving and choosing another retirement community if this is approved by the City Council.

Sincerely,

Owner
Gary L. & Barbara A. Theisen

City of Venice
Attn: City Council
401 W. Venice Ave.
Venice, FL 34285

Re: Fire Protection Special Assessments

Dear City Council:

I am writing in regards to parcel #0410060031. I am opposed to proposed percentages per parcel being considered for Tier 1 & Tier 2 of this assessment. I am willing to pay 5% up to 10% per year but not the 20% to 40% that is being proposed. I am a single home owner/wage earner and cannot afford such an exorbitant increase, especially since water/sewer/recycling costs have gone up and I now have to pay flood insurance since FEMA updated its flood areas.

I also am opposed considering how much of *my taxpayer money* is going to current lawsuits (AKA Neal Properties). I was one of the many who opposed Neal's developments in Venice, so now I would like to say "I told you so." The City stands to lose millions if it loses this lawsuit, which I am sure could pay for multiple fire departments, machinery, and a retirement fund. I won't even mention the frivolous "sunshine law" lawsuit of many years ago. How much taxpayer money did that one waste?

Get your act together and stop pushing your agenda on the rest of us who work hard to make and keep Venice our home.

Sincerely,

Karen Murdock
1025 Groveland Ave.
Venice, FL 34285

31 July 2017

To: Mayor Holic and Venice City Council Members
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285

RE: Notice of Public Hearing to Consider Imposition & Collection of Fire Protection Special Assessments

As a property owner at Golf Green Condominiums, 1041 Capri Isles Blvd., we were quite shocked to receive this notice. We are at our condo January through April so, yes, we are retired and snowbirds who pay property taxes in two states. Ever increasing insurance and taxes concern us very much.

After reading through the FY2018 Fire Protection Assessment Study prepared by Stantec Consulting, we DO NOT agree with their determination that the two pronged test requirements for a special assessment have been met. We pay Sarasota County property taxes to include the City of Venice at a millage rate of 3.766 which should include fire protection services. What is the "special" benefit to us? What have you been using for a fire protection budget all these past years?

We also DO NOT agree with an open-ended assessment that will go on for years & years to come at the discretion of the City Council.

We have many elderly people in our community, as well as many in Venice, who live on a fixed income and they too have not had any increases in pensions and social security benefits. So when you impose increases of this magnitude, it may have devastating consequences for a lot of elderly people. Also, we do not participate in the Homestead Exemption program which makes it even harder on us to keep up with the property tax increases every year! We are certain that there are a lot of folks in Venice in this same position.

Finally, we recommend that the mayor and city council try to find other less burdensome options to raise the additional funds you need for the fire protection program.

Sincerely,

William + Judith Callison

William and Judith Callison

July 27, 2017

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 W. Venice Ave
Venice, Fl. 34285

Re: Notice of imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments

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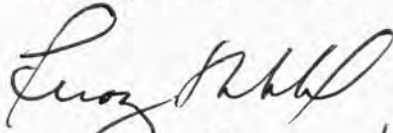
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Given that there are 8 units in my condo building this seems like an awfully big increase for just one of our buildings; \$3200 per year in future years, for one building?

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Thank you for your consideration


1041 Capri Isle Blvd 208
Venice, Fl.
J

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 W Venice Avenue
Venice FL 34285

RE: Notice of Imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments

Having just settled on our Golf Green property, we were not aware of this notice. It was passed on to us by the association. We will not be available for the public meeting on August 221.

As new owners of a condo in the Golf Green area, we purchased that particular condo with the understanding that our monthly cost overall would be within the confines of what we can afford. While we searched long and hard for the perfect place, and visited many properties before settling on Golf Green, we are dismayed that there may be an increase in costs. We are on a fixed income as we're certain are most of the residents in the area.

As new owners, we are not informed as to whether the three fire houses in question are volunteer or paid city firefighters. We also understand the importance of these firefighters no matter the case, as we are aware of the importance of police and other emergency responders. We are not disputing that issue.

We are, however, very concerned on whether we will be able to continue to live in the Golf Green community. We also are of the impression that this blanket increase will affect the entire area of Venice. Please reconsider your options and choose one that is beneficial to all of us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry & Pat Jackson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerry & Pat Jackson
1041 Capri Isles Blvd #204
Venice FL 34292

Mailing address: 230 Gum Street, Oliver Springs, TN 37840

Contact phone: 717-215-7628

July 27, 2017

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 W. Venice Ave
Venice, Fl. 34285

Re: Notice of imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments

As a property owner of a condo at Golf Green-1041 Capri Isles Blvd. I was surprised to get notice of this special assessment. Not being aware of us voting on it as a community, it came as a bit of a shock. I will be out of town on Aug. 21 so cannot attend the public meeting but did want to voice my concerns to you directly.

This assessment seems out of line with my property taxes, since in future years it will potentially increase my taxes/assessment by 1/3 for one line item service. I do recognize the importance that the fire department plays in our community but it seems a bit exorbitant to suddenly expect all property owners to increase their annual tax bill by a third. (I am assuming here that if mine is increasing by that much so is everyone else's.)

Special assessments in condos generally have a one time life span not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

We have elderly people that live in this complex and live on a fixed income as many in Venice do. So when you make this kind of increase suddenly, please be aware of what you are doing to the elderly people that live in our community. For many of them this is a big unexpected increase coming at a time when none of their income changes, ever.

Given that there are 8 units in my condo building this seems like an awfully big increase for just one of our buildings; \$3200 per year in future years, for one building?

I ask that you reconsider this assessment and either bring it down to something more reasonable (cutting it in half); eliminate it altogether by consolidating one of three firehouses into two to cut costs; or levy higher assessment's on all the new developments that continue to get approved by the council, which in turns increases costs for the community.

Thank you for your consideration

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members, Venice, FL
Re: City of Venice Fire Assessment

I own Condo#124, 1041 Capri Isles Blvd in Venice. I am not a Florida resident so do not qualify for the real estate tax discount allowed Homesteaders nor can I vote. I am in residence in Venice for four months every year but must pay the city of Venice a water bill of \$44.30 a month for the eight months I am not in Venice. My point is that I am already paying assessments at the top level for the privilege of owning a condo in Venice.

Now I am told that an additional annual assessment for benefit of the Venice Fire Department will be added to my tax bill.....forever. What a surprise and shock since I knew nothing of this assessment being considered. Using the maximum figures on your tier chart, there is the potential of raising my taxes by almost 30% in the year 2019 if the maximum figures are used.

Therefore I implore you to consider alternative means of raising the money necessary to provide adequate fire protection for the residents of Venice, i.e. an annual Firemens' Fund solicitation such as they do where I live in RI, or increase higher fees on new construction permits etc. If no other means is possible, please consider lowering the amounts of the proposed assessment to the bare minimum.

Thank you for considering my appeal.

Noel Brakenhoff (Mrs.)

35 Knowles Court # 202

Jamestown, RI 02835

401 924-1375

Noel H. Brakenhoff 7/29/17

Sent from my iPad

July 29, 2017

To: Mayor Holic and City Council Members
401 W. Venice Ave.
Venice, FL 34285

Re: Notice of imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments

We are property owners of a condo in Golf Green Condominiums – 1041 Capri Isles Blvd. We recently received a special assessment notice in the mail and have concerns regarding this assessment. Our condominium community was not aware of this impending assessment and therefore we were surprised with this issue. We will not be in town for the public meeting on August 21st so this letter is to serve as our "voice" of these concerns.

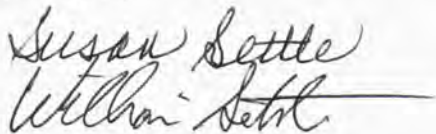
First of all, the assessment is seemingly out of line with our current property taxes, since in the future it could possibly increase our taxes/assessment by 1/3 for one line item of service. It seems unreasonable to expect property owners to suddenly increase their annual tax bill by a third, assuming that this is happening to all property owners.

Secondly, special assessments in condo units general have a one time life span, not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

Third, we are senior citizens that live here (as are most of the others in our complex) and have fixed incomes so when this kind of increase occurs suddenly it affects us as our income does not change to accommodate this large increase in taxes.

We would ask for your reconsideration of this assessment to either reducing it to a more reasonable amount (as we do recognize the importance of the fire department in the community); eliminating it all together by consolidation of one of the three firehouses into two to cut costs; or to levy higher assessments on all new developments that continue to get approval by the city council, which in turn increase costs for the community.

We would very much appreciate your consideration of our concerns.
Thank you,



William and Susan Settle
1041 Capri Isles
#223
Venice, Florida
34292

From: John Holic
Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 3:39 PM
To: Patricia Zingler <pbzingler@verizon.net>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment/Parcel No.: 0176100024

Dear Mr. and Mrs.Zingler,
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.
Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Patricia Zingler <pbzingler@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, August 4, 2017 10:15 AM
Subject: FW: Fire Protection Special Assessment/Parcel No.: 0176100024
To: John Holic <jholich@venicegov.com>

**Subject: Fire Protection Special
Assessment/Parcel No.: 0176100024
Referendum**

needed????????????????????????????????????

To: jholich@Venicegov.com

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Through you and to Council Members, we thank all of you for your dedication and service to our blessed community.

We have been Venice tax payers since1984 and Florida residents since 1993. We have received your Notice of Public Hearing.

These issues are of concern to us:

- First and foremost shame on the Council for scheduling this hearing mid summer; as you all know, a large voting block of residents vacate our fair City for the milder, and sometimes cooler climate of the North for several months during the summer season. We and our peers are part of that voting block and resent that you've negated our opportunity to be heard; not a very astute political decision or a transparent government practice.
- In that this assessment is designed to continue each FY — it is **atax!** We've reviewed FL 197.3632/3635 and 166.021 regarding non-advelorem vs valorem; **we don't have to agree with it.**
- Social media is our friend and we will use same to the extent possible in pushing for **atax payer referendum** regarding this issue. A **"tax"** of this magnitude — close to 10% of our annual property tax clearly requires the approval of your constituents/tax payers, not the mere vote of the Council.
- Did we miss Council's consultant analysis of Sarasota County take over of fire services?? What about full disclosure and the tradeoffs, costs and benefits of the County option?? Was there a one time expense to the City for this transition floated and then negated?? Was there stake holder influence resulting in tabling this option; would the fact that the retirement fund, 40% of personnel expenses, be part of this whole issue?
- Further, but not finally, how does the Council address the likelihood of the Police Department, the DPW and other larger departments within the City from petitioning through their stake holders/union people for their own Special Assessments?? We as citizen taxpayers need to know!!
- **Unfortunately, many of us cannot be present at your summer Hearing. Was the council not aware of this??**

Thank you for your consideration. Please place this memo of concern in your public record. We are concerned and are tax payers.....not fair to be excluded while we are away for summer vacation.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn & Pat Zingler

From: John Holic
Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 3:26 PM
To: Marisa Cassano <marisacass58@gmail.com>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Deny Request for Fire Protection Assessment

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Cassano,
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.
Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Marisa Cassano <marisacass58@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 4, 2017 1:46 PM
Subject: Deny Request for Fire Protection Assessment
To: John Holic <jholic@venicegov.com>

Dear Mayor Holic and City Council,

We are unit owners at 960 Cooper St. Venice Florida. We are out of town and not able to attend the public hearing slated for Monday August 21, 2017. We are sending our disapproval for the Fire Protection Assessment (Proposed Ordinance 2017-23)

As part of Island Park Condo Association, and since speaking to several unit owners, we have come to agree and support the sentiments sent to your office in a letter dated August 1, 2017 from Kim & Ken Eudy (920 Cooper St, Venice Fla).

Who pays and by how much is extremely unfair, especially for seniors on fixed incomes, we are against this proposal.

Regards,
Frank and Marisa Cassano
960 Cooper St. Venice Fla

Sent from my iPad

From: John Holic
Sent: Saturday, August 05, 2017 4:22 PM
To: william j dowling <williamjdowling@msn.com>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Fire Fee

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Dowling,
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.
I can only speak for myself, but I do not think derogatorily of you or any of the residents of Venice.
Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: william j dowling <williamjdowling@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 5, 2017 9:48 AM
Subject: Fw: Fire Fee
To: John Holic <jholich@venicegov.com>

From: william j dowling <williamjdowling@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 5, 2017 10:45 AM
To: jholich@venicegov.com; citycouncil@venicegov.com; elavallee@venicegov.com
Cc: antoinette dowling
Subject: Fire Fee

We believe the proposed fire fee is a thinly disguised tax increase. Further in responding to the question of whether it will be federally tax deductible the response in the SHT was "consult your tax advisor".

It appears that you are attempting to not only raise our local property tax, but our federal income tax as well. If you must raise local taxes do so, but don't take us for fools.

Antoinette & William Dowling
320 W Bay Dr
Venice FL 34285

From: John Holic

Sent: Sunday, August 06, 2017 3:34 PM

To: Thomas Brener <thomasbbrener@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: Il. hamper <ll.hamper@comcast.net>; Terry Holmes <ttholmes33@gmail.com>;
management@birdbayofvenice.com; David Persson <dpersson@swflgovlaw.com>; Linda Senne
<LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Re: TRIM Notice - Fire Fee

Dear Mr. Brener,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. I have copied a few additional city departments in order to get clarification. I believe most of that items you expressed were brought up and covered in our meetings, but checking again seems prudent.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Thomas Brener <thomasbbrener@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, August 6, 2017 2:58:52 PM

To: City Council; John Holic

Cc: Il. hamper; Terry Holmes; management@birdbayofvenice.com

Subject: TRIM Notice - Fire Fee

Dear Mayor Holic and Councilmembers:

8/6/2017

Over the past year I have written a number of letters to you regarding the proposed fire fee. I will not recap those letters, except to repeat that this is a regressive tax and one that (you now agree) is not deductible on the Federal returns. I repeat that this is a "tax" that severely impact all homestead properties and disproportionately benefits higher valued properties while overburdening those who own more modest homes and condominiums.

I understand from recent reports that there has been no rush to implement the fee, and that the Council has worked to keep the public informed and involved in every step of the process. Consequently, I was surprised that the intention is to implement the fee on our next tax bill.

As you are all aware, Florida's TRIM requirements are quite specific, in summary:

In 1980, the legislature passed the "Truth in Millage" (TRIM) act. This law is designed to inform taxpayers which governmental entity is responsible for the taxes levied and the amount of tax liability owed to each taxing entity. The Notice of Proposed Property Taxes is known as the TRIM notice.

TRIM establishes the statutory requirements that all taxing authorities levying a millage must follow, including all notices and budget hearing requirements. These requirements were revised in 2007 to provide for maximum tax levies for counties, municipalities and independent special districts. For fiscal year 2009-10, and thereafter, the maximum tax levy allowed by a majority vote of the governing body will be based on the rate of growth in per capita personal income in Florida...

The Notice of Proposed Property Taxes (TRIM notice) enables the taxpayer to compare the prior year assessed value and taxes with the present year assessed value and proposed taxes, and the amount of taxes if there is no budget change for the upcoming year. The notice lists the date, time, and location of all budget hearings at which the taxing authorities will hear from the public. The notice also shows the deadline for filing a petition to protest the assessment and any denial of exemption.

Taxing authorities establish the millage to be levied against the parcel of land shown on the TRIM notice at the budget hearings. The millage and budget hearings are the best opportunity for taxpayers to provide input into the budgets established by taxing authorities, and the procedures are monitored by the department to ensure compliance with the law. The hearings are designed to ensure taxpayer awareness of the proposed millage changes, the proposed budget changes, and, if any, the percent of change in the rolled-back rate. ... Non compliance by the taxing authority could result in the loss of revenue sharing funds.

It now seems that the official TRIM notice will come after the implementation of the Fire Fee. It would also appear to me that several other requirements spelled out by State Statute have not been followed. Researching this, I noticed that the “consultants” did not follow their own recommended timetable. For example: July 10th was their deadline to provide the County with sufficient time to make the (mandatory) disclosure on the TRIM notice. If the newspaper is correct, the TRIM notice will NOT include the fee- and that’s not right. See- <http://floridarevenue.com/dor/property/trim/pdf/trimprocmap.pdf>

There are a few other issues worth revisiting here- one is that the consultant’s fee to investigate implementation of a fire fee (about \$28,000) was quickly paid out of a newly discovered fire department “surplus”. Frankly, that seems both convenient -and self-serving. Also, please note that though there is nothing illegal about implementing fees for service for property- there is a stipulation that such fees cannot be “based” on property assessments. The actual formula being used on our proposed “fee” uses the Sarasota County Assessor’s numbers in order to generate a component of the new fee. Isn’t that a clear example of basing the fee on assessment?

Lately, (and some say too-lately), the public has become aware that for many city residents, their city taxes will more than double over the next two years as a result of this fee. This will, of course, create hardships and devastate the resale value of middle income property. Some people have complained that this new tax has been carried out in secret and “in summer” when no one is paying attention. I have noticed on the city server, and in the newspaper, a reaction to this – one that suggests people have not paid attention, and they are now grouching after the fact. In point of fact, for those of us who have been paying attention, the general thrust of the consultant’s approach has been to “move the process forward”, to file documents to “keep options open” to provide alternatives, to “educate” and “better inform”. No decision was made until it suddenly came upon you. The heat was very gradually applied. Here we are, the frog has been boiled.

As you all know- I have been paying attention since the last time (10 years ago) when Venice first tried to implement a fire fee. Frankly, the idea still stinks. If the most basic service of fire protection is not a shared concern that should be paid out of the general fund, for the good of

all- what is? Ad Valorem is fair, is efficient, and provides accountability. The new fee will almost immediately release the city of \$millions operating costs, capital cost, and pension fund obligations- so that it can avoid hard choices while it spends the windfall elsewhere.

I would add my voice to those who tell you to slow down. Do it properly, follow the rules. Put it in the TRIM notice before implementing it. Do not rush to institute an unfair, poorly crafted tax. Or, better yet, rethink the whole thing. This process has moved forward relentlessly, and you have been swept up as well.

These comments are provided to add to the record of the public hearing on the proposed Fire Fee.

Thomas Brener
Venice, FL

Dear Mayor Holic and Councilmembers:

8/6/2017

Over the past year I have written a number of letters to you regarding the proposed fire fee. I will not recap those letters, except to repeat that this is a regressive tax and one that (you now agree) is not deductible on the Federal returns. I repeat that this is a "tax" that severely impact all homestead properties and disproportionately benefits higher valued properties while overburdening those who own more modest homes and condominiums.

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These comments are provided to add to the record of the public hearing on the proposed Fire Fee.

Thomas Brener
Venice, FL

From: John Holic
Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 10:23 AM
To: Carla <carlarozell@gmail.com>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rozell,
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. For your information, two additional town hall meetings have been scheduled for Wednesday, August 16 at 9 a.m. And at 5 p.m at the Venice Community Center. I hope you are able to attend one of these meetings.
Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Carla <carlarozell@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 4, 2017 9:13 AM
Subject: Fwd: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment
To: John Holic <jholic@venicegov.com>

Mr. Mayor,

My husband and I own a condominium unit located at 980 Cooper St., Venice Fl and we concur with the sentiments expressed in the letter attached. The distortion of who pays and by how much is unfair and we do not support this proposal.

Regards

Carla and Don Rozell

August 2, 2017

TO: Mayor Holic and City Council

RE: Deny Request for *Fire Protection Special Assessment* by defination of

“*Structural*” and “*Taxable Value*” [*Proposed Ordinance 2017-23*]

Dear Mayor,

The true meaning of "*wish we were there*" to attend the public hearing scheduled for Monday, August 21, 2017 couldn't be truer than now, but we understand your fiscal year starts when some residents are out of town.

We trust the price of property and resale value in our 25 to 30 year Venice investment would increase, along with our assessments/taxes for good schools, stormwater management, great parks, maintained roads, public works, etc. and most important, a sustainable fire protection district. However, the proposed *Fire Protection Special Assessment* suggests a **52% increase** with a future blank-check, without further discussion or approval agreement to raise it. To propose this solution to Venice residents, especially seniors on a fixed income, is an insult to those who pay taxes. Why?

1. The special assessment is based on "*structure value*" not "*taxable value*".
2. Condo owners are assessed on all valuation as opposed to a single family home; their taxes are divided by property and structure.
3. City consultants can not separate condo-structure values from common land values.
4. Single family homes are charged the Tier 1 fee based on the homes land value; the Tier 2 multiplier applied to their structure value.
5. Condo owners are charged the Tier 1 fee based on having an "address"; Tier 2 multiplier applied to the building structure, that in reality, also includes their common land - their entire Sarasota county assessment.
6. Condo residents would be taxed twice for land; once for Tier 1 and again for Tier 2 because building tax assessment includes condo land.
7. Condo residents should not have to pay Tier 1 since it's included in our building value.
8. How is the structure value an "*efficient method to establish the replacement cost*" after a hurricane? *FAQ#6*
9. Besides this assessment being unfair to condo owners, a tax imposed to pay **52%** of the Fire Districts expenses seems more than excessive!

We request *proposed ordinance 2017-23* be revisited and revised to include a more equitable solution for the residents and fire district of Venice, Florida.

From: John Holic
Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 10:21 AM
To: Charlie & Nancy <cnflink@comcast.net>
Cc: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment/Parcel No.: 0176100024

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Flinkstrom,
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.
Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Charlie & Nancy <cnflink@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, August 4, 2017 8:48 AM
Subject: Fire Protection Special Assessment/Parcel No.: 0176100024
To: John Holic <jholic@venicegov.com>

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Through you and to Council Members, we thank all of you for your dedication and service to our blessed community.

We have been Venice tax payers since 2002 and Florida residents since 2006. We have received your Notice of Public Hearing.

There follows in bullet format our concerns:

- First and foremost shame on the Council for scheduling this hearing mid summer; as you all know, a large voting block of residents vacate our fair City for the milder, and sometimes cooler climate of the North for several months during the summer season. We and our peers are part of that voting block and resent that you've negated our opportunity to be heard; not a very astute political decision or a transparent government practice.
- In that this assessment is designed to continue each FY — it is a **tax!** We've reviewed FL 197.3632/3635 and 166.021 regarding non-advelorem vs valorem; we don't have to agree with it.
- Social media is our friend and we will use same to the extent possible in pushing for **atax payer referendum** regarding this issue. A **"tax"** of this magnitude — close to 10% of our annual property tax clearly requires the approval of your constituents/tax payers, not the mere vote of the Council.
- Did we miss Council's consultant analysis of Sarasota County take over of fire services?? What about full disclosure and the tradeoffs, costs and benefits of the County option?? Was there a one time expense to the City for this transition floated and then negated??

Was there stake holder influence resulting in tabling this option; would the fact that the retirement fund, 40% of personnel expenses, be part of this whole issue?

- Further, but not finally, how does the Council address the likelihood of the Police Department, the DPW and other larger departments within the City from petitioning through their stake holders/union people for their own Special Assessments?? We as citizen taxpayers need to know!!

Unfortunately, many of us cannot be present at your summer Hearing. Thank you for your consideration. Please place this memo of concern in your public record.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles and Nancy Flinkstrom

From: The Two Euds [<mailto:kkeudy@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 8:06 AM

To: sterling.phillips@vipam.org; Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>; John Holic <JHolic@Venicegov.com>

Cc: The Two Euds <kkeudy@yahoo.com>

Subject: Location suggestion for Fire Fee Tax/Assessment Open Forums questions and informational exchange

Good morning!

When VPAC first opened, several of us volunteered to be part of the new adventure that comes from having a facility like this in our city and school.

As you can see from the notice below, educating residents pertaining to funding the Fire District is a huge issue and open for discussion; unfortunately, some of us are unable to attend. Is it possible to hold the Forum at VPAC and SKYPE it to the rest of us? Is it possible that its interactive so some of our questions can be answered?

We hope you'll consider using one of the best and newest assets the residents and City of Venice have, the Venice Performing Arts Center.

Regards,
Kim and Ken Eudy

From: Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>

Date: August 3, 2017 at 7:45:34 AM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: "Lenox E. Bramble" <LBramble@Venicegov.com>, Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>, Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>, Judy Gamel <JGamel@Venicegov.com>, Shawn Carvey <SCarvey@Venicegov.com>, Frank Giddens <FGiddens@Venicegov.com>, "Van Malssen, Erick" <erick.vanmalssen@stantec.com>, "dpersson@swflgovlaw.com" <dpersson@swflgovlaw.com>, Chris Roe <croe@bmlaw.com>, Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Fire Fee Assessment - Open Forum

Due to the number of emails and phone calls being received on the fire fee assessment, staff is scheduling an open forum to serve as an informational exchange for those individuals who would like more information or need their questions answered. There will be two open forums on Wednesday, August 16, 9-11 a.m. and 5-7 p.m. at the Venice Community Center.

Staff is still working out the details for the meeting format; however, it is not expected to be a sunshine meeting. Therefore, council members may attend but may not discuss with each other. I wanted to let you know so you can put it on your calendar. More details to follow. Once the format is determined, notices will be put out, which is expected to be next week.

If you have any questions, let me know. Thanks.

Lori Stelzer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
941-882-7390
941-480-3031 (FAX)

From: John Holic

Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 9:41 AM

To: Debbie Heydt <heydebb8@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Kit McKeon <KMCKEON@venicegov.com>; Richard Cautero <RCautero@Venicegov.com>; Robert Daniels <RDaniels@Venicegov.com>; Fred Fraize <FFraize@Venicegov.com>; Jeanette Gates <JGates@Venicegov.com>; Deborah Anderson <DAnderson@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Re: Venice Special Assessment

Dear Mr. And Mrs. Heydt,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. For your information, two additional town hall meetings have been scheduled for Wednesday, August 16 at 9 a.m. And at 5 p.m at the Venice Community Center. I hope you are able to attend one of these meetings.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Debbie Heydt <heydebb8@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 4, 2017 7:44:21 AM

To: City Council; John Holic; Kit McKeon; Richard Cautero; Robert Daniels; Fred Fraize; Jeanette Gates; Deborah Anderson

Subject: Venice Special Assessment

Dear Mr. Mayor and Venice City Council Members:

We recently received the notice for the proposed fire protection special assessments. We noticed that you are having a public hearing on the matter, however, since the meeting is during normal business hours and since we both work, neither one of us will be able to attend your meeting. Therefore, we are e-mailing our thoughts on the matter.

We urge you NOT to proceed with the proposed assessments. We are longtime residents of Venice and while we may expect a small increase in the cost of services, we do not expect nor can we afford that large of an increase. We are currently paying \$ 90.00 on our tax bill to the City of Venice. With the special assessment the new annual charge for our property would be \$248.38 (includes COV & Special Assessment). This is a whopping 175% increase !!! Are you serious?? How can you reasonably expect the residents to afford that large of an increase??

Our mother also lives in Venice and is on a fixed income. Have you forgotten that Venice is a retirement community where much of the population is on a fixed income? These retirees will not be able to afford the dramatic increase. The alternative for them will be cutting back on some of their basic needs.

The suggested assessment will raise a substantial amount of money over and above the normal taxes. It is unclear from your letter what has changed to make these additional funds necessary. If the proposal was for a reasonable increase or a one-time assessment for the purchase of new equipment, then we would agree that this proposal should be considered, however, this does not seem to be the case.

We strongly urge the council members NOT to proceed with this proposal. Please note that your stance on this matter will be remembered.

Thank your for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Glenn and Debbie Heydt

1060 Hope Street

Venice, FL 34285

From: John Holic

Sent: Monday, August 07, 2017 10:20 AM

To: srounds@indy.rr.com; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Judy Gamel <JGamel@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Shawn Carvey <SCarvey@Venicegov.com>; Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Heather Taylor <HTaylor@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Mr. Rounds,

Apology for the cheap shot is accepted; your comments are on file and will be addressed at one or more of the 3 information and discussion meetings we will have prior to the final vote.

I am glad the City Clerk forwarded the meeting dates to you where the fire fee was discussed, as you know, minutes are not meant to give the reader a synopsis of an entire discussion.

Rather, the minutes will let you know the topic and an interested party can go to www.venicegov.com into the meetings tab and recordings of each of the meetings listed in your email can be found; you can listen to the meeting verbatim, and find out what was discussed.

Since you are a Gondolier subscriber, I will point you to the editorial in the Saturday, August 5, 2017 edition. If you receive your subscription on line, or have opened your on line account, this link will give you the story:

<http://yoursun.com/sunnews/venice/veniceeditorial/13163306-694/story.html.csp>

Additionally, so that you are aware, if the fire fee passes, council will meet annual to reassess the value to make sure we are not over collecting for services. As you are aware by now, the money collected for the fire fee can only be used to fund the fire department and will prevent needed fire service funds from being spent on other areas of the city.

Further, as for the timing being suspect, we have worked on this for over a year. In order for the fire fee to be in the fiscal 2018 budget, we must vote on it prior to the end of August.

The fiscal year Starts October 1. 2017 and has been this way for as long as anyone can remember. Suspect, I think not. It is a matter of fact to the City and County budgets.

Finally, I cannot buy your 10% argument. The Fire Service is just like any other insurance you would buy. I have home owners insurance (the cost of which far exceeds the entire city tax assessment, (even with the proposed fire fee) and I hope to never use it. I have automobile insurance that cost several hundred percent more the fire fee and have not used it for an "at fault" accident over 40 years, does that mean I shouldn't have auto insurance?

I think the vast majority of people would be very happy to know that they are paying for top notch, highly trained personnel with the best available equipment to protect both the Fire Fighter and the resident and to never have to use it. For me, as a former Fire Fighter of many years ago, having someone close by that doesn't think twice about helping their fellow man, they just do it, is well worth the money I am spending. Imagine where we would be without people like Fire Fighters, Police, and our Military.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

From: srounds@indy.rr.com <srounds@indy.rr.com>

Sent: Monday, August 7, 2017 9:30:26 AM

To: John Holic; City Council

Cc: Al Maio; Linda Senne; Judy Gamel; Edward Lavallee; chines@scgov.net; ndetert@scgov.net; Shawn Carvey; Lorraine Anderson

Subject: Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Mayor Holic and all,

First, thank you very much for your quick, thorough and thoughtful response. Quite frankly, I am completely surprised and very appreciative that you show such a high level of consideration to reply so fully. I am also very appreciative of the efforts you have undertaken to effectively manage and improve our city, including those specific items you have mentioned. The City Clerk was also very forthcoming in providing meeting dates where this subject may have been discussed. You are right that it was an uncalled for cheap shot for me to suggest that the timing of the public hearing may be a bit cowardly, so I apologize to all for that. There is nothing cowardly about the service you all provide. At the same time, my concern remains that the timing is a bit suspect, as it conveniently ties in with the month when the highest possible number of property owners are absent from the city. I also admit that I fall into the category of "uninformed citizen." I do not attend Council meetings, and I do not review the minutes. I do read the Venice Gondolier, and I do not recall seeing anything there that might have given me a heads-up about this new assessment. Generally, I'm happy with how the city is managed, and hope that I will somehow become aware of any issues that greatly impact me. A significant increase in my property tax bill is one of those issues, and yet I heard nothing about it until receipt of the letter. I did go back and review all the council meeting minutes for the dates the City Clerk provided. Most held very little information about the assessment, other than the special meetings in April, May and July. So shame on me for not being a bit more pro-active in keeping up to date with what's going on.

I also read the consultant's study. Someone may correct me when I get the response to the items you were not able to address, but after reading the study I am more convinced that their methodology is flawed, and only reinforces my points numbered 4 and 5. .

First, it is claimed more than once that using the special assessment is more stable than using ad valorem taxes, which fluctuate based on the market for real property. However, they are using the very data that they are saying they want to avoid because it results in revenue that is subject to the real estate market changes. Tying the Tier 2 tax to the assessed value of a property does exactly what you state you are trying to avoid.

Second, the study correctly concludes that it would be extremely difficult to determine replacement values for all properties -- and then they try to justify assessed value as a good substitute. It is not, as I state in my point 4. You can get data on assessed value for no cost, however, which obviously makes it attractive. They state that using structure value is fair, reasonable, and equitable -- and it is, except that no matter how you spin it, assessed value cannot be correlated with structure (replacement) value.

They cite a 2-prong test for a special assessment, with the 2nd prong being that it yields a fair and reasonable apportionment to all properties receiving the special benefits. This is probably true for the Tier 1 portion, but because of using assessed value, it is not a fair and reasonable apportionment for Tier 2. This inequity is greatly magnified by your verification of my speculation that perhaps 90% of fire department runs are for non-fire emergencies. Using the 90% figure, that means that they are trying to generate the vast majority of the assessment income through a method that only relates to 10% of the actual special benefit. In other words, you are making property owners pay for the vast majority of the cost, while in reality, their property value is only relevant to 10% of the benefit. Not good. Now, changing to a formula that spreads 90% of the cost to Tier 1 might be much more equitable, with property owners sharing the remaining 10% that truly might relate to a fire run to their property. Tying this back to the assessment issue, take two property owners, Joe and Bob. Joe lives in a \$1 million house on the island. Bob's place is a bit to the east, and is only assessed at \$100,000, even though the properties are pretty similar in age, construction and size. If Joe and Bob both call for emergency services, there is a 90% chance that the call is NOT because of a fire, and neither of their properties is at risk. Under your formula, poor old Joe would end up paying nearly ten times more for his ride to the hospital than would Bob. That does not sound equitable to me.

I don't want to drag this out any further, and I appreciate your patience if anyone is still reading. I am not against a special assessment for fire and emergency services, although I am against excessive taxation. I just want the cost to be equitably distributed, and I do not believe the current plan meets that test. Also, I think you would be doing the community at large a great service by postponing any public hearing and council decision until early 2018, when the majority of property owners are actually in Venice and can gain information and participate in any discussions. Based on my newly increased property appraisal, I suspect that property tax revenues will increase significantly next year, thus diminishing the urgency of approving this special assessment before September.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.
Steve Rounds

From: Lori Stelzer

Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 5:35 PM

To: John Holic <JHolic@Venicegov.com>; Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; Judy Gamel <JGamel@Venicegov.com>; Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; chines@scgov.net; Al Maio <amaio@scgov.net>; ndetert@scgov.net; Shawn Carvey <SCarvey@Venicegov.com>

Subject: RE: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Mayor,

Per your request, the fire assessment fee is referenced in the following meeting minutes:

June 14, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
June 27, 2016 – Budget workshop
June 28, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
July 13, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
August 23, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
September 1, 2016 – Special Meeting re: the public safety facility
October 21, 2016 – City Council Introduction to Annual Staff Retreat meeting
November 8, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
December 13, 2016 - Regular city council meeting
February 14, 2017 - Regular city council meeting
March 17, 2017 – Fire Fee Assessment Workshop
March 28, 2017 - Regular city council meeting
April 10, 2017 – Fire Fee Assessment Special Meeting
April 25, 2017 - Regular city council meeting
May 5, 2017 – Capital Improvement Plan Special Meeting
May 15, 2017 – Fire Fee Assessment Meeting
June 13, 2017 - Regular city council meeting
June 19, 2017 – Budget workshop
June 20, 2017 – Budget workshop
June 21, 2017 – Budget workshop
June 27, 2017 - Regular city council meeting
June 29, 2017 – Special Meeting – Budget for Fiscal Year 2018
July 10, 2017 – Fire Assessment Fee Initial Resolution Public Hearing

Copies are on your desk. If you need anything else, let me know. Thanks.

Lori Stelzer, MMC
City Clerk
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
941-882-7390
941-480-3031 (FAX)

From: John Holic

Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 8:18 AM

To: Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; Judy Gamel

<JGamel@Venicegov.com>; Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne

<LSenne@Venicegov.com>; chines@scgov.net; Al Maio <amaio@scgov.net>; ndetert@scgov.net; Shawn

Carvey <SCarvey@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rounds,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. I am not in a location now where I can access data needed to answer all your questions, but I will answer those that I am able and ask that the City Finance Director or other appropriate staff persons to answer the rest.

Question #1

1. ...assuming that the amount is fully funded from the city budget...

You have hit on the main issue of the Fire Fee. 7 years ago, when I and two other Council Members first took office, the budget was in disarray and very difficult to follow. Many changes have been made to the entire city budget process since then:

a. Discontinuance of new members in the city fire and police pension plans, utilizing instead the Florida Retirement System. In addition, many members of the police department (VPD) and some members of the fire department (VFD) opted to change the current city retirement to the Florida Retirement System. This change stopped the then current trend toward bankruptcy of the retirement plans to a viable, sustainable retirement plan for both the VPD and VFD.

Additionally, the change is estimated to save the city about \$30 million over the next 20 years.

b. The city has never fully funded the VFD or VPD. The city has relied upon the 1 cent sales tax (1c) as a Capital Replacement Program instead of a Capital Improvement Program and has replaced instead of improved fire and police vehicles with the funds from that program. When the city decided to fund the Venice Performing Arts Center (VPAC), the 1 cent sales tax all but dried up for Capital Improvement/replacement. My recollection of the voter referendum for 1c was to provide Venice with new items that normal tax revenues would not provide (e.g. VPAC) and to replace high cost items that might not be able to be funded through ordinary real estate tax. Somewhere in the past, the 1c became the funding mechanism for vehicle replacement, re-roofing and the like. There was no incentive to plan for capital improvement, just replacement; the incentive was to fight internally for the 1c sales tax and replace aging equipment instead of setting aside ad valorem taxes to replace equipment. The city was being run by crisis management instead of planned depreciation and replacement.

A perfect example of this is the fire engine that was just replaced at station #1, an engine that cost over \$500,000. The old engine was almost 17 years old and was out of service for repairs almost as much as it was in service. We could not afford to replace the engine because funds for the 1c were committed to the VPAC, and once that funding was complete, 1/2 of the 1c was committed to Utilities Department for infrastructure replacement and was placed in the bond indenture when money was borrowed for necessary infrastructure replacement. We had to go to the bond underwriters and bond council with an explanation as to why that money was not needed by Utilities Department at the present time to free up the money. Once our explanation was accepted, we could buy the new fire engine with 1c sales tax and we intend to buy another overdue engine this year with the 1c sales tax. This money is not in the fire fee, but the 15 year

depreciation is in the fee. 15 years from now, council will not have to look for replacement funds, they will be there.

c. No other routine maintenance or replacement has been in the budget. It has always been seat of the pants financing, or as I liked to call it, crisis financing. The city would wait for a crisis to develop and then defer financing what was needed in another area to correct what was falling apart somewhere else. We hope to leave future councils in much better shape than we were in 7 years ago. The VFD has never been fully funded and this is an attempt to correct that situation, there is no \$9 million windfall, although it would be nice to say there was.

Question #2 The Budget

The current budget is available on line at www.venicegov.com. Although current council members have gone over the budget line by line, it does not mean that we haven't missed something and we are always open to constructive criticism. There are many people who want more money to be spent on parks, on Venice Avenue, on the beach, on parking, on improved public transportation, and on many other projects. We, on council, do try to listen and to weigh each request for the betterment of the city, not for any individual person or group.

Question #3 Use of the VFD

Your estimate on fire serviced is pretty close. The problem we run into is that VFD is actually under the control of two authorities; VFD is for fire and each Fire Fighter is also an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician), the ambulance service is ALS (Advanced Life Support), has one Para Medic (PM) and one EMT for manning and is county run and operated. Our fire engines respond on about 80% of the ambulance calls due to an inter local agreement. The ambulance service charge .66 mills in ad valorem taxes plus a fee per call. None of that revenue is shared with Venice even though we are REQUIRED to respond. Thus far, the county has been unresponsive to sharing revenue for ambulance calls, but that doesn't mean we won't quit trying to obtain our fair share. Two people on an ambulance, without backup from VFD for manpower, would almost surely result in higher mortality rates in our population.

The ambulance service is perhaps the most needed aspect of the VFD and that need continues to grow. I have talked with VFD Fire Chief and the VFD will be working toward having some Venice Fire Fighters become PMs so that we can serve the needs of our population. When some VFD professionals get their PM, our Engines will be able to respond as fully qualified Basic Life Support (BLS) vehicles. To qualify. I am proud of VFD for stepping up and taking the initiative to become the best they can be in aiding our community. We will be able to save even more lives of our population through advanced medical services for the residents of Venice.

I will leave questions 4 & 5 for the Finance Director as I cannot access the needed data from my current location.

I will leave a large portion of question 6 to the City Clerk as again, I do not have access to dates from my current location. I think you will find the 3 Council Members who were elected in 2010 anything but cowardly in the way they have approached their responsibility as Mayor and Council Members and that statement holds true for some of the other Council Members as well. The fire fee has been discussed in open meetings for months, if not years and everything we do and have done is for the betterment of the city. I have no agenda and owe no homage to any group or individual. I take exception to your accusation of cowardly and consider it a cheap shot. I suggest that if you really feel that way, run for a position - it will be open in a little over 2 years. If you are not preparing for it now, you will not be ready to assume the responsibility

when the time comes. If you followed any of the meetings, you would know that the intent is to lower ad valorem taxes as the fire fee is passed or if it is increased in future years.

If this Council were cowardly, we would have not raised taxes by 1/2 mill and placed 2 referendums on the ballot for \$30 million in Capital Improvements during an election year when the three Council Members first elected in 2010 were up for re-election. It would have been far easier to wait another year and slide those items in after the election year.

You will be hard pressed to find a more realistic conservative group when it comes to city finances and taxes, but the term REALISTIC is essential. The out year Fire Fee shows the maximum for the fire fee and the current council direction is reduction in the ad valorem as the fire fee increases. I am not a "trust me" kind of person, but I can show you how this works. I am a firm advocate of transparency and this is as close as it gets in Government Accounting to full transparency. The fire fee can only be spent on the VFD, the General Fund camouflages the expenditure and the tax payer is on a "trust me" form of taxation; as for me, I consider this disingenuous. I am asking the City Clerk to provide a recap of the dates where the Fire Fee was discussed in open forum or as a stand alone workshop or special meeting.

Sincerely,
John Holic
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2017 10:55 AM
Subject: Fire Protection Special Assessment
To: City Council <citycouncil@venicegov.com>
Cc: Steven Rounds <srounds@indy.rr.com>

Greetings,

We have received the unsigned letter from the City of Venice advising us of the upcoming hearing regarding the subject special assessment. The letter stated that we can file written objections within twenty days of the July 20 date of the City's letter. This is our written objection, although it is really partial objection and several questions/concerns, which I hope one of you will answer.

First, let me be clear that we are fully supportive of the fire department, and hold them in high regard. We regularly walk past our local station and visit with the firefighters, and have complete respect for them and the work they do. Nothing in this letter should be construed otherwise.

In no particular order, here are our objections/questions/concerns:

1. You show the fire protection budget as about \$8 million per year, along with capital needs of about \$1 million per year. Assuming that the amount is currently fully funded from the city budget, what are you planning to do with the \$9 million annual windfall the city will gain?

2. Just this past year, voters approved special funding for the police department and road improvements - areas that the general public sees and supports. Now you need \$9 million a year for the fire department, which, of course, is another agency the public supports. If you really need another \$9 million a year, does that indicate that we have had horrendously poor fiscal management of our resources in the past? Perhaps it's time to look at cutting funding for other areas, instead of finding ways to get us to keep paying more for services everyone really wants without cutting elsewhere. If you send me a copy of your current budget, I'll be happy to do a line-by-line evaluation and make some recommendations as to where you can cut \$9 million that will likely not result in objections from the general public.

3. I suspect that as much as 90% of fire emergency runs are for non-fire events. Do you currently charge users for these services? If not, why not? Charging property owners for the cost of non-fire emergency services based on the value of their property is not equitable and does not make sense. Your proposed funding formula adds care facilities and other non-profit organizations to the source of revenue, which does make sense, as they represent actual users of the non-fire services as well as possible fire protection services. I'd be interested in knowing what percentage of fire runs are for actual fires, and what is the average property damage amount for those fires? Funding that portion of fire services based on property value might be more reasonable.

4. Your funding formula for the tax (yes, this special assessment is a tax) is fatally flawed. The Tier 2 portion of funding is based, according to your letter, on the replacement value of an improved property. You state that this value is provided by the assessor's office. This is absolutely incorrect, and makes me wonder whether you got your money's worth from the consultants on this project. Property is assessed based on market value, not replacement value. For example, our property is assessed for 2017 at just under \$250,000. That is a \$50,000 increase from 2016. The cost to replace our home did not increase by \$50,000 in one year, although the market value may have. Our property is about 1200 square feet. I can find on the tax rolls a similar property located a few blocks west of us that has an appraised value of over \$500,000. I also found a similar one a bit east that has an appraised value of \$125,000. So, which amount is the "real" replacement value for a 1200 square foot condo - \$125K, \$250k, or \$500K? The answer is "none of the above." To tax us based on replacement cost, you have a lot of work to do in order to determine actual replacement cost on a property-by-property basis. Further, if you look at replacement cost, you also should consider risk of loss. Some properties are more vulnerable to greater loss than are others, based on location, age, construction materials, and accessibility to fire equipment. Using these additional factors would make the tax more equitable.

5. Another problem with using appraised value is hinted at in your FAQ sheet. You are seeking for the city "a revenue source that is less vulnerable to fluctuations in the economy than the city's ad valorem taxes." This statement proves that Tier 2 is not based on replacement value, and application of your formula shifts the vulnerability of the economy to the fire department, as their revenue would become subject to the vagaries of the real estate market. Why make the fire department bear that risk?

6. Your timing of this letter and the hearing is extremely suspect, and perhaps even cowardly.

Surely you know there will be significant objections to this proposal, even though the public supports our fire department. Phasing the tax in with a 50% recovery in the first year is like hiding the true ongoing cost. The out year tax is certainly not insignificant, and will have a noticeable budget impact on all property owners. Advising us of this in late July, and holding a hearing in August is really shameful. You know full well that August is the one month that has the absolute highest number of citizens AWAY from the city, and therefore unable to make a timely response or attend the hearing. It appears that you are timing this to avoid having to deal with your constituents. How about postponing the hearing until February? You will miss the FY18 budget, but based on the large increase in our property assessment, there should be a huge bump in total city revenues next year anyway. You should have adequate funding to make it one more year if you wait and let more of your citizens have the opportunity to voice concerns and attend the hearing to listen to your plans.

Having spent many years in public service, I understand how hard your jobs are and appreciate the work you do to try to maintain and improve our city. Please hold off on this project until next year and engage the public in the process. Since Tier 2 of the assessment is based on incorrect assumptions and data, I trust that you recognize that you cannot move forward without more work.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Steven & Roberta Rounds
440 Palmetto Ct. #3
srounds@indy.rr.lcom

From: smove440 [mailto:smove440@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, August 04, 2017 5:39 AM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Really!! You can't do your job so now you people want to fee us into poverty! Shame on you!
Live with in your budget! We have to!

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy Note5.

From: John Holic

Sent: Thursday, August 03, 2017 6:23 PM

To: edashway@gmail.com; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Kit McKeon <KMCKEON@venicegov.com>; Richard Cautero <RCautero@Venicegov.com>; Robert Daniels <RDaniels@Venicegov.com>; Fred Fraize <FFraize@Venicegov.com>; Jeanette Gates <JGates@Venicegov.com>; Deborah Anderson <DAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Lenox E. Bramble <LBramble@Venicegov.com>; Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>

Cc: mashway@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Objection to City of Venice / Fire Protection Special Assessment - Ordinance 2017-23

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ashway,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Ed Ashway <edashway@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2017 4:29:03 PM

To: City Council; John Holic; Kit McKeon; Richard Cautero; Robert Daniels; Fred Fraize; Jeanette Gates; Deborah Anderson; Edward Lavallee; Lenox E. Bramble; Lorraine Anderson; Linda Senne; Joe Welch

Cc: mashway@gmail.com

Subject: Objection to City of Venice / Fire Protection Special Assessment - Ordinance 2017-23

August 3, 2017

City of Venice Officials

401 West Venice Ave

Venice, FL 34285

Dear City of Venice Officials,

This email is to formally file an objection to the proposed Ordinance 2017-23; Fire Protection Special Assessment.

The Fire Protection Special Assessment for our property will be based on "structure value" and not "taxable value". It appears that condominium owners are getting unfair treatment. Single family homes are getting charged a tier 1 fee (\$93.92) based upon having a parcel of land (nothing regarding the value) and the tier 2 fees (\$4.81 per EBU) would be applied to their structure "building" value. Condominiums are charged the Tier 1 fee (\$93.92) based upon having a "parcel of land" and the Tier 2 fees (\$4.81 per EBU) applied to the structure "building" on the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's list. In reality the "building" also includes a portion of the value of the condominium's land. Condominium owners

are getting taxed twice for our "parcel of land", once for Tier 1 and again for Tier 2 because the structure "building" value includes a portion of undeterminable condominium land.

Our increase for 2018 is proposed to be near \$450 or about a 50+% increase in City taxes and in subsequent years it could go as high as \$900 per year without any further discussion or approval. Quite a significant increase especially in future years. Venice is our domicile (Homestead) and this increase seems to be contrary to Florida's Homestead Act or at least the proposed increase is not in the spirit of the Homestead Act.

Additionally, it should be noted that per IRS Regulations; Publication 17, the "fire tax" would be considered a user tax and therefore not tax deductible for an individual who itemizes their federal taxes.

Please note the above tax increase does not take into consideration future tax increases due to the recently authorized bond issues for road improvements and a new police station. The roads clearly need to be improved but if people were aware of the significant increase in taxes due to the proposed "fire tax" they may have voted differently in those two situations. We know we would have!

Island Court Condominium of Venice is fairly new having been completed in 2016 to the latest fire codes. The structure is mostly masonry with every unit, inside and out, fully protected by a fire suppression system. Fire extinguishers are also located in every unit. The Units are inspected annually at great expense to the property owners by Piper Fire Protection and then inspected again by the City Fire Marshall at a small charge to the Association. Overall these are significant expenses that condominium owners are already incurring that single family homes do not have to pay.

In conclusion, we hereby formally request Ordinance 2017-23, Fire Protection Special Assessment, be denied in its current form. We strongly believe that any solution to this financial issue should be a property tax based upon taxable value. As previously stated, using structural "building" value significantly impacts and discriminates against condominium owners versus other types of property owners.

Thank you,

Marie & Edward Ashway
433 Nokomis Ave S
Venice, FL 34285
203-856-7029

July 30, 2017

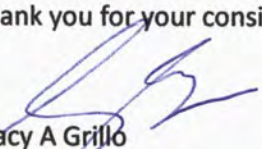
City of Venice
401 W. Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285

DISTRIBUTED:
☒ Mayor/Council
☒ City Clerk
☐ City Manager
☐ Staff

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my objection to the special assessment for the property owners of Venice. I received the city's letter, dated on July 20, 2017. I have 2 properties located at 713 and 734 Gardens Edge Drive.

Thank you for your consideration,


Stacy A Grillo

Owner

617 7335069

July 29, 2017
CLERK 03AUG'17 1:11

Dear City Council,

I am writing concerning the public hearing on August 21st @ 9:00 about annual fire protection assessment revenue.

My first comment is that while over half of Venice Residents are gone during the summer, you hold a public hearing. NO ONE is there. It seems a little bit sneaky.

My second comment is that I am tired of being taxed. I moved here to enjoy retirement on a fixed income like so many other residents but ... the taxes keep going up.

My third comment is the general fund and one-cent sales tax has been doing just fine. We don't need more and more projects. We are being taxed & taxed again.

Please Please Please Do not move forward on this.

Jonyn Sauppe
440 Arborview Lane

Venice, Florida 34292

* Resident of Venice since 2001

7/29/17

To Whom it May Concern,

I am Sally Ardrey, a property owner in the City of Venice & am very much against the proposed fire protection assessments.

Our taxes are so high as it is & those of us who are on fixed income will suffer the most.

By implimenting such an assessment would mean that we could be assessed for other things such as Police Protection.

This could cause some people to lose their homes.

Please do not approve this assessment.

Thank you.

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- ☐ City Manager
- ☐ Staff

Sally Ardrey